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Assistance services available to Austrian citizens abroad are detailed on the  
website of the Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs at  
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Foreign and European Policy Report

2010

Report by the Federal Minister for European and International Affairs
Preface

Every year, Austrian citizens undertake 10 million trips abroad – and this tendency is rising. Austria is one of the world’s leading exporting countries – Austrian companies are coveted investors, manufacturers, and service providers. A positively large number of young Austrians engage in non-profit activities in other countries. Young Austrians increasingly also pursue studies in Europe or overseas. Austrian researchers and artists participate in global networks. The number of Austrians residing abroad rises continuously, more than 400,000 Austrians live in other countries. Our staff at the Foreign Ministry, the Embassies and the Consulates are dedicated to their service.

But we actually do much more than this. We view ourselves not just as a service institution for our country and Austrians around the globe. We are ready to also assume responsibility for others. 50 years of Austrian participation with approximately 90,000 Austrians in the UN Peacekeeping Operations worldwide prove: We do not shy back from this responsibility. We want to have an active say in international politics – and our two-year membership of the UN Security Council clearly proves that we know how to do it. Our work, however, is far from over even though our membership has come to an end. Considering our acknowledged high profile, the network, and the expertise of the last two years we have presented our candidature for a three-year membership of the UN Human Rights Council, the highest body for the promotion of human rights, and the UNESCO Executive Board, the organisation’s highest governing body. It is here that we want to continue our systematic commitment for the rule of law and the protection of human rights.

European Policy
This is the first time that this Report is entitled Foreign and European Policy Report. The new name is owed to the great importance of European policy for Austrian foreign policy both in its internal as well as in its external dimension. The European integration process remains the most effective way to guarantee peace, stability, and security in Europe, as it is only together that we can master the challenges of our time. The Lisbon Treaty, which came into force in 2009, and the European External Action Service (EEAS) created by it shall help comply with this task in a more effective and coherent manner.
Preface

For Austria the EEAS is an important contact point particularly in countries where we have no or just a very small diplomatic representation of our own. It is above all in such cases where we benefit especially from an increased information flow with the delegations of the Union. The establishment of the EEAS, however, on the one hand also shows that the European dimension of Austrian foreign policy can be expected to gain even greater weight in the future. On the other hand it means that Austrian diplomacy is even more challenged to represent genuinely Austrian interests, the trademark “Austria” in the European and international decision-making process and competition.

Europe, however, must also reach the people back home, we must see it and feel it in direct contact. This is why I continued my “EU-Discussion Tour” through the Federal Provinces and in encounters with Austrian citizens personally discussed their EU-related worries and concerns. In order to give fellow citizens in the Austrian municipalities the possibility to address EU-related questions directly to a familiar contact person in their own community I launched the Municipal Councillors for European Affairs Initiative. Consequently, each municipality will have one municipal councillor as a contact point for citizens and their EU-related questions. I am very pleased that from the start this initiative has been meeting with a very positive response and has meanwhile been filled with life.

Neighbourhood

Austria attributes great importance to Europe’s neighbours. Hence, together with my Greek colleague, I launched a joint initiative for a new Western Balkan impulse in the framework of the EU in order to help the countries in the region draw nearer to the EU with the objective for all of these countries to become EU members no later than by 2020. I am also pleased that the Strategy for the Danube Region which I initiated together with my Romanian colleague has meanwhile become an EU core project, highlighting new synergies thanks to a holistic approach linking together different areas such as transport and environmental issues, mobility, and economic development. Here Austria can, for instance, provide a contribution thanks to its know-how regarding the efficient use of the Danube as a transport route while maintaining highest environmental standards.

In the context of a successful neighbourhood policy it is also my special concern to utilise the human, economic, and cultural potential of Europe’s region of the future, the area between the Black and the Caspian Seas, and the respective opportunities arising for Austria. I hence travelled to the Region and inaugurated an Austrian Embassy in Baku with the aim of helping Austrian foreign policy to contribute to political stability and open doors for Austrian companies. I am particularly pleased that in June 2011 we succeeded in bringing to Vienna a meeting of the World Economic Forum dealing with this region.

IV
Preface

Austria on the UN Security Council

What people want – no matter whether in Austria or Tunis or Cairo – is greater participation, freedom, rule of law, and human rights. The revolutionary developments in the Middle East and North Africa over the past weeks and months demonstrate that the priorities Austria has been pursuing in its foreign policy for many years are highly topical. These in particular include strengthening the rule of law, the protection of the civilian population in armed conflict, and the role of women in conflict resolution and reconstruction. And these topics also were the central focus areas Austria chose for its work during its membership on the UN Security Council over the past two years. In this we generally adopt a human rights approach and the rule of law as guiding principles for our activities. These efforts were fruitful as many of the resolutions passed on the Security Council over the past two years clearly bear the hallmarks of Austrian policy. They strive to secure the protection of the civilian population in armed conflict and to fight impunity.

Vienna as Headquarters – A Hub for Peace and Security

In the course of the last two years we also managed to implement yet another important goal: even back in the times of the Cold War, thanks to its geopolitical situation and its neutrality, Austria already was a platform for international dialogue. A starting position that was consolidated further with the inauguration of the Vienna International Centre as one of the UN Headquarters in 1979 and even more during Austria’s membership of the Security Council. Initiatives included peace talks on the Western Sahara in Dürnstein in the summer of 2009 and on Sudan in Baden and Vienna in November 2010.

Last but not least thanks to our reputation as a country actively committed to the disarmament debate we managed to attract some important institutions from the fields of disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons to base themselves in Vienna, including a UN Office for Disarmament Affairs and the Vienna Centre for Disarmament and Non-Proliferation, a platform mainly for activities in the civil society. Also of importance is the International Anti-Corruption Academy, the first of its kind worldwide, which will provide a major contribution to greater transparency, rule of law, and good governance.

Austria’s Membership of the UN Human Rights Council

In line with our active commitment in the United Nations and our consistent advocacy for human rights Austria has applied for a seat on the United Nations Human Rights Council. On 20 May 2011 Austria was elected by the UN General Assembly by a great majority. I regard this as a major token of trust and recognition of our work to date within the international community.

We want to use our membership of the Human Rights Council to achieve specific progress on some core issues including protection of the freedom of
religion and religious minorities, promoting the freedom of the media and the protection of journalists as well as promoting the rights of children and protection against violence and exploitation. In addition to the traditional Austrian resolution initiatives such as those on minorities and internally displaced persons we will also continue our priorities from the Security Council on the Human Rights Council in an appropriate manner, particularly regarding protection of the civilian population and strengthening the rights of women. Strengthening the rule of law continues to be an important leitmotiv accompanying our long-standing commitment as a central theme.

Austria’s Candidature for the UNESCO Executive Board – Dialogue of Cultures

During the period 2011–2014 Austria also wants to assume responsibility on the UNESCO Executive Board. So far Austria has twice been on the Executive Board (1972–1976 and 1995–1999), the organisation’s most important governing body. I am convinced that especially in times of globally growing tensions between religious groups the dialogue with and between religious communities and different cultures is indispensable for peace and security. This is also reflected in our candidature with its clear focus on intercultural and interfaith dialogue. In the true spirit of our long tradition as a venue for dialogue, Austria in 2010 also hosted the Third Conference for European Imams and Religious Advisers and the First Arab-European Young Leaders Forum.

Austrian Development Cooperation

Today development policy is mainly structural policy just as foreign policy mainly is “global domestic policy”. I am referring to global political fields which cannot be seen in isolation and are closely connected with each other such as human rights, resources, trade and environment, climate change, migration and security, access to know-how and communication as well as technology. They influence both conventional “development policy” as well as foreign policy as such.

Hence it is obvious that development policy alone is not enough. New approaches are needed for new growth and development opportunities in the least developed countries. Good governance, transparency, and the fight against corruption are equally important in this process. Austria can and must make its contribution where we can provide added value, for instance with our proven expertise in water management, environmental issues, and sustainable energy, as well as agriculture in harmony with nature which we plan to implement also in the future for everyone’s benefit.

“Worldwide at Your Service” – Consular Work

As mentioned in the beginning, Austrians are becoming increasingly mobile. Approximately 60 per cent of Austrians travel abroad at least once a year.
Preface

The Foreign Ministry’s Consular Service hence clearly is a growth area. Every year my Ministry boasts growth rates of about 10%. In 2010 the Foreign Ministry handled more than 300,000 consular cases, i.e. no fewer than 1,500 cases on every working day. – And 2010 was a comparatively “normal” year after all.

Since the beginning of the year the Foreign Ministry has multiplied its consular activities in many ways. We have handled tens of thousands of enquiries regarding the two major crisis regions in Northern Africa, the Middle East, and Japan alone. Around the clock and in addition to our normal operations. We have dispatched special “crisis support teams” to Tunisia, later to Egypt, and most recently to Libya which also involved the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of Defence. The total number of people evacuated to date reaches four-digit levels.

International Cultural Policy

International cultural policy is an integral part of the Foreign Ministry and a central instrument successfully used by Austria through its embassies, Cultural Fora, and consulates worldwide. With approx. 5,400 events in almost 110 countries and 800 cities attracting a global audience of more than 7.7 million persons worldwide, international cultural policy provides a major contribution to positioning and shaping Austria’s image abroad.

The international cultural policy network of the Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs currently consists of 30 Cultural Fora, 82 Embassies, 11 Consulates General, 60 Austria Libraries, 9 Austria Institutes, as well as Special Offices in Lviv, Sarajevo, and Washington D.C. In 2010, in addition to approx. 143,000 regular visitors, the Austria Libraries also attracted 260,000 visitors at roughly 800 events.

Expression of Thanks for Employees

In conclusion I want to express my thanks and appreciation to Secretary-General Johannes Kyrle and all the employees at the Ministry as well as at the Austrian representations abroad for their tireless efforts, often made in difficult and sometimes even dangerous circumstances, for the benefit of our country and of our fellow citizens.

Dr. Michael Spindelegger
Vice-Chancellor and Federal Minister for European and International Affairs

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A. Austria in the European Union

I. The Financial Crisis and the European Union’s Response

Overcoming the financial and economic crisis in 2010 again was a central issue for the European Union.

In order to master the sovereign debt crisis and to attain greater economic control the European Council agreed at its March meeting on a strategy based on closer coordination of economic policies to generate higher growth and jobs. The new strategy will focus on key areas requiring specific measures: knowledge and innovation, an increased economic focus on sustainability, a high level of employment, and social inclusion. The European Council agreed on five core objectives as common goals and guidelines for actions in both the Member States and the Union: boosting employment, improving conditions for innovation, research and development, meeting both climate protection and energy targets, improving educational levels, and promoting social inclusion, particularly by reducing poverty. In June the new “Europe 2020” strategy for jobs and smart, sustainable, and inclusive growth was adopted together with steps for strengthening controls over economic policies and consolidation measures. The European Council confirmed the five above-mentioned core objectives as action guidelines for the Member States and the Union.

Internationally the European Union continued its committed work on the G20 level. In November France, an EU Member State, took over as chair of the group of the twenty most important industrialised and emerging countries which since the onset of the crisis in 2008 has developed into a global forum for financial and economic issues.

1. Steering Economic Policies and Monitoring Budgets

At the European Council meeting in March a high-level “Task Force” for steering economic policy was set up under the chairmanship of the President of the European Council, Herman Van Rompuy, and took up work at the end of May. Its goal on the one hand was to reform the Stability and Growth Pact by strengthening the preventive and corrective arm. The Stability and Convergence Programmes should be presented earlier to allow for more efficient influence on Member States’ budgets. In the context of the excessive deficit procedure the debt criterion should be given greater weight. Secondly, more effective coordination and monitoring instruments should be introduced to reduce and minimise macroeconomic imbalances and thirdly, a permanent crisis mechanism should be created allowing for quick responses in the event of crises such as in Greece.
In time before the October meeting of the European Council work was concluded with the final report by the “Task Force” issuing the following recommendations:

Strengthening discipline as part of the Stability and Growth Pact,
– Introducing a new macroeconomic control mechanism,
– Introducing a European Semester as from 1 January 2011,
– Creating a framework for a Permanent Crisis Mechanism,
– Strengthening the institutions for enhanced economic policy control.

Since the recommendations of the “Task Force” partly differ\(^1\) from the European Commission’s legislative proposals submitted on 29 September an ad hoc working group for clarifying unsolved issues was established at the end of November. A political agreement on the ECOFIN Council shall follow by February/March 2011 and negotiations with the European Parliament (EP) shall be completed by mid-2011. Also refer to A.I.1.2.

## 2. European Stability Instruments for Liquidity Support

### 2.1. Support for Greece

On 23 April highly indebted Greece officially applied for help as it could no longer refinance its debts on the financial markets. In May the EU Finance Ministers and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) agreed on the Greece rescue scheme worth 110 billion euros for a period of three years (80 billion euros from the Eurozone countries, 30 billion euros from the IMF). Austria contributes 2.29 billion euros to the total of 80 billion euros, i.e. 2.86 %\(^2\). On behalf of the contributing Member States\(^3\) the European Commission opened an account with the European Central Bank. The first loans were transferred to Greece on 18 May. Loan portions are disbursed to Greece subject to strict conditions\(^4\) verified by the European Commission/ECB/IMF at regular intervals.

### 2.2. Joint EU/IMF rescue mechanism totalling 750 billion euros

The joint EU-IMF rescue mechanism totalling 750 billion euros is composed as follows:

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\(^1\) Three regulations in the sphere of budget control, two regulations regarding a procedure for macroeconomic monitoring, and one directive concerning the definition of minimum standards for national budget frameworks.

\(^2\) The legal basis is the Balance of Payments Stabilisation Act (BoPSTA, Federal Law Gazette I 52/2009). On 19 May the National Council adopted the amendment of the BoPSTA establishing that Austria will contribute a maximum amount of 2.29 billion euros in bilateral loans.

\(^3\) The Slovak Republic and Ireland do not participate.

\(^4\) Consolidation by 2014, pension and structural reforms, etc.
EU Financial Stabilisation Mechanism (EFSM) – from the EU Budget

European Financial Stability Facility (EFSF) – Member State Guarantees

IMF loans

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Currency</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EU Financial Stabilisation Mechanism (EFSM) – from the EU Budget</td>
<td>EUR 60 billion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>European Financial Stability Facility (EFSF) – Member State Guarantees</td>
<td>EUR 440 billion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMF loans</td>
<td>EUR 500 billion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>EUR 750 billion</td>
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### 2.3. European Financial Stability Facility (EFSF)

The European Financial Stability Facility (EFSF) is limited to three years, i.e. until the middle of 2013 and 16 Euro area countries assume guarantees of a total of 440 billion euros (decision of the European Council/Euro Group). The EFSF’s Framework Agreement defines relations between the countries and with the EFSF, while “EFSF”, a joint stock company under Luxemburg law, whose shares are held by the Euro area countries, is responsible for handling. EFSF started operations on 4 August and on 20 September received an ‘AAA rating’. The EFSF finances Eurozone countries during adjustment programmes. The **Austrian stake** in the EFSF is 12.3 billion euros in guarantees. The National Council gave its approval on 19 May on the basis of the Balance of Payment Stabilisation Act (authorisation to conclude guarantees of up to 15 billion euros).

### 2.4. EU Balance of Payment Support and European Financial Stabilisation Mechanism (EFSM)

Non-Eurozone countries qualify for balance of payment support pursuant to Art. 143 and Art. 108 of the Treaty on the functioning of the European Union. The volume is 50 billion euros (Regulation 332/2002 in the version of Regulation 1360/2008, Regulation 431/2009). In addition all EU Member States can resort to the EFSM with a budget volume of 60 billion euros (Regulation 407/2010). Both instruments are guaranteed through the margin in the EU budget.

At the end of November the **support scheme for Ireland** was approved with a total volume of 85 billion euros (resolution by the Euro Group of 28 November). 17.5 billion euros come from Ireland itself, 22.5 billion euros from the IMF, 22.5 billion euros from the EFSM, 17.7 billion euros from the EFSF and the remainder is provided by the United Kingdom, Sweden, and Denmark in the form of bilateral loans. The Ireland support scheme is also subject to strict conditions (budget consolidation to less than 3% deficit by 2015, structural reforms). Part of the aid may be used to restructure banks.
2.5. European Stability Mechanism

In December the European Council agreed on the establishment of the European Stability Mechanism (ESM) on the basis of a limited amendment to the Treaties pursuant to Art. 48 (6). As from 1 January 2013 the ESM shall replace the current EFSF. The Mechanism is established on the basis of a declaration by the Euro Group of 28 November. It shall assume the principles of the EFSF and grant distressed Member States liquidity support subject to strict conditions. In accordance with current IMF rules the participation of private investors shall also be agreed for stabilisation. To minimise the burden for taxpayers the ESM shall be granted preferred creditor status and its claims shall be second only to those of the IMF. Compliance with the adjustment programmes and the sustainability of the sovereign debts shall be verified by the European Commission in cooperation with the ECB and the IMF. Support for countries in distress shall be unanimously agreed by the Finance Ministers of the euro area. In the event of an insolvency of a Member State it must negotiate a restructuring plan with its private creditors; this is an absolute precondition for the approval of liquidity support by the ESM. As from June 2013 all euro area bonds shall contain standardised collective action clauses allowing creditors to restructure debts by qualified majority should a Member State become insolvent. The Mechanism is activated in agreement with the euro Member State. Non-euro Member States are involved upon request and can participate in the measures on an ad hoc basis.

3. Consolidation efforts by the EU Member States

As a consequence of the Greek debt crisis as from the beginning of 2010 the euro came under increasing pressure. As stated above, to regain the trust of the financial markets the EU, ECB and IMF launched substantial rescue measures. At the summits at the beginning of May the EU Heads of State and Government and the ECOFIN Council decided the speedy restoration of sustainable state finances – currently 24 of 27 EU Member States infringe against the rules of the Stability and Growth Pact – to create a sustainable basis for economic recovery and strengthening competition. Depending on the economic starting situation and the needs for reform, individual Member States have different approaches and timelines to overcome the crisis. This shall prevent threats to renewed growth through excessive consolidation. The Euro Group and the ECOFIN generally agreed that consolidation should mainly be achieved through spending side measures and “genuine” structural reforms (e.g. the pension systems) and in accordance with the objectives of the Europe 2020 Strategy.

Art. 136 TFEU is amended by the following paragraph: “The Member States whose currency is the euro may establish a stability mechanism to be activated if indispensable to safeguard the stability of the euro area as a whole. The granting of any required financial assistance under the mechanism will be made subject to strict conditionality.”
Taking up a proposal by the working group for economic policy control in the summer, EU Finance Ministers approved the introduction of a “European Semester” as from 1 January 2011. Accordingly, in the future the European Commission will monitor the budgets of the Member States more closely to be able to intervene faster in case of excessive sovereign debt as in Greece. The “European Semester” will cover the period between March and July during which Member States must draw up their budgets subject to a precisely defined schedule. In March 2011 the European Council will list the biggest upcoming challenges based on information by the European Commission and will issue advice as to their solution. In April Member States must then revise their budgets and submit reform proposals, e.g. on employment. The European Commission and the Council establish ultimate proposals for improvements during June and July before the Member States finally approve their budgets for the coming year. The European Semester shall contribute to a more consistent compliance with the Euro Stability Pact and the objectives of the Europe 2020 Strategy. The rights of the national Parliaments in drafting the budgets, however, remain unaffected.


4.1. New European Financial Supervision System

One year after the draft legislation for the reform of the European financial supervision system had first been submitted, the EP and the Council agreed on 21 September on legislation regarding the new supervision system in the European Union coming into force as of 1 January 2011. The aim of the new supervisory structures is to strengthen the stability of the financial markets by strengthening macro- and micro-prudential supervision as well as through improved cooperation with the competent authorities on an EU and on a national level. The reform for the first time shifts certain competences in this area from the national level to the EU. Accordingly, a European Systemic Risk Board (ESRB) shall be established under the chairmanship of the ECB President (for an initial term of five years). It shall analyse risks in the financial markets and issue warnings if it perceives threats to the stability of the financial sector. On a micro level three European authorities shall be established for bank, insurance, and stock exchange control. Once a crisis event is identified by the EU Finance Ministers they will be entitled to directly interfere with the financial institutions. Their competences include the imposition of bans on certain transactions and financial products.

4.2. Framework for crisis management

The crisis has demonstrated that problems of one single bank may spread onto the entire financial industry, not stopping short of national borders. It
has also highlighted the lack of systems for dealing with financial institutions in distress. Previously practically no framework conditions had existed for cross-border crisis management in the event of a bank crisis. In October the European Commission therefore submitted a Communication with proposals for an EU framework for crisis management in the financial sector; legislative proposals are to follow in spring 2011. The aim is to create a comprehensive framework for crisis management in banks and security firms.

4.3. Bank Rescue Schemes and Banking Sector Stress Tests

Numerous EU Member States including Austria approved national Bank Rescue Schemes which in most countries were subsequently extended. Even though an agreement had been found on EU level regarding joint rescue measures to stabilise the financial sector (guarantees, capital for recapitalising banks, protection of deposits, etc.) this did not include a joint EU Fund for the stabilisation of the financial markets. In July stress tests were performed on 91 systemically important European banks producing generally satisfactory results, also for the participating major Austrian banks.

5. Financial Sector Contributions to Crisis Costs

So far on an international level no consensus has been reached on this issue which again in 2010 kept coming up on the agenda of different institutions (G20, IMF, EU, and Task Force on International Financial Transactions for Development). On an EU level taxation of the financial sector (bank levy, financial activity tax, financial transaction tax) was also pursued in 2010 with the European Council issuing a report on the status quo in December. So far ten EU Member States have introduced a bank levy or are in the process of doing so. A consensus exists on EU level that any introduction of bank levies requires coordinated actions to avoid double taxation. Already at the beginning of the year Austria decided to introduce a bank levy no later than at the beginning of 2012. According to calculations by the Austrian National Bank the levy shall produce approx. 500 million euros in additional tax income each year. In accordance with the stipulations in the government agenda 2008–2013 Austria has also been advocating the mandatory introduction of a Europe-wide Financial Transaction Tax (FTT) with its European partners.

6. EU Activities in the G20 Group

On an international level the issues are mainly identified by the so far five meetings of the G20 Group of major industrialised and emerging countries, most recently on 26 and 27 July in Toronto and on 11 and 12 November in Seoul.

In Toronto states committed themselves to balanced consolidation. In the “Framework for Growth” initiative the countries vouched to cut budget defi-
Enlargement of the European Union

cits by half by 2013. Accordingly, by 2016 public debt quotas shall at least be stabilised if not reduced. In Seoul the G20 Heads of State and Government agreed to develop measures for measuring and minimising foreign trade imbalances. G20 Finance Ministers plan to finalise the respective details over the next months under the French Presidency with the assistance of the IMF. Seminal in this process were the resolutions for stricter equity rules for banks (Basel III) as well as a comprehensive reform of IMF voting rights in favour of emerging countries.

By mid-November France took over the Presidency of the G20 (G8). President Nicolas Sarkozy plans to focus on issues such as the reform of the international monetary system, the volatility of the raw material prices as well as “good governance” in fiscal issues (procedures against uncooperative jurisdictions, transparency and terrorist financing).

For Austria it is important that at any time all 27 EU Member States have a say in the EU’s decisions for G20 meetings.

II. Enlargement of the European Union

In 2010 again the Enlargement Process was defined by the principles of the “renewed consensus on enlargement” laid down in December 2006. This strategy adopted by the European Council is based on the premise of the consideration of the Union’s absorption capacity and in addition to consolidating existing commitments also stresses compliance with a fair and also determined conditionality.

The yearly “enlargement package” approved by the European Commission on 9 November (including the enlargement strategy and progress reports for the individual countries) defined overcoming the economic crisis, intensifying the social inclusion of endangered social groups, improving the rule of law and strengthening public administration, asserting the rights to freedom of speech and a free press, as well as continuing the enhanced regional cooperation in the Western Balkans as the main challenges to the enlargement agenda.

Regarding Croatia the main conclusion is that despite certain shortcomings, particularly in the areas of justice and fundamental rights as well as efficiency in public spending and budget discipline, the country is in the final phase of the accession talks.

One chapter was opened in accession talks with Turkey. The Council and the European Commission welcomed the constitutional reform passed in

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9 IMF reform: redistribution of voting rights and shares of the 187 IMF Member States reallocating approx. 6% from the old European industrialised countries to the emerging countries. IMF Executive Board: member number unchanged (24, US had demanded 20), Europe will have only 7 seats in the future (down from 9), but Germany, United Kingdom and France will keep theirs. Europe and the US continue to claim the chief position at the IMF and the World Bank.
September. In many areas, however, further intensified reform efforts are necessary, implementation of which substantially determines the progress of the negotiations.

Progress in the negotiations with Iceland is closely linked to compliance with the obligations under the Agreement on the European Economic Area (EEA Agreement) and the country’s ability to fulfil the requirements for adopting the Union’s Community Acquis.

1. Croatia, Turkey and Iceland

In 2009 the accord reached between Croatia and Slovenia on a bilateral agreement regarding the submission of their long-standing disputes on their maritime border line to an arbitration court gave a boost to accession talks. That momentum was preserved and – benefitted by reform efforts – became even more pronounced (particularly regarding the rule of law and the fight against corruption).

The arbitration agreement with Slovenia stipulating that the dispute shall be decided by a mutually binding award to be implemented within six months entered into force on 29 November. In its conclusions on the enlargement process the Council acknowledged this event also stressing the generally good cooperation between Croatia and the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) while demanding further unrestricted cooperation. Compliance with these criteria especially in the fields of competition policy, judiciary and fundamental rights, as well as boosting the efficiency of public spending and improving budget discipline as discussed by the European Commission in the Progress Report remain essential for the conclusion of the accession talks.

In 2010 negotiations on six chapters were opened: “Competition policy”, “Fisheries”, “Judiciary and fundamental rights”, “Environment”, “Foreign, security and defence policy” and “Institutions”. Eleven chapters were closed preliminarily. The total number of negotiation chapters opened thus was 34 (out of 35); a total of 28 chapters have so far been preliminarily closed. The working group for drafting the accession treaty established by the Council in December 2009 continued its work regularly, bringing the content matter of the closed chapters into treaty form.

In Turkey a constitutional reform was adopted by a referendum on 12 September (principles: changing the composition of the Supreme Council of Judges and Public Prosecutors, introducing the right to strike for civil servants, setting up an ombudsman service, restricting the political power of the military). Both the European Commission’s Progress Report as well as the Council’s conclusions welcome these measures whose adequate implementation would constitute an important step towards approaching EU standards. However, in numerous areas Turkey is urged to proceed with reforms
(including: respect for fundamental rights and freedoms on a legal and material basis, implementation and continuation of the democratic opening which shall in particular also contribute to a solution of the Kurdish issue).

Turkey is very active in its wider neighbourhood and therefore an important regional actor. In order to deepen its rapprochement to the EU, Turkey must commit itself to good neighbourly relations and the peaceful settlement of disputes. It has, however, failed to make progress towards normalisation in the bilateral relations with the EU Member State Cyprus. Despite repeated requests the Additional Protocol to the Association Agreement (Ankara Protocol) has not yet been implemented. Hence the customs union with the EU, in force since 1995, still has not been extended to all countries that had joined the Union in 2004. Thus the decision taken by the EU Foreign Ministers on 11 December 2006 to completely suspend the negotiations in eight chapters related thereto and to neither preliminarily close any of the other chapters remains unchanged.

All in all negotiations have been opened on thirteen chapters and closed preliminarily on one chapter. In 2010 one chapter (food safety, veterinary and phytosanitary policy) was opened.

Iceland, which in 2008 had been severely hit by the economic and financial crisis, applied for membership on 17 July 2009. Simultaneously a parliamentary resolution stipulated that following completion of the accession negotiations a referendum was to be held on accession to the EU. After a positive opinion was issued by the European Commission in February the European Council decided on 17 June to initiate accession talks. The opening conference for accession talks with Iceland took place on 27 July.

The so-called screening process, i.e. the analytic assessment of the Community acquis by the European Commission, started in November. As a long-standing member of the European Economic Area (EEA), Iceland has already implemented large parts of the Union’s acquis. In the conclusions to the enlargement process the Council praised Iceland as a country with long-standing functional democratic institutions, efficient bodies, and close ties with the EU. Further efforts towards legal harmonisation, however, are still necessary, in particular regarding the restructuring of the banking sector. As highlighted by the European Commission in the Progress Report, further efforts are required regarding comprehensive information of the Icelandic population on EU membership and compliance with obligations under the EEA Agreement, particularly decisive for the accession talks.

2. Bulgaria and Romania

When Bulgaria and Romania joined the European Union on 1 January 2007, a special Mechanism for Cooperation and Verification (CVM) was set up to support the countries in overcoming residual deficits in the areas of the
judiciary and home affairs. In 2010 the European Commission produced its fourth annual report on progress made in the reform process. The report pointed out substantial discrepancies in the reform efforts of the two states: Bulgaria managed to show a certain reform dynamic in the field of the judiciary, whereas in Romania substantial problems lingered for lack of political will. Sustainable improvements are necessary both in fighting organised crime and regarding conflicts of interest and corruption in public procurement. The CVM is hence continued for both countries.

3. The European Perspective for the Western Balkan Countries

The EU developed the so-called Stabilisation and Association Process (SAP) for all Western Balkan Countries under which each country shall be brought closer to the EU through specific reform steps making EU accession a realistic long-term perspective. The countries have hence been granted free access to the EU Internal Market for almost all their exports and receive financial support for their reform efforts. The Stabilisation and Association Agreements (SAA) providing for the adoption of parts of the acquis by the associated state in addition to economic association as well as cooperation with the EU in a large number of political spheres constitute a core element of the agreements.

For Macedonia, Croatia and Albania the SAAs have now partly been in force for some time. The agreement signed with Montenegro on 15 October 2007 and with Bosnia and Herzegovina on 16 June 2008 is in the process of being ratified. Ratification of the SAA signed with Serbia on 29 April 2008 was unblocked only in June 2010 after the Prosecutor at the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) had judged cooperation with the Hague War Criminal Tribunal satisfactory. The SAA Interim Agreement on trade regulations already unilaterally applied by Serbia entered into force on 1 February following the respective decisions by the Council of December 2009. Austria ratified the SAA with Serbia during the second half of the year.

For Macedonia, which since 2005 has had candidate status, the start of accession talks remains unclear mainly because of the unresolved name dispute with Greece.

After some delay the membership applications of Montenegro and Albania (submitted in December 2008 and April 2009) had been forwarded to the European Commission with the request for producing an opinion. It includes a detailed analysis of the applicant country’s ability and willingness to enter into accession negotiations. The opinion on Montenegro presented on 11 November despite various remaining shortcomings recommended awarding the candidate status – granted by the European Council on 16 December – but accession negotiations only after substantial improvements in all key areas. The opinion on Albania, which was presented simultaneously, did not award candidate status due to severe deficiencies of the democratic institutions.
Enlargement of the European Union

Serbia had applied for membership of the European Union in December 2009 and after some delay by virtue of a decision by the European Council its application was forwarded to the European Commission for an opinion on 25 October.

The accelerated rapprochement of the Western Balkan countries to the EU is one of Austria’s foreign policy priorities and is also given particular attention within the EU. With a joint Austrian-Greek initiative at the beginning of the year and by hosting a seminar at the Diplomatic Academy in May, Austria actively contributed to bringing the Western Balkans prominently back again onto the international agenda. In Berlin Foreign Minister Spindelegger and his German colleague Westerwelle hosted a Western Balkans Conference on 10 and 11 December organised by the Aspen Institute and the Austrian Embassy and attended by Western Balkans Foreign Ministers and high level representatives from business and the media. Austria had also made substantial efforts for visa liberalisation (Schengen area) for Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia, which entered into force on 19 December 2009, as well as for Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina, which entered into force on 15 December 2010. For Kosovo the EU is internally discussing a visa dialogue subject to compliance with strict rules.

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

The Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) supports the candidate countries of Croatia, Macedonia and Turkey as well as the potential candidate countries of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro and Serbia during their pre-accession phase with a financing volume of 11.5 billion euros for the period 2007–2013.

Austria provided specific pre-accession support by participating in regional cooperation and administrative partnerships (EU-Twinning) under the IPA. Austria has participated in EU funded twinning projects for the strengthening of public administration in the recipient countries mainly in the areas of justice and internal affairs, environmental protection, and agriculture. In 2010 the focus of Austrian twinning activities was on Croatia (three) and Montenegro (two). In total Austria successfully applied for participation in seven projects in the Western Balkan countries with a total budget volume of 7.1 million euros.

Since the effects of the international economic crisis have proved an additional burden for reform speed in the Western Balkan countries, the EU is trying to ensure sustainable progress in the current enlargement process by offering incentives for political and economic reforms. Special consideration is being given to the development of governmental administrative structures and the rule of law reflected in an increased number of calls for tender in this area.
5. Regional Cooperation in South Eastern Europe

The sustainable cooperation between South Eastern European countries is the precondition for the successful integration of the entire region into European structures. As successor to the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC), directed by Hido Biščević from Croatia, tried to promote and urge the self-responsibility of the countries in the region. The core areas of his activities include the economic and social development, infrastructure and energy, justice and home affairs, security cooperation, education and research, as well as parliamentary cooperation. The EU and some of its Member States, including Austria, provide material and financial support for the work of the RCC and are represented on the organisation’s Board with seats and votes.

III. The Lisbon Treaty – One Year On

The Lisbon Treaty which amended both the Treaty on European Union as well as the Treaties of Rome (now Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union) entered into force on 1 December 2009. What follows is a presentation of select areas where new developments occurred in the course of the year as a consequence of the amendments.

The elections to the European Parliament (EP) in June 2009 were still based on the Nice Treaty. Before the latest EU enlargement round by a total of 12 Member States it provided for a maximum of 736 MPs in the EP and an allocation of seats pursuant to the so-called “principle of degressive proportionality” of a minimum of five and a maximum of 99 MPs per Member State. The Lisbon Treaty raised the maximum to 751 MPs and now provides for a minimum of six and a maximum of 96 MPs per Member State.

The Lisbon Treaty must therefore be fulfilled before the term of the EP elected in 2009 expires, i.e. before 2014, and EP composition must be adapted to the stipulations of the Treaty. In order to avoid the departure of three of the 99 MPs from the most populated Member State elected in 2009 the European Council in 2009 resolved to convene an Intergovernmental Conference with the aim of creating a transitional solution limited in time for the current term providing for a maximum of 754 MPs.

The European Commission subsequently on 27 April issued an opinion on the suggested Intergovernmental Conference and the EP on 6 May issued a positive opinion and renounced on convoking a convention. The European Council subsequently on 21 May resolved to convene an Intergovernmental Conference in Brussels on 23 June. The amendment protocol signed on that same day now lays down the allocation of additional seats to the Member States for a term limited up to the next EP elections. For Austria it provides for an increase in the number of MEPs from a current 17 to 19. By 31 December twelve Member States had submitted the instruments of ratification in Rome.
By introducing the European Citizens’ Initiative the Lisbon Treaty for the first time also provides an instrument for direct citizen participation. A minimum of one million Union citizens from a considerable number of Member States (the number is defined in greater detail by the respective regulation) under Art. 11 Para 4 of the Treaty on European Union in the version of the Lisbon Treaty can request the European Commission to submit within its mandate proposals on topics requiring a legal instrument by the Union to implement the Treaties. This provision must be implemented by an EU regulation. The respective regulation was adopted by the EP by a large majority upon first reading on 15 December. After adoption by the Council the regulation can enter into force.

The legal and organisational amendments required in the Member States must be carried out within a period of twelve months from the regulation’s entry into force.

The Lisbon Treaty had delayed the regular appointment of a new European Commission scheduled for November 2009. On 9 February the EP had approved the European Commission’s composition as proposed by the Council. Following its appointment by the European Council the new European Commission commenced its term on 10 February.

The elected President of the European Council, Herman Van Rompuy, replaced the rotating Presidency as of 1 January and took over as permanent President of this organ. On his level he is the EU’s external representative in matters of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). In Union competences covered by the European Commission the Union is still represented externally by the President of the European Commission.

Also as of 1 January the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Baroness Catherine Ashton, appointed by the European Council pursuant to the Treaty, replaced the rotating Presidency and took over as permanent President of the “Foreign Affairs” Council. The High Representative also is Vice-President of the European Commission with competence for the Union’s external relations and in this double mandate shall ensure greater coherence in the Union’s international relations. The High Representative is responsible, in particular, for submitting her own proposals to the Council in the area of CFSP including the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) and provide for the implementation of the Council decisions. The High Representative is the Union’s external representative in the area of the CFSP on the basis of the decisions previously passed by the Council. In the areas of competence covered by the European Commission the competent member of the Commission is the Union’s external representative.

In the institutional domain on the European level the area of the Union’s external relations and the CFSP was dominated by the transition of the President’s function and in third countries and international organisations from
the rotating Presidency of the Council to the structures created by the Lisbon Treaty. An adequate legal basis had to be created. The Lisbon Treaty, for instance, provides for the establishment of a European External Action Service (EEAS) to support the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy who is in charge of the EEAS. The EEAS merges the already existing structures in the European Commission and in the Council’s General Secretariat in the area of external relations and CFSP under one roof. The EEAS also includes the more than 130 long-existing Delegations of the European Community, now Delegations of the Union, in third countries and to international organisations.

On the basis of the Lisbon Treaty the Council, after hearing the EP and approval by the European Commission upon proposal by the High Representative, on 26 July decided on the organisation and functioning of the EEAS and thus created the legal basis for establishing the EEAS as an independent institution. For the creation of this new Service the regulation concerning the Union’s Financial Regulation and the regulation regarding the Union’s Staff Regulations of officials and the conditions of employment of other servants of the Union also had to be amended.

As from 1 January the Union’s Delegations took over the local Presidency function in several steps in all third countries where the representative of the Member State acting as current Council President under the rotational system had been carrying out this function. In the case of the Delegations of the European Union to international organisations the new regulations must in many cases be harmonised with the statutes of the respective organisation. This also is the case with the United Nations. This work was not yet completed by the end of the year.

Following the entry into force of the respective legal instruments the EEAS officially started work at the beginning of December and is composed of officials from the European Commission and the General Secretariat of the Council as well as employees from the diplomatic services of the Member States who after their term as temporary staff at the EEAS return into the diplomatic service of their home country. By 1 July 2013 at least one third of the positions in the EEAS employment plan on all levels shall be filled with diplomatic personnel from the Member States, while a minimum of 60 percent of positions shall be filled with Union officials. The joint work of staff from the European Commission, the General Secretariat of the Council and the Member States’ diplomatic services on the European level shall boost the spirit of cooperation and the coherence of external action on a European level.

The EEAS supports the President of the European Council and the European Commission and its President and cooperates with the diplomatic services of the Member States and the General Secretariat of the Council and the European Commission agencies also offering adequate support to other Union organs and services, particularly the EP.
The Lisbon Treaty does not provide for any restrictions of competences of the Member States in wording and executing their foreign policy or their representations in third countries and to international organisations [7][1]. The tasks and functioning of the Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs thus are not amended by the EEAS. The Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs, however, cooperates with the EEAS and by so doing makes sure that Austria provides its contribution to the EU’s international activities in general and the CFSP in particular.

At the end of the year the EEAS employment plan featured 1625 scheduled posts of which 1114 permanent posts at the European Commission and 411 at the General Secretariat of the Council which will be formally transferred to the EEAS staff at the beginning of the following year, 100 scheduled posts were newly created in consideration of the additional tasks resulting from the transfer of the Presidency on the “Foreign Affairs” Council as well as the local Presidency in third countries and with international organisations. In accordance with the declared will of the Member States the EEAS is established in accordance with the principles of cost efficiency and budget neutrality.

In the summer employees of the diplomatic services of the Member States could for the first time apply for one of the approximately 30 head positions as part of the rotation of Delegation Heads. Following a successful application Austria’s Permanent Representative to the European Union, Ambassador Hans Dietmar Schweisgut, was appointed Head of the Delegation of the European Union to Japan. Minister Engelbert Theuermann, long-standing Head of the Department of “Human Rights, International Humanitarian Law, and Minority Issues” at the Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs, following a successful application as part of the advertisement for permanent Heads for Council Working Groups in the field of “Foreign Affairs” was appointed President of the Council working group on “Human Rights”. By the end of the year the competition of approximately 80 allocated posts to the Delegations of the Union was not yet closed. Member State Representatives were present in the selection committees for most competitions.

The Lisbon Treaty stipulated the obligation for the European Union to sign the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR). The Union’s accession to the ECHR guarantees that the compatibility of Union legislation with the ECHR can be verified before the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR). On 4 June the Council issued a negotiating mandate for the European Commission for negotiations between the European Commission and the Council of Europe. Negotiations began on 6 July.

To enable the establishment of a permanent mechanism for safeguarding the financial stability of the Euro area the European Council on 16 December

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[7][1] On this point also refer to the Declarations No.13 and No.14 on the Common Foreign and Security Policy annexed to the Final Act of the Intergovernmental Conference which adopted the Treaty of Lisbon.
decided to introduce the simplified procedure for the amendment of the Treaties pursuant to Article 48 Para 6 of the Treaty on European Union without delay. The Member States must approve an amendment in accordance with their respective constitutional provisions before the amendment can enter into force.

In December the Council and the EP in a first hearing agreed on the revision of the Comitology Regulation which had become necessary as a consequence of the Lisbon Treaty for the definition of European Commission control by the Member States in adopting implementation measures. When entering into force in 2011 the new consultation and verification procedures will be applied for the implementation of legislation to be newly adopted. Procedures in already existing basic legal instruments will be adapted gradually over the following years. Under the Belgian Council Presidency a common position by the European Commission, the EP and the Council on the definition of the new form of the delegated legislative act was established but not yet formally adopted.

IV. European Information Activities

The Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs views itself as the central contact point for citizens on European issues and is available to the public for questions and answers. In addition it has also made it its goal to actively approach the citizens thus rendering the European project tangible and a direct experience of daily life, particularly through the following initiatives:

The Dialogue on Europe Tour through the Federal Provinces launched by Federal Minister Michael Spindelegger in autumn 2009 was continued in 2010. Due to its huge success and many positive responses the Tour shall also be continued in 2011.

The video reports by Federal Minister Michael Spindelegger in which he discusses the results of the EU Council meetings in Brussels on the website of the Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs have proved equally popular.

The Municipal Councillors for European Affairs Initiative was one of the priorities of information activities. Its objective is to establish contact persons for European issues in each of the approximately 2,350 Austrian municipalities. Similarly to the municipal councillors for culture and sport, in the future municipal councillors for European affairs shall be able to provide information for citizens on questions of European integration rapidly and unbureaucratically. The project is coordinated by the Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs together with the European Commission Representation in Austria.

The Initiative was launched at the end of February as part of a workshop with approximately 60 mayors and municipal representatives from all the Federal
Provinces and political parties as participants. In September Federal Minister Michael Spindelegger presented the Initiative at the Convention of Municipalities in Graz and in December a first information trip to the European Institutions in Brussels was organised for municipal representatives. Plans for 2011 also include a choice of seminars and further education options in cooperation with the provincial management academies and the communal educational institutes. Municipal councillors also receive continuous information on issues relating to the EU. Success proves the initiative right: after less than one year Austria already has 200 municipal councillors for European affairs.

Europe-related events supported by the Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs also include the Café d’Europe Régional which was last held on 3 December in Jennersdorf as well as the Conference of European Regions and Cities. Both events were organised at the invitation of the Institute of the Regions of Europe (IRE) chaired by Professor Franz Schausberger.

As kick-off for the Europe Day on 9 May the newly revised exhibition “The EU and You” (“Die EU und DU”) was presented on 7 May at the Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs. This travelling exhibition staged at Austrian schools and accompanied by experts from the Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs aims to acquaint pupils with Europe and to inspire extensive discussion. In 2010 the exhibition travelled to 25 schools and reached 3,450 pupils. It was also shown at training events for teachers at teacher training academies and prepared for possible use at workshops in the classroom.

School visits to the Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs are another opportunity for adolescents to get to know the Ministry and discuss questions of European integration. Just as in previous years this offer proved very popular again in 2010 – about 40 classes with a total of 800 pupils visited the Ministry. Also open for interested visitor groups from Austria are the doors of Austria’s Permanent Representation to the European Union in Brussels (see Section V.2).

The Open Day on 26 October was another highlight. Thousands of Austrians were able to obtain information from the Ministry’s stands, discuss about Europe with employees, or test their knowledge with the Quiz on Europe.

V. Austria in the European Institutions

1. The Role of the Austrian Parliament on the European Level

The so-called “Lisbon Amendment” amended the National Council’s and the Federal Council’s participation rights under Art. 23e Federal Constitutional Act on matters of European integration as a right to information and
opinion regarding EU projects by additional information and participation rights in relation to the Federal Government (see Section VI) as well as by direct participation rights of the National Council and the Federal Council in relation to the EU organs.

In the subsidiarity verification procedure, in particular, either Chamber of the Austrian Parliament now has an important control function on the European level giving Member State governments also the possibility to have a greater influence on European legislation. Each chamber of a national parliament can now turn concerns over subsidiarity issues into a draft bill which then needs to be examined by the European Commission if the number of reasoned opinions claiming that a legislative act does not comply with the subsidiarity principle totals at least one third of the total number of votes allocated to the national parliaments (subsidarity complaint). For certain legislation concerning freedom, security and law the threshold is 25% of the votes. The national parliaments can also bring action against legislation already enacted (subsidarity action). Pursuant to the new legislation the National Council and the Federal Council on 14 September and on 5 October brought a first subsidiarity complaint over a regulation on the entry and residence of seasonal labourers from third countries.

The National Council and the Federal Council voiced their opinions on current legislation projects of the Union in a total of fourteen Communications to the Organs of the European Union.

Regarding the European Council meeting on 28 and 29 October the National Council’s Main Committee on 27 October passed a Communication to the EU organs about the advantages of introducing a transaction tax on EU level. Both the Standing Sub-Committee on Matters of the European Union as well as the Federal Council’s EU Committee passed Communications to EU organs pursuant to Art. 23f Para 4 of the Constitutional Act on the following topics:

- Deposit insurance systems (NC 12 October, FC 4 November)
- European investigation order in penal matters (NC 12 October, FC 4 November)
- European broadband networks: investment into internet based growth and the first programme for the radio frequency policy (NC 9 November, FC 16 December)
- Europe – the world’s No 1 tourist destination: a new political framework for European tourism (FC only 16 December)
- Possibility for Member States to restrict or ban the cultivation of GMO on their sovereign territory (NC 14 December, FC 16 December)
- Future policy for the trans-European transport network and development and creation of a uniform European railway area (NC 9 November, FC 16 December)
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The National Council’s Standing Sub-Committee on Matters of the European Union on 29 January passed a legally non-binding committee opinion on the European Citizens' Initiative.

The Federal Council’s EU Committee adopted legally non-binding opinions on the following topics:

- **EU financial contributions to the International Fund for Ireland** (9 March)
- **European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders of the Member States of the European Union (FRONTEX)** (6 April)
- **Prevention and combating trafficking in human beings** (4 May)
- **Fighting sexual abuse and the sexual exploitation of children as well as child pornography** (4 May)
- **Increased cooperation in the area of the law to be applied on the dissolution of marriage and separation without dissolving the bonds of wedlock** (4 May)

A **reasoned opinion** was passed both regarding conditions for the entrance and the residence of third country nationals for seasonal employment (subsidiarity complaint pursuant to Art. 23g Constitutional Act see above) as well as the right to interpreter and translation services in penal proceedings (6 April).

2. **Austria’s Permanent Representation to the European Union**

As Austria’s diplomatic representation to the European Union the Permanent Representation constitutes Austria’s direct link with EU institutions. It represents Austria in the preparation of political decision-making processes on an ambassadorial level as well as in the expert level working groups. Its task is to represent the Austrian positions in all bodies and towards EU institutions.

All Federal Ministries, the Liaison Office of the Federal Provinces as well as social partners and interest representations (Austrian Chamber of Commerce, Federal Labour Chamber, Austrian Chamber of Agriculture, Austrian Union Federation, Austrian Federation of Municipalities, Austrian Association of Cities and Towns, Federation of Industrialists as well as the Austrian National Bank) are represented.

The Head of Mission (Permanent Representative) and his deputy guarantee consistence of the positions agreed in Austria during the preparation of the EU Council (EU Council of Ministers) and represent them on the Committee of Permanent Representatives (COREPER). The COREPER is composed of representatives from the Member States and under Art. 207 Para 1 of the Treaties of Rome is responsible for the preparation of the Council meetings in particular. Austria is represented by the Permanent Representative in COREPER II (general affairs and external relations, economic affairs and finances, justice and internal affairs) and by the Deputy Permanent Represen-
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tative in COREPER I (employment, social policy, health, consumer protection, competitiveness, transport, telecommunication and energy, agriculture and fisheries, environment, education, youth and culture).

CFSP and CSDP related issues are also discussed and prepared in the Political and Security Committee (PSC). The PSC also has political control and strategic leadership in military and civilian crisis management operations and missions.

Preparatory work is handled in the respective Council working groups and the committees meeting approx. 4,500 times a year in total. Austria is either represented by Permanent Representation staff or officials from the Federal Ministries.

The departments of the Permanent Representation are interfaces between the Federal Ministries and bodies and EU institutions, the Council Presidency and other Member States. Officials from the Federal Ministries mainly participate in meetings of the Council working groups in their respective fields of expertise, the PSC, the COREPER and EU Councils of Ministers and immediately report back to Vienna. They are also responsible for comitology committees and contact with the EP, the Economic and Social Committee, and the Committee of the Regions.

Outside the formal meetings the members of the Permanent Representation advocate Austrian interests by targeted lobbying for Austrian interests during all phases of the legislative process. The Permanent Representation also supplies the Federal Government with reports, analyses, and estimates as a basis for developing Austria’s EU positions.

Since by now much of the legislation applicable in Austria is created in Brussels it is a particularly important task to also timely inform the public of legislative projects harboured by the EU-27. The Permanent Representation’s Press Department provides support to the Austrian Brussels-based EU correspondents from TV, radio, and numerous dailies in this process. In addition to their work with the media representatives during visits of members of the Austrian Federal Government to Brussels, press department staff also brief journalists on current developments in the law-making processes in media-adequate terms.

Another important task of the Permanent Representation hence is to provide interested citizens with a direct insight into the Permanent Representation’s work and that of the European Institutions. In 2010 139 visitor groups (in total 4,367 people) were received and briefed about the EU and Austria in the EU.

3. Austrian Representatives in EU Organs

Since 10 February Johannes Hahn has been a Member of the European Commission. In the Barroso II Commission he is responsible for the important field of Regional Policy.
Even though the mandate of the Barroso I Commission ended on 31 October 2009 it was prolonged temporarily due to delays in the Lisbon Treaty ratification process.

Since October 2009 former Federal Minister Maria Berger has been a Judge at the European Court of Justice (ECJ) in Luxemburg. Josef Azizi has been a Judge at the Court of First Instance (CFI) since January 1995. Since 2003 Austria also has had a Member on the Executive Board of the European Central Bank (ECB), Gertrude Tumpel-Gugerell. At the European Court of Auditors Hubert Weber is a Member of Chamber I “Preservation and Management of Natural Resources“.

In 2010 436 Austrian citizens (of whom 193 women and 243 men) were employed with the European Commission, a percentage of 2% of all European Commission employees. 14 Austrians (of whom seven women and seven men) were employed with the European Court of Justice, corresponding to 0.9% of all court employees. 71 Austrians worked for the European Parliament, of whom 43 women and 28 men (1.1% of the entire staff). 25 Austrians were employed at the General Secretariat of the Council (seven women, 18 men) 1% of all staff, the European Investment Bank (EIB) employs 29 Austrians (12 women and 17 men) and the Court of Auditors (ECA) has 14 Austrians (seven women, seven men) amongst its staff.

4. The European Parliament

The distribution of mandates between the 17 Austrian MPs in the European Parliament (EP) is the result from the elections for the EP in 2009: six European People’s Party and European Democrats, four Social-Democrats, two Green Party and European Free Alliance, and five independent (three Liste Hans-Peter Martin, two Liberals).

5. The Committee of the Regions

The Committee of the Regions (CoR) is an advisory body and as such a forum for representing regional and local interests connected with European Integration. The Committee consists of a total of 344 representatives from the regional and local authorities of all 27 Member States and prepares its opinions in a total of six thematic commissions. Austria is represented by twelve members with one seat for each Federal Province and a total of three for the cities and municipalities. The national Austrian Delegation consists of six Provincial Governors, the President of the Tyrolean Diet Herwig Van Staa, the Province of Salzburg’s envoy to the Committee of the Regions, Franz Schausberger, the Styrian Provincial Councillor Christian Buchmann, and three representatives of the Austrian Association of Cities and Towns and
the Austrian Association of Municipalities. The CoR started its fifth term on 26 January.

6. European Economic and Social Committee

The Economic and Social Committee (EESC), an advisory body, integrates the representations of interests from economic and social life into the EU’s legislative process. The 344 Members are organised as employers, workers, and “various interests” and pursue their work in six working groups. Austria has twelve Members.

7. The Court of Justice of the European Union

The Republic of Austria is represented before the Court of Justice of the European Union (consisting of the European Court of Justice and the General Court) by legal counsels from the Federal Chancellery’s Constitutional Service. In 2010 Austrian courts initiated 15 new proceedings for a preliminary ruling (reference to the CJEU by a national court for the purpose of interpreting Union legislation).

At the end of 2010 eleven proceedings for alleged infringements of Union law were pending against the Republic of Austria. These infringement proceedings concern the implementation of the Common VAT System Directive regarding reduced rates on certain live animals (in particular horses), the implementation of Directive 2006/24/EC on the retention of data, the introduction of a sectorial driving ban (Tyrol), the nationality requirement for notaries, the fiscal deductibility of allocations for research and development, the requirement of a domestic fiscal representative in connection with the Real Estate Investment Fund Act and the Investment Fund Act, the purchase of agricultural land in Vorarlberg, implementation of Directive 2007/2/EC for the creation of geodata infrastructure (INSPIRE), gainful employment of third country citizens studying in Austria, implementation of Directive 2008/68/EC on the domestic transport of hazardous goods, and the implementation of the Directive of the first railway package.

In 2010 the Court issued judgments in four proceedings establishing an infringement of Union law by the Republic of Austria: these judgments concerned the inadequate implementation of the Birds’ Directive, minimum prices for cigarettes and fine-cut rolling tobacco, inadequate implementation of the EU Directive on statutory audits of annual accounts and consolidated accounts, and the inclusion of the Austrian standard consumption tax payable on car purchase in the VAT assessment base.

In one event infringement proceedings against the Republic of Austria were discontinued by the European Commission in 2010: the proceedings for the alleged non-communication of implementation measures on Directive
2008/74/EC (type approval of motor vehicles with respect to emissions from light passenger and commercial vehicles).

In one case the complaint against the Republic of Austria was withdrawn by the European Commission. This case related to the non-implementation of Directive 2006/21/EC on waste management in the non-energy extractive industry.

VI. National Cooperation between Government, Parliament and the Federal Provinces

Cooperation between Government and Parliament in matters relating to European integration was substantially amended by the Lisbon Amendment Act to the Federal Constitutional Act, including strengthening participation rights of both National Council and Federal Council in the domestic Austrian preparation of Union level negotiations by expanding the Federal Government’s obligations of information for projects on a Union level. The reporting obligation for Federal Ministers defined in Art. 23f Para 2 who at the beginning of the year must brief the National Council and the Federal Council on projects of the Council and the European Commission as well as the expected Austrian position on these projects was also introduced.

The National Council’s and the Federal Council’s right to issue an opinion to the Government pursuant to Art. 23e Para 3 and 4 remains unchanged. If the National Council’s Main Committee or the Permanent Sub-Committee on Matters of the European Union issue an opinion in matters of the European Union on a project aimed at producing a binding legal instrument that would affect the issuing of federal legislation in the fields regulated by the legal instrument, such opinion is binding for the competent Government member who may depart from it only for cogent reasons related to foreign policy or integration. If the competent member of Government wishes to depart from such an opinion of the National Council, the National Council must again be consulted. Wherever the EU legal act in preparation would constitute an amendment of the applicable federal constitutional legislation any departure from the National Council’s opinion is inadmissible if the National Council objects within an adequate period of time.

In preparation of the meeting of the European Council on 28 and 29 October the Main Committee of the National Council issued an Opinion pursuant to Art. 23e Federal Constitutional Act on the Reform of the Stability and Growth Pact and in preparation of the European Council meeting on 16 and 17 December an Opinion pursuant to Art. 23e Federal Constitutional Act on the details of the future stabilisation mechanism for protecting the euro. The National Council’s Standing Sub-Committee on Matters of the European Union issued opinions pursuant to Art. 23e Federal Constitutional Act on the following issues:
• Gender equality between women and men as well as greater commitment towards gender equality between women and men through the Women’s Charter (29 June)

• Rating agencies, corporate governance in financial institutions, remuneration policy in the financial services sector and regulating financial services for the benefit of sustainable growth (13 July)

• Possibility for Member States to restrict or ban the cultivation of GMOs on their national territory (14 December)

The National Council’s Standing Sub-Committee on Matters of the European Union passed legally non-binding committee statements on the following topics:

• Establishment of an Agency for the operative management of large-scale IT systems in the areas of freedom, security, and law (8 April)

• European Heritage Seal (2 June)

• Combating the sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children and child pornography (9 June)

• Prevention of and fight against trafficking in human beings (9 June)

• Increased cooperation in the area of the law to be applied on the dissolution of marriage and separation without dissolving the bonds of wedlock (9 June)

• Conditions for the entry and sojourn of third country nationals on intra-corporate temporary transfer (14 September)

• Action plan for the application of the Global Satellite Navigation System (GSNS) and regulating access to the public services provided by the worldwide satellite navigation system originating from the Galileo programme (9 November)

• Application and effectiveness of the EIA Directive (14 December)

• Disposal of used fuel elements and radioactive waste (14 December).

In legally non-binding committee statements to the competent Government members the Federal Council’s EU Committee pronounced its position on the following topics:

• European Heritage Seal (30 June)

• Conditions for the entry and sojourn of third country nationals on intra-corporate temporary transfer (5 October)

• Application and effectiveness of the EIA Directive (16 December)

• Future policy for the trans-European transport network and development and creation of a Single European Railway Area (16 December)

The participation right for Federal Provinces and municipalities pursuant to Art 23d Federal Constitutional Act includes an information and opinion right analogous to those of the National and Federal Council for their respec-
tive competences. In 2010 a total of 16 opinions were passed by the Federal Provinces as part of the participation in the internal decision-making process on EU proposals.

The Austrian positions on the Committee of Permanent Representatives (COREPER) are coordinated weekly under guidance from the Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs. This guarantees continuous involvement in the opinion shaping process of the respective ministries, the social partners, the Austrian National Bank, the Federation of Austrian Industry, as well as of the provinces and municipalities.

Since November 2004 at the beginning of each year the ministries have forwarded reports on their working programmes and EU level legislation projects to Parliament. This makes it possible to inform MPs from the start and allow them to participate in the political opinion shaping process.

VII. The Policies of the European Union

1. Economic and Monetary Policy


2. Employment and Social Policy

The central topic of the EU employment and social policy in 2010 was the employment policy and the social dimension of the Europe 2020 Strategy and the Green Paper on Pensions.

The “Employment, Social Affairs, Health and Consumer Protection” (EMSA/HECP) Council meetings on 8 March, 7 June, 21 October and 6 December produced the following main points and decisions. The employment guidelines were formally adopted. The Council also adopted a declaration on the European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion (2010), conclusions regarding the elimination of violence against women in the EU, regarding equal opportunities for women and men in the EU (2010–2015), as well as minimising the wage gap between the sexes and a resolution on a new European Framework for People with Handicaps. A draft amendment to the Maternity Protection Directive was dealt with by the Council and the EP in first hearing. European Commission consultations were held on the Working Time Directive.

The EU expert group on demographic issues established at the European Commission in 2007 convened three times. Central topics included the effects of the economic crisis on dealing with demographic change in the Member States, the preparation of the European Year for Active Ageing and Intergenerational Solidarity 2012, the 3rd European Demography Forum in November, and the evaluation of the European Family Alliance.
Following a Commission proposal the Council voted to declare 2011 the European Year of Voluntary Activities Promoting Active Citizenship.

Throughout Europe the European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion 2010 was filled with targeted sensitisation measures. Activities in Austria were coordinated by the Federal Ministry for Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection and included project allocations, events, and targeted PR work.

“Safe maintenance” events were organised in Austria as part of the European Campaign for Safety and Health at Work 2010–2011.

3. Structural and Cohesion Policy

Ever since the Single European Act of 1986 structural and cohesion policy has been a central policy area in the European Union. Its aim is to strengthen economic and social cohesion in Europe through targeted assistance to economically weaker regions.

Following the enlargement by eight Central and Eastern European countries plus Cyprus and Malta on 1 May 2004 the EU’s cohesion policy has been substantially revised. In 2007 three new “objectives” and priorities have been defined: the “convergence” objective (before: objective 1), the “regional competitiveness and employment” objective (before: objective 2) and the “European territorial cooperation” objective (new). It has also been more prominently focused on the Lisbon (innovation, growth, jobs) and Gothenburg (sustainable development) objectives. The European Council provided a total of 307.6 billion euros for structural and cohesion policy during the budget period 2007–13. 81.7% are allocated to convergence regions, 15.8% to regions earmarked for competition and employment, and 2.44% to territorial cooperation. The publication of the 5th Cohesion Report by the European Commission on 9 November kicked off negotiations on the future design of cohesion policy beyond 2014. A consultation process for the Member States is planned until the end of January 2011 before an exchange of views between the Member States and the European Commission will follow at the 5th Cohesion Forum at the beginning of February 2011. Real negotiations, however, will only start in autumn 2011 after the draft regulations have been submitted to the European Commission.

The future of the structural and cohesion policy, which currently at an annual mean 50 billion euros accounts for roughly one third of the EU budget and as such is the largest single item of EU expenditures next only to the Common Agricultural Policy, is closely related to the negotiations on the EU budget post-2014 started in 2010. Judging from the 5th Cohesion Report of the European Commission a comprehensive reform of the EU regional and cohesion policy can be expected. Most importantly, the allocation of funds as well as the cohesion policies shall be geared to the EU 2020 Strategy.
Since its accession to the EU on 1 January 1995 Austria has substantially benefitted from EU subsidies: from 1995 up to the end of the funding period 2007–13 Austria will have received an estimated 5 billion euros. On top of the funds for rural development totalling 3.9 billion euros Austria will thus receive approx. 8.9 billion euros during the current budget period.

4. Single Market and Industrial Policy

4.1 Single Market

Mario Monti who in October 2009 had been commissioned by the President of the European Commission Barroso to produce a report on the revival of the Single Market, produced the results in spring. Just like the report by Maltese MEP Louis Grech which mainly puts consumers at the focus of the Single Market the Monti Report was also considered by Commissioner Michel Barnier in the preliminary draft of the Single Market Act. This document which was presented by the end of October proposes 50 measures from different political fields to boost the Single Market. The final version of the Act will be adopted in spring 2011 and can be seen as an amendment of the Europe 2020 Strategy containing no explicit reference to the Single Market.

After the expiration of the implementation period of the Services Directive at the end of 2009 and the mutual evaluation in 2010 the European Commission at the beginning of 2011 will submit a report on the implementation of the Services Directive by the Member States. At the same time the Member States, under the chairmanship of the European Commission, will also continue their consultations on the uniform contacts established in their sovereign territories pursuant to the Directive with regard to extending their information and services offer.

In 2010 the EU’s better regulation agenda was converted into smart regulation. The existing four pillars for better legislation (simplifying existing legislation, minimising administrative burden, impact assessment and public consultations, monitoring the application of community legislation) were supplemented by a fifth, i.e. ex-post evaluation. The Commission communication was published in October.

4.2 Industrial policy

The Commission communication “An Industrial Policy for the Globalisation Era” published at the end of October is one of seven lead initiatives (Digital Agenda / Innovation Union / Youth on the Move / Resource Efficient Europe / Industrial Policy / Agenda for New Skills & Jobs / Platform against Poverty) of the Europe 2020 Strategy. The Commission communication on industrial policy defined new horizontal and industry sector specific measures to create a dynamic and competitive manufacturing industry facilitating the transition to a more sustainable, more integrative, and more resource-friendly econ-
omy. The focus clearly is on issues such as the competitiveness-screening of new legislation, “compatibility tests” of existing legislation, the establishment of small and medium-sized companies and their growth and boosting the strengths of European standardisation.

The EU Construction Products Directive was replaced by a Construction Products Regulation (CPR). As a prerequisite for products to be marketed the CPR requires economic actors to declare specific product characteristics of services in accordance with methods defined in harmonised standards and responsibility to be assumed through CE marking. It eliminates the shortcomings of the current directive by strengthening CE marking and introducing monitoring mechanisms, sanctions, and structures.

4.3 Small Business Act

Throughout Europe support measures for small and medium sized companies (SMEs) and entrepreneurial activities as a pillar of growth and affluence as well as a job engine are implemented under the Small Business Act (SBA) which the Member States and the European Commission vouched to execute in 2008. In 2010 a more detailed Commission progress analysis was based on consultations with SME federations and public authorities in the Member States. Its prime objective was to obtain a broad range of opinions on SBA implementation and to obtain proposals for new measures to be introduced in accordance with the SBA’s ten guiding principles. The aim was to match it more closely to the EU 2020 Strategy giving it a firmer base in the guidelines of SME policy. The results will be published in a communication.

5. Common Agricultural Policy

In the field of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) discussions focussed on “the future of CAP post-2013“ and an enhanced functioning of the food supply chain, particularly for milk.

Following an exchange of views on “Agriculture and the CAP in the Perspective of the EU 2020 Strategy” at the meeting of the Ministers for Agriculture on 29 March the Ministers discussed the future of CAP post-2013 again at their informal meeting during the Spanish presidency in Mérida from 30 May to 1 June. An EU-initiated public debate on this topic took place between 12 April and 11 June. The results of this consultation were presented at a closing conference on 19 and 20 July. A short discussion followed at the informal meeting of the Ministers for Agriculture at La Hulpe between 19 and 21 September.

On 18 November the European Commission adopted the Communication “The CAP towards 2020: Meeting the food, natural resources and territorial challenges of the future”. The reform options in this Communication underwent a first exchange of views at the Agriculture Council meetings on 29 November and 13 December.
There also was a comprehensive debate on enhancing the functioning of the food supply chain in Europe. Conclusions on this issue were adopted at the Ministers for Agriculture meeting on 29 March. On the basis of these conclusions and the recommendations by the High Level Group on Milk which was established as a result of the milk crisis and which concluded its work in June the European Commission produced legislative proposals to improve the milk producers’ position in relation to other market players.

6. Transport

The agreement on the draft regulation regarding the rights of passengers in bus and coach transport stipulating the rights of persons with impaired mobility, duties of entrepreneurs in the event of delays or cancellation of journeys, information duties, and stipulations concerning dealings with complaints and warranty regulations achieved during the mediation procedure further strengthened consumer rights.

On 2 December the Transport Ministers Council adopted conclusions for enhancing road transport safety based on the Commission Communication “Towards a European road safety area: policy orientations on road safety 2011–2020” with a particular focus on increasing safety for elderly road traffic participants.

At the same meeting of the same Council of Transport Ministers political agreement was reached on a proposal for a directive regarding the cross-border enforcement of transport safety rules allowing the exchange of information on the registered owner of the vehicle involved between the Member States in the event of certain infringements (e.g. speeding, running red lights, or driving under the influence of alcohol/drugs).

At their informal meeting in Antwerp on 15 and 16 September Transport Ministers discussed the topic of “Towards a full integration of waterborne transport in the EU transport and logistics chains of the European Union”. Conclusions were adopted on the results which in line with a sustainable transport policy aim at strengthening ship transport on inland waterways and shifting transport to more environmentally friendly modes.

In air transport major progress was achieved regarding the amendment of the air transport agreement between the EU and the US, especially on regulation issues, environmental protection, security issues, and social standards so that negotiations on the second phase were completed on 25 March. The Protocol was signed at the Transport Ministers Council meeting on 24 June. Negotiations on a cooperation agreement with the US Federal Aviation Agency (FAA) on the interoperability between SESAR and NextGen was also concluded on 17 June in Madrid. On 15 October the Transport Ministers Council adopted a negotiating mandate to initiate negotiations on a comprehensive air transport agreement between the EU and the Federal Republic of Brazil.
As a consequence of the agreement reached between the Council and the EP on a revision of the Regulation on aviation accident investigation legislation on improving air safety was adopted. By guaranteeing a high level of efficiency, expediency, and quality of European safety investigations in civil aviation, accidents and incidents (without clarifying fault or liability issues) shall be prevented. With regard to support for the victims of aviation accidents and their families this regulation also includes provisions for the timely availability of information on all persons and hazardous goods on board the aircraft involved in an accident.

At the Council of Ministers on 15 October a political consensus was reached on the proposed directive revising the directive for charging heavy goods vehicles for the use of certain infrastructures. This proposal also provides a first possibility for internalising certain external costs of heavy goods vehicles. In Austria’s view the compromise achieved does not yet go far enough in the sense of an efficient analysis of cost transparency in several areas (e.g. the truck categories or the possibility to also demand road toll in sensitive mountain areas in addition to the external costs) so that further improvements are aimed at in the upcoming negotiations with the EP.

7. Environment

After the Climate Conference in Copenhagen in December 2009 which produced no binding international follow-up agreement for the Kyoto Protocol expiring at the end of 2012, discussions were continued on an international level in the run-up to the Climate Conference in Cancun (29 November to 10 December). Simultaneously, the EU Member States on 14 October adopted Council Conclusions on a joint EU position for the Climate Conference. In line with its pioneering role in international climate protection the EU in Cancun firmly advocated an agreement on a decision package balanced both internally as well as between the negotiating lines and signalled openness for a second period of commitments under the Kyoto Protocol subject to certain conditions.

At the end of the year the European Environment Agency produced the “State of the Environment Report 2010” (SOER) published once every five years and directed mainly at political decision makers and administrations in Europe. The SOER includes a comprehensive evaluation of global megatrends and their effects on the European political context, a European assessment of ten select key topics, country-specific descriptions of the environmental situations in six common areas (air, water, soil, waste and protection of nature/biodiversity, climate change, and minimising emissions) as well as summaries of the special situation in each Member State. A synthesis report sums up important findings. The SOER 2010 in its analysis confirms certain core statements from earlier reports by the European Environment Agency with trends intensifying in the fields of climate, biodiversity and resources.
where numerous mutual links exist. The environmental policy pursued by the EU and its neighbours, however, has brought about substantial improvements for the environment’s current state.

8. Consumer Protection

On Council level substantial progress was achieved in the negotiations regarding the proposal for a consumer rights directive presented by the European Commission in October 2008. The negotiations lasting for two years showed that the comprehensive full harmonisation intended by the proposal was unfeasible due to the appertaining problems with the consumer protection level on the one hand and the effects on national contract law on the other as the comprehensive regulation of all consumer contracts. The Austrian negotiating position complied with the coalition agreement to not water down the high Austrian standard by full harmonisation in the process of a new European regulation of the consumer contracts. Under the Belgian Presidency during the second semester the Council reached the required qualified majority for a compromise text which was also acceptable to Austria subject to a clarification in the Council Protocol and which was the basis for the negotiations with the EP during the first semester of 2011. The compromise provides for a ‘targeted harmonisation’ for restricted areas (uniform information and revocation terms/rights as well as definitions). The directive’s scope is reduced to distance selling contracts and contracts concluded outside commercial premises. The chapter on warranty in consumer goods purchase and on abusive clauses which had also been problematic for Austria were deleted.

The focus of the “Consumer parameter 2010” providing information about the functioning of the Single Market from a consumer perspective was on 50 consumer markets (industries regarding goods and services) in all EU Member States and Norway analysing and assessing the markets on the basis of four main indicators (comparability of goods and services, consumer confidence, problems and complaints and satisfaction) and two further indicators (for one part of the industries change of provider and prices).

9. Energy

Taking the 2007 Energy Policy for Europe (EPE) one step further, the EU in 2010 set new initiatives along the target triad of sustainability, procurement safety, and competitiveness. The further evolution of the EPE outlines in 2010 focused on three axes: 1) setting the course for quantitative and qualitative development and upgrading of the energy infrastructure; 2) increased commitment to energy efficiency and 3) necessary increased coordination of the external dimension.
The European Commission produced two trend-setting communications “Energy 2020 A Strategy for competitive, sustainable and secure energy” as well as “Energy infrastructure priorities for 2020 and beyond” discussed on 3 December at a first orientation meeting in the Transport, Telecommuni-
cation and Energy Council (TTE-Council). These deliberations were to lead
to the adoption of an energy strategy 2020 in 2011 as well as reflections on
the roadmap for a complete revision of the energy system towards a low car-
bon and sustainable energy future by 2050. The backbone will be an energy
infrastructure plan providing for the continuous networking of the entire
European energy area including neighbouring regions, upgrading grids to
integrate renewable energy sources for both longer distances as well as the
feeding possibilities, the preservation of grid stability and further diversi-
fication of the sources and supply routes. In this context the southern gas
corridor and its backbone, the Nabucco pipeline, for connecting new energy
sources from the South Caucasus, the Caspian Sea, and Central Asia are of
major relevance. The intergovernmental agreement between the five Nabucco
countries of Austria, Bulgaria, Hungary, Romania and Turkey entered into
force on 1 August.

In November the regulation concerning measures to safeguard secure natural
gas supply was published in the Journal of the European Union. It provides
for uniform EU infrastructure and supply standards as well as the creation of
preventive action and emergency plans on a national, regional, and EU level.

Under the Strategic Energy Technology Plan (SET Plan), the technology pil-
lar of European energy policy, all seven European industry initiatives (wind,
solar energy, e-grids, carbon capture and storage, bioenergy, nuclear fission,
as well as smart cities) were launched officially. Austria generally takes a
proactive stance on the industry initiatives except for the nuclear fission ini-
tiative which it expressly rejects – particularly regarding intended public
subsidies for developing new reactor technologies.

A number of international conferences and meetings on energy policy topics,
hosted in Vienna as headquarters of international organisations, underlined
the city’s relevance as a hub of energy policy networks. On 14 and 15 Sep-
tember Vienna hosted the first high-level conference of the Africa-EU Energy
Partnership adopting concrete, quantitative and qualitative energy develop-
ment targets to minimise energy scarcity in Africa. In all these processes
Austria pursued its energy policy interests supporting, in particular, promo-
tion of renewable energies and energy efficiency, further development of the
Single Energy Market and diversification of energy sources and routes.

10. Education and Youth

Education plays a central role in the Europe 2020 strategy. Education as a
core goal provides for a reduction of the school dropout rate to less than 10 %
and to increase the share of 30–34 year-olds with a university or comparable
degree to a minimum of 40%. The wording of ‘or comparable degree’ shows that the high quality of the Austrian post-secondary vocational education (ISCED Level 4a) is adequately reflected in the EU strategy.

In February the joint Progress Report by the Council and the European Commission on the implementation of the “Education and Training 2010” work programme was adopted. In May the Council adopted conclusions on the social dimension of education and training. The objective is to highlight the relevance of key competences on all educational levels and to promote lifelong learning beyond the end of compulsory school education. The Council also adopted conclusions on the internationalisation of university education with the objective of internationally enhancing the attractiveness of European universities.

As part of the Copenhagen Process the attraction and quality of training in Europe was further enhanced and strengthened worldwide. In December the Ministers of Education defined the objectives and focuses of further EU cooperation on training in the Bruges Communiqué. The central objective of European cooperation in education is to raise the level of basic competences and promote equal opportunities. Conclusions for “schools for the 21st century” and “education for sustainable development” were hence adopted. In November the Ministers discussed successful measures to offer all learners the best educational opportunities regardless of their origins and social background.

The EU Lifelong Learning Programme enabled approx. 9,000 adolescents, students, teachers, and adults to gather experiences in a different EU country through cross-border mobility, project partnerships, and cooperation.

The Council meeting on 19 November adopted a resolution on the important role of youth work as a contribution to extracurricular education for the employability of young people. The measures aim at the improvement of quality in youth work, promoting the mobility of youth leaders and recognition of non-formal and informal learning results to facilitate the start of young people on the labour market.

In addition to projects on youth participation and democracy the EU Youth in Action Programme (2007–2013) also facilitated the exchange of youth groups, European volunteers, youth trainers and multipliers. Out of 140,000 participants throughout the EU 3,400 come from Austria.

11. Research

Research, development and innovation are essential elements of the Europe 2020-strategy. In addition to the basic discussions on research and development objectives (including a 3% target for the R&D quota; development of an “innovation indicator”), the European Commission on 6 October published the “Innovation Union” Communication, one of seven lead initiatives of the
Europe 2020-strategy. Conclusions on the Innovation Union were adopted at the Council meeting on 26 November.

Based on preparatory work from 2009 very essential progress was achieved: the adoption of the Council resolution on the **“developments in steering the European Research Area” provided** a new mandate for the Council and the European Commission’s research policy consultation body, CREST. This mandate gave the body the new name **“European Research Area Committee” (ERAC)**. The Council also adopted conclusions on the **simplification of the proceedings in the 7th Framework Programme** and kicked off the **“first wave” of initiatives on Joint Programme Planning (“Agriculture, food safety and climate change”; “Healthy diets for a healthy life”; “Cultural heritage and global change as a new challenge for Europe”**) . The progress in joint programme planning including the submission of “Voluntary Guidelines on Framework Conditions” was also acknowledged in the conclusions. Currently six more initiatives are being developed. In November the **mid-term evaluation** of the 7th Framework Programme, initiated in 2009 by the European Commission, was presented.

The Council also analysed further **ITER** project developments (joint research project of several states for the use of fission for energy generation). A cost savings plan and a plan for administrative reform were presented.

**12. European Satellite Navigation Programmes GALILEO and EGNOS**

**GALILEO** is a European civilian satellite navigation system for global use and the Community’s largest infrastructure project. It is based on a constellation of 30 satellites orbiting the earth at an altitude of approx. 23,000 kilometres and linked to various ground bases. Following the start of operations – scheduled for 2014/2015 – the system would make it possible to identify exact positions as sharply as never before.

The original design and operational concept of a public-private partnership failed in 2007. In 2008 it was decided to build up the system by 2013 exclusively funded from public sources. 3.4 billion euros are budgeted for this purpose in the financial perspective 2007–2013. To date two test satellites have been launched to reserve the necessary frequency bands. **EGNOS**, a system for improving position accuracy of already existing navigation systems, is now operative and also part of the future global European satellite navigation systems (GNSS).

The restructuring of the GALILEO 2007/2008 programme has made the European Commission (instead of **GSA – GNSS Supervisory Authority; “GALILEO Supervisory Authority”**) the central programme manager; the infrastructure will be procured via the European Space Agency **ESA**. The security-sensitive infrastructure will be monitored by the GALILEO Security Monitoring Cen-
tre (GSMC) domiciled both in France and the United Kingdom. Revision of the GSA Regulation necessary as a result of the restructuring was completed in the course of the year. Regulation (EU) No. 912/2010 on the foundation of the agency for the European GNSS was published on 20 October.

On 10 December the conference of government representatives of EU Member States chose Prague as the new venue for the Agency for the European GNSS which since 2004 had had its interim headquarters in Brussels. The Agency is the first EU Agency domiciled in the Czech Republic.

Internationally a cooperation agreement was signed with Norway on 22 September. After the European Commission was given a mandate for negotiations with Switzerland in June a draft agreement shall be submitted to the Council in 2011. Negotiations with China regarding frequency overlapping with the COMPASS system have so far not produced any technical results.


The Stockholm Programme adopted by the European Council in 2009 pursues the goal of creating an “Area of Freedom, Security, and Justice” in Europe. The EU Council of Ministers for Justice and Home Affairs in 2010 adopted an action plan for the implementation of the Stockholm Programme. Under the leitmotiv of “Establishing a Europe for Citizens” measures are taken to boost the security of European citizens. It focuses on cybercrime, terrorism, efficient external border management, trafficking in human beings, protection of children, migration and asylum policy, and legal aid in criminal proceedings. In summer 2010 an Austrian initiative led to the launch of the European e-justice portal giving EU citizens easier access to judicial authorities.

Regional cooperation between Austria, Bulgaria, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Hungary, Slovenia and the Czech Republic was continued at Forum Salzburg both on the level of Interior Ministers as well as of officials. This cooperation focuses in particular on the fight against organised cross-border crime in all its forms and the development of strategies for the protection of the Union’s external borders.

In 2010 further efforts were made to add new countries to the Schengen area. Bulgaria and Romania completed important preparations in this context. Both countries advocated the conclusion of modern police cooperation agreements with other Schengen countries as an operative contribution to a more efficient fight against crime.

Austria also closely cooperates with the European police agency Europol in The Hague. Europol supports the exchange of information between EU Member States to obtain specific details on possible threat scenarios. In the judicial domain Eurojust promotes pan-European cooperation between national judicial authorities in criminal proceedings.
14. Combating Terrorism

Terrorism poses a significant threat to the European security, the values of democratic societies and the rights and freedoms of European citizens. Since the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 and the bombings in Madrid (2004) and London (2005), the EU has attached major significance to the fight against terrorism. Attacks with a terrorist background committed all over the world confirm that the only means to effectively counter terrorism is through close international cooperation.

The EU’s holistic approach in the fight against terrorism includes measures for preventing, combating, and prosecuting terrorism with a special view on fighting socio-economic, social, and other factors possibly benefitting terrorist activities. The EU underlines that measures for combating terrorism must also guarantee compliance with human rights as well as the rights to personal protection of citizens.

In 2004, an EU Counter-Terrorism Coordinator was established to ensure close cooperation among EU Member States in implementing the EU strategy for combating terrorism. An action plan, regularly updated to meet new challenges, sets out clear measures for preventing, combating, and prosecuting terrorism. In 2010, particular attention was given to chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear safety (implementation of the CBRN 2009 Action Plan) as well as new threat scenarios and online recruitment of prospects for terrorist activities.

Terrorism is a global challenge and therefore requires cooperation between the EU, its partner countries and international organisations. The cooperation with the US as strategic partner has high priority. In 2010 the EU also focused on measures to fight terrorism in South Asia and the Sahel, in Yemen and the Horn of Africa while continuing support for the Western Balkan region.

The EU underlines the central role of the UN for guaranteeing a coherent global approach in the prevention and combating of terrorism. In its relations with third countries the EU continues to vouch for the ratification and implementation of the principal UN legal instruments for the fight against terrorism while fully meeting obligations under international law, human rights, refugee and international humanitarian law.

15. Health

In the sphere of public health, law making concentrated on drugs, organs, and patient rights. The legislative process regarding the regulation and the directive on the pharmacovigilance of human medicines as well as the directive on quality and safety standards for humans organs destined for transplants was completed. Negotiations on the directive regarding the exercise of patient rights in cross-border health care advanced to a point where
they were completed except for the formal agreement with the EP in second hearing.

Pricks and cuts are amongst the biggest threats facing health sector employees so that a Directive for the prevention from sharp injuries in the hospital and healthcare sector was passed and entered into force in June.

The focus in the non-legislative sphere was on health safety and led to the Council conclusions on “Lessons to be learned from the influenza A/H1N1 pandemic – Health security in the European Union”. Upon inquiry by the Council the European Commission revised the EU emergency plan with a view to the influenza pandemic. The plan was to provide detailed information on the respective national and European assessments of the influenza-A/H1N1 pandemic.

The area of consumer health was mainly dominated by consumer protection and animal health. Important progress was achieved on the regulation on novel foods and ingredients as well as the regulation for uniform food labels.

Work on the animal health strategy 2010–2013 was continued on the basis of a working paper for a joint animal health law. In animal protection the focus was on protection for pets.

In line with a concern strongly advocated by Austria in July the European Commission presented a proposal granting Member States the possibility to decide independently about the approval, restriction, or ban on the cultivation of genetically modified organisms (GMOs) in their sovereign territories. Following an exchange of views in the Agriculture Council on 27 September and discussions in the Environment Council on 14 October and 20 December discussions of this controversial dossier will continue in 2011.

16. Strategy Europe 2020

The Europe 2020-strategy constitutes the EU growth strategy for the next ten years replacing the “Lisbon Agenda”. The basic goals and implementation steps of the Europe 2020-strategy were defined by the European Council on 17 June in its conclusions (“Europe 2020 – A European strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth”).

On EU level five core objectives (“headline targets”) were quantitatively determined:

– Increasing employment in the 20–64-year age bracket to 75%,

– Stepping up investments into research and development (R&D quota) to 3% of GDP,

– Compliance with the 20–20–20–climate goals (reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 20%, increasing the share of renewable energies to 20% and boosting energy efficiency by 20%).
– Improving the educational level by driving down the percentage of early school leavers to less than 10% and increasing the percentage of 30–34-year olds with a university or an equivalent degree to at least 40%,
– Promoting social inclusion, in particularly by preventing poverty, with the intention of freeing a minimum of 20 million people from poverty and exclusion.

Austria was particularly focused on the fight against poverty. The core targets shall be met through a definition of national goals by the Member States in close dialogue with the European Commission and taking account their respective starting situation and framework conditions. No later than by the end of April each Member State shall present a national reform programme for growth and employment together with the stability and convergence programme. This shall be used for bringing together the various fields of economic coordination and improving economic policy during a “European Semester”. During the transition to the European Semester which becomes operative at the beginning of 2011 the Member States are requested to submit a draft of the national reform programme to the European Commission no later than by mid-November 2010.

On 5 October the Federal Government acknowledged the “Report by the Federal Chancellor regarding the definition of national goals under the “Europe 2020 – A European strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth” defining the following national goals until 2020, to be implemented within the current federal financial framework:

– Increasing employment in the 20–64-year age bracket to 77–78%, particularly by raising the effective retirement age;

– Raising the R&D quota to 3.76% of GDP;

– Reducing greenhouse gas emissions (by 16% compared against 2005 for sources not covered by emission trading) and increasing the share of renewable energies in total energy consumption (to 34%) in line with the commitments under the Climate and Energy Package; regarding energy efficiency the goal of stabilising final energy consumption on the 2005 level at 1100 PJ;

– Driving down the number of early school leavers to 9.5% and increasing the share of 30–34-year-olds with a university or equivalent degree to 38%;

– Reducing the number of persons threatened by poverty and exclusion (as identified using the three indicators of poverty risk, material deprivation, and unemployed household) by 235,000.

On 16 November the Federal Government acknowledged the “Austrian Reform Programme – Draft 2010” which was then forwarded to the European Commission on 17 November. This draft is a rough outline of the reform focuses set to reach the national goals and lists measures that are already being implemented. The final version of the National Reform Programme –
specifying the measures for reaching the national goals – will be established **no later than by the end of April 2011**.

To implement the agenda on EU level six flagship initiatives (Digital agenda for Europe, Innovation Union, An industrial policy for the globalisation era, An agenda for new skills and jobs, Agenda for new skills and jobs, Youth on the Move, European platform against poverty) were presented by the European Commission in its communications on which the Council adopted conclusions. The submission of the seventh flagship initiative “Resource-efficient Europe” is scheduled for the end of January 2011.

**VIII. The European Union’s External Relations**

1. **The Common Foreign and Security Policy**

1.1. **General**

Under the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) current foreign policy issues relevant to all EU Member States including the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) are addressed on EU level. Central CFSP issues were the search for a peace solution in the Middle East, the efforts to find a solution regarding the conflict surrounding the Iranian nuclear programme, the situations in Afghanistan, in Haiti and in Burma, the developments in Sudan and in the South Caucasus, finding a solution for the crisis developing on the Horn of Africa, continuing the stabilisation process in the Western Balkans, also the unrest in Kyrgyzstan and in Ivory Coast as well as in other parts of the African continent. The EU was involved in 13 civilian and military CSDP operations around the globe from the Western Balkans to the Middle East to Africa.

Decisions on CFSP issues require unanimity (possibility of constructive abstention) in the *Foreign Affairs Council* based on the strategic guidelines of the European Council; the *High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy* also issues declarations on short-term political events that are binding for the EU Member States.

The Political and Security Committee (PSC) composed from Member State representatives regularly keeps track of international foreign and security policy developments, monitors the implementation of the agreed policies, and is the strategic leader in crisis management operations.

The Council adapted already existing sanctions against international terrorist groups, Belarus, Ivory Coast, the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, Eritrea, Guinea, Iraq, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Lebanon, Liberia, the Republic of Moldova, Myanmar (Burma), Zimbabwe, Somalia as well as states of the former Yugoslavia to promote their cooperation with ICTY. It also revised the list of persons and groups affected by specific restrictive measures of the fight against terrorism.
Upon a proposal by the High Representative the Council can appoint EU Special Representatives (EUSR). Currently mandates exist for Afghanistan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Georgia, Macedonia, Moldova, the Sudan, the African Union (AU), the Middle East peace process, the Great Lakes Region (Burundi, Kenya, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ruanda, Tanzania and Uganda), South Caucasus and Central Asia. Since March 2009 Austrian Valentin Inzko has been EU Special Representative for Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In 2010 the CFSP budget totalled 281.5 million euros. A large portion was used for financing civilian crisis management operations, EUSR activities, and promoting disarmament and the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

1.2. The Common Security and Defence Policy

When the Lisbon Treaty came into force on 1 December 2009 the name “Common Security and Defence Policy” (CSDP) replaced the expression “European Security and Defence Policy” (ESDP). It continues to be an integral part of the CFSP. The Lisbon Treaty also provides for a deepening of the CSDP by introducing an assistance clause amongst EU Member States, extending the so-called Petersberg tasks, improving cooperation in the European Defence Agency, the possibility to establish a Permanent Structured Cooperation in the military sphere, strengthening the role of the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, and – albeit not regulated as part of the CFSP – the introduction of a solidarity clause between the EU Member States. So far no concrete steps have been taken to implement the assistance and solidarity clause. Several seminars were held on Permanent Structured Cooperation preparing decisions on the possible specific future contents, scope, and possible participation.

1.2.1. Current crisis management operations

The EUFOR-Althea EU military operation for stabilising Bosnia and Herzegovina was continued with approx. 1,600 personnel, of whom approx. 320 from Austria. Planning for converting the operation into a non-executive mission for counselling and supporting the forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina were completed in 2010 so that the conversion can go ahead as soon as further political developments in the country seem to justify this step. Since December 2009 the Austrian Major General Bernhard Bair has been commander of EUFOR-Althea. In addition to its contribution to EUFOR Austria in 2010 also provided one company for a German-led battalion as part of the so-called operational reserve forces consisting of two battalions and standing ready in their home countries so as to be able to quickly join the EUFOR-Althea or NATO-led troops of the multinational Kosovo peace mission in Kosovo (KFOR).
The European Union’s External Relations

The EU Police Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (EUPM), first commenced at the beginning of 2003, also supports the stabilisation of the country. The main goals of the Mission are to build up an efficient, multi-ethnic police structure based on the principles of the rule of law and the fight against organised crime. Austria contributed up to five officials for this Mission.

The European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX Kosovo) supports the Kosovo authorities in the continued build-up of police, judicial and customs structures and assumed the competences earlier managed by the UN Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK). The start of the EULEX Kosovo activities was considerably delayed due to resistance from Serbia and the Serbian community in Kosovo. EULEX Kosovo could only start its activities on 9 December 2008 following an agreement with the UN about extended cooperation and task sharing which had not been part of the original concept. With a planned size of up to 3,000 mission staff EULEX Kosovo is by far the largest civilian CSDP Mission to date. On an annual average Austria participated in the Mission with 25 experts mainly from the police and the judiciary.

The dispatch of an EU observer mission to Georgia (EUMM Georgia) was agreed after a conflict had broken out in August 2008 between Georgia and Russia on the Georgian Province of South Ossetia. In addition to monitoring the withdrawal of troops the Mission’s mandate also covers monitoring the return of the people displaced by the conflict to their former homes and compliance with human rights by all the parties in the Mission’s territory. An approximate total of 230 observers are deployed under this Mission including three police officials, three members of the armed forces, and one human rights expert from Austria.

The main tasks of EU NAVFOR Somalia (Operation “Atalanta”) are escorting vessels of the UN World Food Programme destined for Somalia and particularly threatened cargo ships as well as patrolling waters under particular risk from pirate attacks. Considering the increasing threat to cargo vessels at the Horn of Africa the UN Security Council in several Resolutions created the basis for international naval forces to proceed against pirates in Somali waters. Since October 2008 the EU has been successfully contributing to deterring and curbing piracy at the Horn of Africa. Persons apprehended under the EU NAVFOR Somalia operations and suspected of piracy have been extradited to the third countries of Kenya and the Seychelles for further criminal prosecution. Extradition proceedings for the criminal prosecution of the pirates were terminated by Kenya at the end of March and ended at the end of September. Currently the EU is negotiating another extradition agreement with Mauritius. Austria is not actively involved in this operation.

Since January the EU has been supporting training for soldiers from the Somali army under the EUTM Somalia training mission. Once their training is completed they are supposed to support the transitional government in reforming the security sector. This CSDP mission is run in close coordi-
nation with other international actors such as the Somali government and AMISOM. Austria is not actively involved in this operation.

The **EUSEC RD Congo** mission was first launched in 2005 and supports the reform of the armed forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo at headquarters in Kinshasa and on command level in the regions and provinces, e.g. through a systematic count and registration of all members of the military. Since 2007 up to two Austrian officers have been participating in this mission.

In addition to EUSEC RD Congo the EU has also been running the **EUPOL RD Congo** police mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo since 2007. Its aim is to provide advice and support to the government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo in reforming the national police forces and improving cooperation between the police and the judicial authorities. Austria is not involved in this mission.

Since 2008 the **EU SSR Guinea-Bissau** mission has been supporting the reform of the security sector, in particular the restructuring of the armed forces, the police, the border protection agencies, and of the judicial authorities. Following the attempted coup in April and the subsequent unrest the preconditions for an extension of the mission no longer existed. It was hence closed when the mandate expired by the end of September.

In November 2005 the EU on the basis of an agreement between the Palestinian Authority and the Israeli Government had set up a mission to support border controls at the border crossing point of Rafah between the Gaza Strip and Egypt (**EU BAM Rafah**) As a result of the assumption of power by Hamas in the Gaza Strip the border crossing point has remained shut down since June 2007. With much fewer staff the mission is still being continued in order to be able to quickly reopen the border crossing point as soon as the situation changes. Prior to the closure of the border crossing point Austria had participated in the EU BAM Rafah with one customs expert. When the border crossing point will reopen the operation can quickly be relaunched with an Austrian participation of up to four customs officials and up to two police staff.

The **EU Police Mission in the Palestinian Territories (EUPOL COPPS)** established at the beginning of 2006 supports Palestinian civilian police in the development of viable and effective police structures as defined by international standards. Austria also supported the mission with up to two police staff.

At the request of the Iraqi Government in July 2005 the EU launched the **EU Integrated Rule of Law Mission for Iraq (EUJUST LEX)** with the aim of contributing to the establishment of a modern police and judicial apparatus in Iraq complying with modern Western standards for the rule of law and the respect of human rights by organising courses for high level Iraqi experts from the police, criminal justice and the penal system. Austria supported the
mission from the very beginning by occasionally sending lecturers from the police and the judicial system provided that such courses were held outside of Iraq. During the period under report no such mission took place.

The aim of the EU police mission in Afghanistan (EUPOL Afghanistan) in operation since June 2007 is to support the Afghan Government in the establishment of its own civilian police apparatus complying with international standards. Austria has supported this mission since October by sending up to five police staff.

1.2.2. Developing civilian and military capacities for crisis management

Work on the implementation of the Civilian Headline Goal 2010 was continued and completed. The most important elements included the establishment of recommendations and guidelines for recruiting staff for civilian EU crisis management missions, defining a concept of principles for the administrative-logistic support for the Missions and the systematic analysis of potential contributions from EU third countries to improve civilian CSDP capacities. Already under the Civilian Headline Goal 2008 Austria had registered a total of 147 experts from different fields for civilian EU crisis management missions.

Implementation of the Military Headline Goal 2010 was also continued with specific steps for closing capacity gaps still in the focus. The guideline used was the so-called “Capability Development Plan”, listing specific measures and structuring identified shortcomings by their repairs priority. In this context in addition to experts from the Member States the European Defence Agency whose role has been strengthened by the Lisbon Treaty also is of great importance.

Under the Military Headline Goal 2010 the concept of easily deployable battle groups is of prime importance. In a six-month rotation scheme two such groups each comprising approx. 1,500 troops are on standby at any time ready to commence operations in just five to fifteen days. Austria during the first semester of 2011 for the first time participates in a battle group led by the Netherlands. The Austrian contingent will consist of 180 troops. In addition to the Austrian and Dutch troops the group will also consist of units from Finland, Germany and Lithuania. Another Austrian battle group participation is scheduled for the second six months of 2012. Next to Germany as lead nation Austria will be responsible for logistics management. The group will also include troops from the Czech Republic, Ireland, and the third countries Croatia and Macedonia.

Both the civilian as well as the military headline goals 2010 expire by the end of the year. On the basis of the experiences with the implementation of the military headline goals the Council in December decided to continue the skills development process both in the military and in the civilian sphere, with a particular focus on developing the “pooling and sharing” options,
continuing the already existing military cooperation and the possibility for individual Member States to specialize in particular roles.

In the future it will be important to pursue a comprehensive approach in skills development as well as better coordination of the civilian and military capacities. The Lisbon Treaty provides for the commitment of the Member States to gradually improve their military skills and their commitment to provide the civilian and military skills of the Member States to implement the CSDP.

1.2.3. Cooperation with other international organisations

Organisations involved in practical crisis management must increasingly consider that in most cases a large number of international organisations are deployed in different areas of the operations territory. This mainly requires increased cooperation and task sharing, pursuant to the principle of comparative advantages, between the EU and other organisations, in particular the UN, NATO, the OSCE, the Council of Europe and the African Union (AU) (“comprehensive approach”). Regular meetings of high-level staff were held activities in different territories were closely coordinated.

The Joint Statement on UN-EU cooperation in Crisis Management (2007) provides for a close coordination between organisations in conflict prevention, mediation, maintenance of peace, and peace consolidation. Implementation of the Statement is promoted by regular meetings of either organisation. Experience with the execution of CSDP and UN missions in the same region (e.g. DR Congo, Chad or Kosovo) shows that efficient and smooth cooperation between the EU and the UN is of prime relevance for preserving international peace and security. Moreover, the EU also fully supports the “New Horizon” initiative for the reform of UN peacekeeping operations introduced by the UN Secretariat in 2009.

Cooperation between the EU and NATO was continued. The CSDP EUFOR-Althea operation in Bosnia and Herzegovina is executed with the support of NATO facilities and capacities. The EU and NATO also cooperate on crisis management operations in Afghanistan and Kosovo; the EU in each case with civilian capacities, while NATO assumes military tasks. In the waters around the Horn of Africa the EU Atalanta operation and the NATO Ocean Shield operation for combating piracy off the Somali coast are closely coordinated. EU military capacities are also developed in close coordination with NATO of which 21 EU Member States are members. Care is taken that EU and NATO requirements on armed forces from Member States are compatible and mutually supplementing. Nevertheless it is considered that cooperation between EU and NATO still offers room for improvement. Various initiatives have so far only met with moderate success.

A particularly close cooperation exists between the EU and the OSCE on activities in the Western Balkans and the states of the European Neigh-
bourhood Policy with both organisations supporting the establishment and strengthening of democratic institutions ruled by law.

Since December 2007 cooperation between the EU and the AU on security issues has been based on the Joint Africa-EU-Strategy and the included peace and security partnership adopted by the then EU-Africa summit in Lisbon whose implementation began in 2008.

2. The European Neighbourhood Policy

The European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) covers Egypt, Algeria, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Moldova, Syria, Tunisia and Ukraine as well as the Palestinian Authority. With Russia the EU has agreed a special type of cooperation. The EU and its “key partner” Russia further develop their “strategic partnership” not within the ENP, but by creating “four common spaces”.

Cooperation under ENP is based on the existing bilateral association, partnership and cooperation agreements. Even though Belarus, Libya and Syria are amongst the addressees of the ENP, they do not fully participate as a result of lacking association, partnership and cooperation agreements.

The ENP aims at integrating the participating neighbouring countries into a common area of peace, stability and prosperity with specific goals to be agreed in individual multi-annual action plans differentiated by each partner country. ENP countries shall not only fully exploit the potential of the respective association, partnership and cooperation agreements, but subject to adequate commitment also be integrated into an ever closer relationship which beyond the cooperation offers a substantial degree of economic and political integration. The material focus of the action plans is on areas such as Political Dialogue and Reform; trade, market and regulation reforms; cooperation on judicial issues and Home affairs; transport, energy, information society and the environment as well as contacts between the civil societies.

The ENP measures and the strategic partnership are funded on the basis of a more flexible yet uniform “European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument” (ENPI) for the period 2007–2013 replacing earlier support programmes such as the Technical Assistance to the Commonwealth of Independent States (TACIS) and the MEDA (financial and technical measures to accompany the reform of economic and social structures in the framework of the Euro-Mediterranean partnership) programmes.

Relations with the countries of the Eastern Neighbourhood (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine) were developed further through the implementation of the Eastern Partnership concept created in 2009. Progress was achieved particularly in the negotiations on new association agreements aiming at greater mutual opening, gradual integration into the EU economic area, and harmonisation with European standards and
norms. These negotiations started with Moldova in January and with Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia in July, negotiations with Ukraine dating back to 2008 were continued.

Promoting citizen mobility and liberalising visa issuance in a secure environment is another major aspect of the Eastern Partnership. A visa facilitation agreement with Georgia was signed on 18 June and a readmission agreement on 22 November. An action plan for the gradual achievement of the long-term goal of visa exemption was agreed with Ukraine.

On 13 December the second meeting of Foreign Ministers of the Eastern Partnership took place in Brussels. It both served to analyse the status quo of the progress made since the previous summit in May 2009 as well as to prepare the next summit.

Implementation of the action plans with Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco and Tunisia was continued. The establishment of an ad hoc group was agreed at the Association Council with Egypt to evaluate possibilities for enhancing EU-Egypt relations. With Morocco implementation of the 2008 roadmap for the “advanced status” requested by Morocco was commenced, developments started on a successor instrument for the action plan. The European Commission approved funds from the so-called Governance Facility (Facility for Good Governance) for Morocco and the Palestinian Authority. Preparations for signing an Association Agreement with Syria initialled at the end of 2008 were completed by the EU. Negotiations on a framework agreement with Libya on cooperation in different fields were continued.

The ENP partner countries meanwhile also benefit from new types of technical assistance. With the help of EU financing instruments already successful in the new accession countries or potential accession countries the reform processes and the establishment of institutions in the partner countries are being supported under the EU twinning programmes (administrative partnerships) and TAIEX (short-term deployment of experts). The aim is to achieve coherence with EU policies and standards by providing know-how.

Austria under this initiative applied for projects in Azerbaijan (worker protection and vocational training in agriculture), Georgia (standardisation, civil aviation, environment, customs and tourism), Jordan (agriculture and standardisation), Moldova (food safety) and Israel (veterinary sector) and was awarded two projects in Georgia, on civil aviation and environment.

The Eastern Partnership also includes a concentrated programme for institution development funded with 173 million euros for the period 2011–2013. The programme provides supplementary support for the partner countries, in particular those administrative units that are relevant for future compliance with the terms and obligations of future association agreements.
3. South Eastern Europe/Western Balkan Countries

3.1. Albania

Against the background of more than 40 years of isolation during the dictatorship and the opening of the country at the beginning of the 1990s visa exemption for holders of biometric passports to enter the Schengen area, in force since 15 December, was celebrated as a historic and important step towards the country’s return to Europe.

On 14 April Prime Minister Sali Berisha provided Enlargement Commissioner Štefan Füle with the answers to the 2280-question EU questionnaire on Albania’s application for EU accession. The European Commission on 9 November approved the so-called opinion regarding the initiation of accession negotiations confirming Albania’s considerable progress towards compliance with the required measures for opening negotiations, but also listing important criteria still to be met before any start of negotiations can be recommended.

Despite several reconciliation attempts by the EP and the Council of Europe no changes were achieved in the domestic political situation characterised by the unresolved conflict between the government and the opposition. Even though the opposition around the Socialist Party had ended its boycott of Parliament in March, it still failed to participate in votes requiring a qualified majority. The reason for the dispute was the establishment of a parliamentary inquiry panel on the parliamentary elections of 28 June 2009 whose results are not accepted by the opposition.

3.2. Bosnia and Herzegovina

Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) has achieved two important steps towards the country’s foreign policy priority of Euro-Atlantic integration. In April BiH was granted conditional admission to the NATO-Membership Action Plan (MAP) and on 15 December EU visa exemption for BiH came into force. The requirement imposed for the actual start of NATO-MAP (especially the solution to the allocation of immobile military assets) could not be fulfilled before the end of the year. As a non-permanent member on the UN Security Council for 2010/2011 BiH achieved another important success in international politics also of great symbolic relevance.

Domestically the focus was on the elections held on 3 October (direct election of the members of the State Presidency and of the President of the Republika Srpska; election of the state parliament as well as of the entity and the cantonal parliaments). During the run-up to the elections the political climate was mainly characterised by increasingly nationalistic rhetoric and actions undermining the entire state which at first blocked the reform projects required for EU convergence and closing of the Office of the High Representative (OHR). The swift establishment of a reform-oriented government
as urged by the International Community and by the High Representative (HR) and EU Special Representative (EUSR), Ambassador Valentin Inzko from Austria (since 2009), had not yet been managed by the end of the year. Austrian participation in the EUFOR-Althea military mission was further extended with Austria becoming the mission’s number one in terms of troop size while also providing the Force Commander, Major General Bernhard Bair. Austria’s position as the largest investor and number six trading partner is a boost to the country’s high economic profile in BiH.

Since the spring the regional setting has seen a marked improve. The atmosphere of regional cooperation geared towards reconciliation (Igman Initiative, EU Western Balkans Conference on 2 June in Sarajevo, diplomatic visits by Croatian President Ivo Josipović and Serbian President Boris Tadić) can also have a stabilising effect on BiH by confirming the country’s national integrity and a model effect of progress in EU integration on the neighbouring countries.

Compliance with the obligations under the 2009 funding agreement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) again in 2010 proved particularly difficult in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina so that another portion of 133 million euros was released by the IMF only by mid-October.

3.3. **Kosovo**

The Declaration of Independence of 17 February 2008 and the entry into force of the new Kosovar constitution on 15 June 2008 opened up a new chapter in the history of the Republic of Kosovo. The country’s newly gained national independence is accompanied by numerous challenges such as international recognition, its sustainable democratic, economic, and social development and the creation of a concrete European perspective.

Even though government work had started off on a positive note at the beginning of the year the finding of the Kosovar Constitutional Court declaring the double function of President Fatmir Sejdiu as head of state and party chairman of smaller coalition partner LDK in breach of the constitution triggered a domestic policy crisis during the second six months of the year. After President Sejdiu had resigned on 27 September, on 16 October all LDK ministers withdrew from the coalition government with Prime Minister Hashim Thaçi’s PDK. On 12 December early parliamentary elections were held.

As a result of the allegation of election fraud and manipulations by the PDK governing party, the elections must be repeated in numerous constituencies in January 2011.

By the end of the year 73 countries including 22 EU Member States had recognised Kosovo as a sovereign state.

Since Serbia continues to view Kosovo as an integral part of its territory and gets international support for this position i.a. from the Russian
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Federation, Kosovo cannot apply for membership with the United Nations (UN) and other international organisations (by contrast, Kosovo had been a member of the World Bank and the IMF since mid-2009).

In a legal opinion initiated by Serbia, the International Court of Justice on 22 July established that Kosovo’s unilateral declaration of independence was not in breach of International Law. After Serbia on 27 July had submitted a draft resolution to the UN General Assembly which was again withdrawn following diplomatic negotiations, a joint draft resolution presented by the EU and Serbia was unanimously adopted on 19 September. The EU-led dialogue between Serbia and Kosovo requested in a Resolution by the UN General Assembly could not be commenced before the end of the year due to the domestic political situation in Kosovo.

The civilian United Nations Interim Administration Mission Kosovo (UNMIK) created by UN Security Council Resolution 1244 (1999) has minimised its presence by transferring competences to the Kosovar institutions, but still represents Kosovo in some international fora and continues its activities mainly north of the Ibar river.

The OSCE mission led by Austrian Werner Almhofer since 1 October 2008 has supported the establishment of democratic institutions and local administration and totals about 750 persons. Resolution 1244 (1999) also established the Kosovo Force (KFOR) military presence in which Austria is currently involved with 420 troops as the largest non-NATO troop contributor. KFOR reduced the number of its troops to 10,000 in the course of the year.

The International Civilian Office (ICO) created in February 2008 is of special importance and endowed with broad executive competences to implement the Ahtisaari Plan. Dutch diplomat Pieter Feith as International Civilian Representative (ICR) closely cooperates with the Kosovar government while as EU Special Representative (EUSR) he at the same time also represents European interests. The European Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX) led by French General Xavier Bout de Marnhac supports the Kosovan institutions in establishing a functioning legal, police, customs and judicial system and has approx. 2,500 staff. Since the middle of the year Austrian diplomat Thomas Mühlmann has been the Mission’s chief-of-staff.

3.4. Croatia

On 19 February President Ivo Josipović took up office. Despite the departure of smaller parties the coalition government under HDZ Chairwoman Jadranka Kosor remained stable. Its three declared main goals were the conclusion of the EU accession negotiations in 2011, the fight against corruption, and the revival of the crisis-shaken economy. The attempt by Jadranka Kosor’s predecessor in office, Ivo Sanader, to resume HDZ leadership at the start of January failed and ended with his expulsion from the party. In December charges were brought against Sanader for setting up a criminal organisation
and abuse of office. President Josipović and Prime Minister Kosor closely cooperated to improve relations mainly with Serbia, but also with Bosnia and Herzegovina. In particular with Serbia relations were clearly improved, with the solution of the partly complex open questions, however, proving difficult in detail.

By the end of the year 28 of the 35 negotiating chapters of EU accession negotiations first launched in 2005 had been completed and accession talks had thus entered their final phase.

The mandate of the OSCE office in Zagreb for monitoring the war criminal trials in Croatia and progress on the open issues in connection with residential properties and refugee residence rights was extended until the end of 2011.

3.5. Macedonia

Euro-Atlantic integration remained Macedonia’s prime foreign policy goal also in 2010. NATO and EU representatives, however, left no room for doubt that accession (NATO) or the start of accession talks (EU) would only be possible once a solution were found in the name dispute with Greece. An end to this bilateral conflict with the southern neighbour, however, is not yet in sight; nor did several meetings with high-level representatives of the two countries advance the stalemate in negotiations.

Even though the European Commission’s Progress Report for 2010 recommended the start of accession talks with the EU, the decision on a date was postponed by the European Council to the first half of 2011.

Macedonia’s bilateral relations with its neighbours – except for Greece – are largely satisfactory. Following the start of diplomatic relations with Kosovo a Macedonian Embassy was opened in Pristina; cooperation with Serbia was intensified through bilateral agreements.

Traditionally good and intense bilateral relations with Austria have further been deepened with the conclusion of a cultural agreement. The economic relations were further consolidated at the first meeting of the bilateral economic committee. The number of high level visits – starting in January with a visit of Federal Minister Michael Spindelegger to Skopje – clearly increased over the previous year.

3.6. Montenegro

Montenegro managed visible progress on its prime international political goal of swift European integration. Following a positive Opinion by the European Commission in November which, however, also highlighted the well-known problem areas of corruption, organised crime, and urgently needed reforms of the judicial system, Montenegro was awarded candidate status
in December. The as yet undated start of accession talks, however, is conditional on compliance with targets set in seven key areas.

After having been granted NATO Membership Action Plan Status at the end of 2009 Montenegro swiftly met the first respective reform targets. This was stressed positively at the Lisbon NATO Summit in December. Montenegro also contributes quite large troops to the international missions in Afghanistan and the “Atalanta” security mission at the Horn of Africa. NATO accession could not have achieved majority approval by the population in the past but is now increasingly meeting with a more diverse response with the question of the accession referendum, however, not yet clarified.

In addition to Euro-Atlantic integration constructive neighbourhood policy is regarded as a stabilising factor in the region and continues to be the cornerstone of Montenegrin foreign policy. Temporarily clearly strained relations with Serbia following the recognition of Kosovo in 2008 enjoyed a positive development towards normalcy reflected by mutual high level visits from the middle of the year onwards and the conclusion of an extradition agreement. Friendly relations with Croatia as well as BiH with whom the region’s first border treaty was concluded and with Albania were further enhanced. Relations with Kosovo experienced further progress (establishment of a mixed border commission), but no ambassadors were exchanged due to the as yet unresolved issue of the ethnic Montenegrin community in Kosovo.

Montenegro’s three successful presidencies of the Central European Initiative (CEI), the South-East European Cooperation Process (SEECP), and the Adriatic-Ionian Initiative (All) following the successful Chairmanship of CEFTA in 2009 make 2010 the peak of Montenegro’s regional and multilateral commitments to date. With the continuous organisation of numerous international events and conferences contributing to the goal of European Integration young and small Montenegro secures for itself sustainable international visibility benefiting last but not least its tourism industry.

In domestic policy in the municipal elections of 23 May the government coalition represented in Parliament with an absolute majority and its parties (Democratic Party of Socialists, Social-Democratic Party, and most of the minority parties) were further strengthened. The Government now provides mayors in 18 out of 21 municipalities. All in all the domestic political situation remains stable, little changed by the withdrawal of long-standing Prime Minister Milo Đukanović and the take-over as head of government by former Finance Minister. In addition to EU Integration the administrative and judicial reform, the further development of the country’s infrastructure as well as the reform of electoral legislation, corruption and organised crime remain central issues. The consequences of the financial crisis were cushioned off by successful tourism and continuous budget discipline. GDP, which still in 2009 had shrunk by approximately 5 %, in 2010 enjoyed a moderate growth of about 0.3 %.
3.7. Serbia

The overriding priority of the Serb Government in the sphere of international policy continues to be Serbia’s rapprochement to the EU. After the three landmark developments of December 2009 (deblocking of the interim agreement, visa liberalisation, submission of its application for EU membership) it managed further important steps on its path towards European integration: on 1 February the interim agreement on the Stabilisation and Association Agreements (SAA) was also put into force by the EU so that the commerce-related aspects of the SAA have been applied since that date. On 14 June the Council approved deblocking the ratification of the SAA already signed on 29 April 2008. In Austria the ratification was unanimously approved by the National Council on 18 November. Regarding Serbia’s membership application the little satisfying – in the view of some countries – cooperation with the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) – with the last two alleged war criminals Mladić and Hadžiç not yet arrested – prevented a speedy forwarding of the application to the European Commission due to resistance from some EU Member States. On 25 October the EU Foreign Ministers finally achieved a compromise on the Council and forwarded the application to the European Commission. In future, however, “no further step can be taken (towards the EU) unless the Council unanimously ascertains full cooperation with the ICTY“.

Regardless of the priority of EU integration Kosovo remains Serbia’s second priority in international policy. After the issuance of a legal opinion on Kosovo independence to Serbia’s disadvantage by the International Court of Justice on 22 July Serbia’s stance briefly hardened. Contrary to requests by others including Austria to prevent Serbia from going it alone in the UN General Assembly (UNGA) in New York, Serbia already on 27 July submitted its own draft resolution not accorded with the EU. After weeks of diplomatic tug of war in different bodies Serbia finally relented at the last moment submitting a new text, this time agreed with the EU which on 9 September was approved unanimously by the UNGA. Since then the Serb government has been flaunting its willingness to enter into a dialogue with Pristina while at the same time avoiding anything that might be interpreted as a de facto recognition of Kosovo.

Important progress was achieved above all thanks to President Boris Tadić’s personal commitments in the third priority of international policy, regional cooperation and reconciliation. The initiation of the Srebrenica Declaration by the Serb Parliament in March and participation in the memorial event on the 15 anniversary of the Srebrenica Massacre on 11 July, participation in the trilateral summit with Bosnian President Silajdžić (brokered by Turkey’s President Gül) in Istanbul in April and visits to Croatia (Vukovar and Zagreb) in November, linked with an apology for the crimes committed by Serb units during the war in ex-Yugoslavia were important accents set by the Serb Presi-
dent raising hope for progress also on the numerous specific regional issues (e.g. return of refugees, property questions, border issues).

4. The Eastern European States

4.1. Ukraine

Ukraine is a target country of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) also participating in the Eastern Partnership (EP) launched in May 2009 as a special dimension of the ENP.

The Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA) from 1998 and the EU-Ukraine Action Plan adopted in February 2005 as part of the ENP are the basis of the comprehensive relations with the EU. A visa facilitation and readmission agreement between the EU and Ukraine came into force on 1 January 2008, a corresponding implementation protocol was in its final negotiating stage by autumn 2010. The dialogue on visa exemption between Ukraine and the EU, started in November 2008, made a big step forward with the conclusion of an action plan on a future visa exemption at the EU-Ukraine Summit on 22 November in Brussels.

Both an Association Agreement as well as negotiations on a comprehensive free trade agreement between Ukraine and the EU are expected to be closed in the course of 2011.

The new state and government leaders (as from February/March) tried to deepen relations with the EU while also normalising relations with Russia. In July both the international political priority of European integration and the preservation of non-aligned security policy were anchored by law.

The EU keeps questioning human rights issues, fundamental freedoms, and democratic values.

The manner in which the local and regional elections were conducted on 31 October was a setback for democracy. The general framework conditions for European companies continue to be challenging with weak rule of law, customs and tax administration often being addressed as problem areas.

2010 was a highly eventful year in domestic Ukrainian policy. The presidential elections of 17 January had government leader Yulia Tymoshenko set in a run-off against opposition leader Viktor Yanukovych. Then President Viktor Yushchenko only got 5.45% of the votes and was thus eliminated from Ukrainian politics as an important player. On 7 February Yanukovych won the elections by 48.95% against 45.47% for Tymoshenko. Already on 3 March a motion of no-confidence was brought against the Tymoshenko government which was toppled as a result.

On 11 March President Viktor Yanukovych formed a new coalition government under Prime Minister Mykola Azarov (Party of the Regions). It enjoys a solid majority in Parliament. MPs of former opponents were won as support-
ers. As part of an administrative reform the Government was substantially downsized seven months after its inauguration. Career Diplomat Kostyantyn Hryshchenko is Foreign Minister, a position he had held already between September 2003 and February 2005.

Once the destructive dualism between Yushchenko and Tymoshenko was over, the executive consolidated when the Presidency and the Government were taken over by the Party of the Regions. At the same time the Government also used this position for macroeconomic stabilisation and approving budgets for important reform steps. Some unpopular social reforms were passed as were comprehensive and income-neutral fiscal reforms. With a view to the football European Cup 2012 long overdue infrastructural measures were introduced and swiftly expedited. The IMF was satisfied with the implementation of the agreed reforms by the new Government and released the first portions of a “standby agreement” concluded in July as planned (15 billion US dollars).

In December administrative reform was implemented. The number of ministries was downsized, numerous state authorities and bodies were merged or dissolved. Austerity reigns including across many ministerial personnel departments.

The policy of normalising relations and reapproaching Russia is largely motivated also by economic factors. Several important bilateral agreements were signed at the end of April. In return for an extension of the Russian Black Sea fleet on the Crimea (lease contract for the Sevastopol fleet base extended until 2042 instead of 2017) a new gas supply agreement was negotiated relieving Ukraine’s financial burden and securing better priced gas imports from Russia. This surprising and very long-term agreement caused violent protests in Parliament. Gas conflicts with Russia such as at the start of 2009 have since been prevented.

The local and regional elections on 31 October brought a clear win for the pro-presidential Party of the Regions thus also extending its predominance in central parts of the country. This was a severe defeat for Tymoshenko’s party exacerbated even more by its absence in two important regions. In Western Ukraine the nationalist forces turned out the new opposition.

### 4.2. Moldova

The basic direction of Moldovan foreign policy towards the EU since a four-party “Alliance for European Integration” (AEI) under Prime Minister Vlad Filat came into office in September 2009 is unchanged. Following parliamentary elections on 28 November three of the coalition partners still in Parliament on 30 December agreed to continue their coalition which enjoys a solid absolute majority.

The AEI pursues an explicit pro-European policy ("greatest possible convergence" with the EU). The cornerstones of this policy are successful negota-
tions on the new partnership and association agreement as well as successful efforts for gaining international support in thwarting insolvency (IMF package and donor conference in Brussels in March, aid promises totalling 1.9 billion euros).

The constitutional requirement of electing the President with a 3/5 majority of MPs – failure of which leads to the dissolution of Parliament after two abortive rounds – allows a blockage of the election by the respective opposition if it has more than 2/5 of MPs. The government hence intended a legally disputed amendment of the presidential election mode towards direct elections. A referendum on 5 September to this effect failed as the specifically reduced quorum of one third of eligible votes could not be reached. It will be the task of the new government to solve this disputed constitutional issue requiring concerted action from both political blocks (liberal/democratic-EU oriented parties versus CP).

The search for identity reflects the divisiveness in the Moldovan population and policy also manifested in affiliation with language communities (Romanian-Russian) and the historic interpretation of the events following the Second World War. In June the interim State President issued a decree stating that in future 28 June 1940 will be the memorial day of Soviet occupation and the victims of communism in the Republic of Moldova. The decree was coupled with the request for the withdrawal of Russian troops from Transnistria which led to a foreign policy dispute with Moscow.

The internationally recognised body for solving the Transnistria (TN) conflict is the so-called “5+2 format” (five participants: Moldova and TN as parties, Russia, Ukraine and OSCE as “facilitators”; two observers: EU and US). Due to on-going differences between the parties no formal, only informal, sessions could be held. For the first time in a long time direct bilateral talks between the parties to the conflict were held on a political level. The relaunch of the railway link between Chisinau and Odessa via Tiraspol is one specific success of the working groups for strengthening confidence building measures launched in 2008. EU Special Representative Kalman Mizsei again executed numerous brokering missions on site.

Even though the EU in February extended the travel restrictions imposed against leading representatives of the separatist regime years earlier to encourage Tiraspol to take an active part in the search for a solution enforcement was suspended until 30 September; in September the Council decided to extend this arrangement by another year (until 30 September 2011) and to prolong the suspension by another six months (until 31 March 2011).

The Presidents of Russia and Ukraine on 17 May published a joint declaration in support of the 5+2 Process and the territorial integrity of the Republic of Moldova. The conflict also attracted new attention on yet another international level. In Meseberg on 4 and 5 June, Federal Chancellor Angela Merkel and President Dmitri Medvedev expressly defined the conflict as future sub-
ject matter for regular consultations – albeit not institutionalised as yet – between the Union’s High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and the Russian Foreign Minister.

The European Union Border Assistance Mission to Moldova and Ukraine (EUBAM) was established in 2005 and has seen its mandate extended preliminarily until November 2011.

4.3. Belarus

Relations between Belarus and the West as well as the EU experienced a highly ambivalent development. EU Enlargement Commissioner Stefan Füle during a visit to Minsk on 9 July declared extensive reforms a precondition for closer cooperation with the EU. The suspension of EU travel restrictions against representatives of the Belarusian leadership were again extended on 25 October. Measures defined in an EU road-map for reforms in Belarus include the elimination of the death penalty, discontinuation of its repression against the opposition, and democratic presidential elections.

In the course of the year relations between the EU and Belarus were particularly strained by the execution of two death sentences (whereas no death sentence had been executed in 2009) and a dispute between the Belarusian authorities and the independent “Union of Poles in Belarus”.

Presidential elections on 19 December in which President Alexander Lukashenko was re-elected by approx. 80% of the votes were criticised by OSCE election observers as “falling far short of OSCE standards”. Disproportionally violent action on behalf of the security organs and the imprisonment of hundreds of demonstrators on election night, mostly directed against Lukashenko’s election rivals, evoked criticism from the EU and several European states as well as the US. Federal Minister Michael Spindelegger declared that the massive use of violence against demonstrators could in no way be accepted and that the Belarusian leadership had stepped away from the European community of values and law; he called for the immediate release of those arrested and an investigation into the attacks. On behalf of the EU, High Representative Catherine Ashton issued a statement to the same effect. The EU subsequently commenced a revision of its policy towards Minsk and the imposition of further restrictive measures.

On 31 December it became known that Belarus would not extend the mandate of the OSCE’s Minsk office. The Lithuanian OSCE Presidency subsequently announced that it would urge Belarus to revise this decision.

4.4. South Caucasus

In July the EU commenced negotiations with the three South Caucasian states of Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia on bilateral association agreements putting relations between the EU and these countries on a new basis under the
Eastern Partnership. The main objective of the Agreements is close political association and gradual economic integration of the three states. A strong commitment towards common values and principles such as democracy, rule of law, respect for human rights, and responsible behaviour on state level are required from the South Caucasian countries.

In January Armenia’s constitutional court ruled that the protocols on normalising relations between Armenia and Turkey signed in October 2009 are compatible with the Armenian constitution. The ratification process in the Armenian Parliament, however, was suspended on 22 April stating that the Turkish side would equal ratification with a solution of the Nagorno Karabakh conflict.

The term of the Russian military base at Gjumri in Armenia was extended until 2044 during the state visit of Russian President Medvedjew in Yerevan in August.

Following allegations of corruption and infringements of official diligence duties in November two Vice-Ministers and in December the Ministers of Justice and Economic Affairs were discharged. The Mayor of Yerevan also resigned in December.

Parliamentary elections in Azerbaijan on 7 November were peaceful. The international election observers, however, did not consider the preparation and execution of the elections as expressions of progress in the democratisation process.

Azerbaijan’s economic growth (based on the oil and gas industry) declined, but still achieved approx. 5%. Azerbaijan will become one of the EU’s most important gas suppliers (next to Russia, Algeria and Norway) as soon as adequate gas transport capacities will be created. With a view to the resulting increased energy security for Europe the EU advocates linking Azerbaijan to the European energy market by promoting gas infrastructure projects including the Nabucco gas pipeline project managed by Austria.

In Georgia municipal and mayoral elections were held on 30 May which ended with a clear victory for the party of President Micheil Saakashvili, the United National Movement. Even though international election observers determined clear improvements in the election process, they also found lingering faults. The domestic political situation remains characterised by the polarisation between the President and the Government on the one hand and the opposition parties on the other. In October Parliament adopted a new constitution strengthening the position of the Prime Minister over the President. The NATO Lisbon Summit in November confirmed Georgia’s perspective for future membership.

Two years after the war in Georgia hardly any progress is perceivable in the conflict surrounding the two renegade territories of Abkhazia and South Ossetia. While on the one hand threats of a resurgence of the fights seem to be banned, on the other no significant progress between the conflicting par-
ties can be seen. Reconciliation attempts at the Geneva Talks under the joint chairmanship of the EU, the UN and the OSCE and with the US participating were continued. The EU Special Representative for the Georgia Crisis, Pierre Morel, and the EU Special Representative for the South Caucasus, Peter Semneby, continue to provide valuable brokering work both within Georgia as well as with other countries in the region including Russia, Armenia and Turkey.

The EU Monitoring Mission (EUMM), operative in Georgia since September 2008, is the only international presence. Its tasks include monitoring full compliance with the six point agreement throughout the Georgian territory. The EUMM, however, still has no access to the renegade territories and in July was extended by yet another year until September 2011.

5. Russia

Russian domestic policy continued to be determined by the “tandem government” of President Dmitry Medvedev and Prime Minister Vladimir Putin. The Russian economy which during the economic crisis had suffered the sharpest drop in GDP of all G-20 countries managed a rebound, last but not least thanks to the stable oil price. Economic recovery was slightly curbed by the lingering structural deficits and the unusually hot summer which in addition to crop failures also caused major forest fires. On 6 July the Single Customs Code between Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan came into force finally putting into effect the long-planned customs union between the three countries. The next integration objectives from a Russian perspective are establishing a single market and a single currency. Bilateral WTO accession talks with the EU and the US were also concluded.

A new federal district of “North Caucasus” comprising seven regions in the North Caucasus was created to stabilise the situation in the troubled north. Furthermore a “Strategy for the development of the North Caucasus until 2025” was adopted under which the region’s socio-economic setting is to be improved. At the same time the security situation in the North Caucasus, particularly in Dagestan and Ingushetia, remains unstable. Almost daily fighting and attacks on the Moscow metro carried out in April obviously by perpetrators from the region show that the spiral of violence has not stopped.

In international policy Russia accomplished a few successful results. The climate of Russian-American relations was further improved. The Presidents of the US and Russia signed the new START Treaty on the reduction of strategic weapons on 8 April in Prague. There are also increasing signs of an improving relationship between Russia and NATO. Moscow is content that the Alliance’s new Strategic Concept adopted at the NATO Summit on 19 November no longer considers Russia a threat. The NATO-Russia Summit on 20 November also agreed a closer cooperation on Afghanistan and the possibility of Russian participation in a joint missile defence.
Since new Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovych started his term on 25 February, relations between Russia and the Ukraine have also clearly improved. A price rebate for Russian gas in return for an extension of the lease for the Russian Black Sea fleet on the Crimea until 2042, the end of Ukraine’s NATO ambitions as well as numerous bilateral contacts on the highest level testify to the improvement of the relations. The joint mourning of Poles and Russians after the demise of Polish President Lech Kaczynski in an air crash near the Russian town of Smolensk also improved relations with Warsaw.

The EU and Russia are in a strategic partnership to be reflected in “Four Common Spaces” (economy, internal security, external security, as well as research, education, and culture). Parallel negotiations are under way on a new EU-Russia Framework Agreement.

Russia’s main interests in its relations with the EU are visa exemption, energy partnership, and European security. Both EU-Russia summits were a success: the Summit at Rostov-on-Don approved a joint declaration on the modernisation partnership on 1 June. This partnership shall open new possibilities for mutual investments in the field of innovation.

The Brussels Summit on 7 December in Brussels confirmed that the EU and Russia will approach the joint goal of visa exemption through “joint steps”. The EU delivered a document addressing measures such as document security, border controls, and migration.

6. Central Asia

With its 2007 Strategy for Central Asia the EU wishes to contribute to greater stability and security, sustainable economic development, combating poverty in Central Asia, and enhanced regional cooperation of the five countries in the region amongst themselves as well as with the EU through active commitment in seven fields. In the Joint Progress Report by the Council and the European Commission on the status quo of the implementation of the Central Asia strategy submitted to the European Council on 14 June the EU identified a clear intensification in the relations between the EU and its Member States with the countries of Central Asia during the past three years. On 14 April EU Commissioner Günther Öttinger paid a bilateral visit to Turkmenistan. EU Commissioner Andris Piebalgs visited Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan from 15 to 18 November. On 28 April a meeting of the EU Foreign Ministers with the Foreign Ministers of the Central Asian countries was held. On 14 and 15 June an EU-organised ministerial meeting was held in Dushanbe. In 2010 the representations in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, until then managed by the EU’s Astana office were converted into independent EU delegations. Special EU initiatives pay particular attention to education, environment/water and rule of law. The EU’s prime programmes in Central Asia – Border Management in Central Asia (BOMCA) and Central Asia Drug Action Programme (CADAP) – in which the EU has already invested approx. 45 million euros meet with
broad interest. The EU has established human rights catalogues in all countries in Central Asia. The biggest challenges for the region still are security issues in a broader sense, direct proximity to Afghanistan, the fight against poverty, regional water management and the democratisation process.

EU support during the financial period 2007–2013 totals 750 million euros. The EU and its Member States are amongst the biggest donors in Central Asia.

In Kazakhstan in 2010 the OSCE Presidency was the focus of attention. President Nursultan Nazarbayev paid an official visit to Brussels on 26 and 27 October. EU internal negotiations on a mandate for the European Commission to start negotiations on an extended Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA) with Kazakhstan were begun. In 2010 the customs union between Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan entered into force. Kazakhstan, however, continues to strive for admission into the WTO as an individual member. Economic growth was approx. 6%. The “ Forced Industrialisation 2010–2014 ” programme and the “ Business road map 2020 ” geared towards SME promotion were launched in 2010 to modernize and diversify the economy.

On 7 April demonstrations in several cities of Kyrgyzstan overthrew the regime of President Kurmanbek Bakiyev who first fled into the south of the country, but then left altogether declaring his resignation. The self-appointed provisional government under Social Democrat party leader Roza Otunbayeva set itself the goal to restore stability in the country and to build up democratic structures. Between 10 and 12 June severe unrest between the Kyrgyz and the Uzbeks shook Osh and Dzhalal-Abad killing several hundred people and injuring thousands. Pursuant to UNHCR approx. 375,000 members of the Uzbek minority temporarily fled into neighbouring Uzbekistan. Most foreigners were evacuated. Coordination between the EU, the OSCE and the UN as well as the provisional government functioned very well. A referendum was held on 27 June under top security provisions. 90.58% of eligible voters voted in favour of the new constitution and the introduction of a parliamentary system. On 3 July Roza Otunbayeva was sworn in as President for the transitional period until 31 December 2011. The first free and fair parliamentary elections were held on 10 October with five out of 29 parties making it into Parliament. On 17 December Kyrgyzstan’s Social Democratic Party and the two parties Ata Dzhurt and Respublika agreed to form a coalition government under Social Democratic Prime Minister Almazbek Atambajew. The major challenges for the new government are reviving the economy and fight poverty, rebuilding the south and reconciling Kyrgyz and Uzbeks. The international community has provided generous help for refugees and reconstruction. At the request of Kyrgyzstan an international investigation committee was established to analyse the reasons for the bloody unrest in the country’s south. Subject to Kyrgyzstan’s approval an OSCE Police Mission will be sent to South Kyrgyzstan.
On 1 January the PCA with Tajikistan came into force. The first EU–Tajikistan Cooperation Council was held in Brussels on 13 December. The internal situation remained unstable. The approx. 1,300 km long borderline with Afghanistan with repeated armed fighting between Tajik border patrols and illegal border crossers from Afghanistan is a particular threat. The Tajik economy saw another upswing. Developing water power is a priority. In June an international conference in Dushanbe under UN patronage explored the topic of “Water for Life“.

The PCA with Turkmenistan has not yet come into force for lack of ratification by some EU Member States. Austria has already ratified the agreement. On 1 August the interim agreement regulating trade issues between the EU and Turkmenistan entered into force. In 2010 a new gas pipeline started operating in Iran and construction was started on the East-West pipeline. On 11 December the Presidents of Turkmenistan, Afghanistan, and Pakistan as well as the Indian Energy Minister participated in Ashgabat in the celebratory conclusion of a framework agreement on the construction of the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) pipeline.

Uzbekistan held its second round of parliamentary elections. The Liberal Democrats provide the majority of MPs. Since earlier OSCE/ODIHR recommendations had not been heeded the OSCE only dispatched an election assessment mission which established on-going substantial difficulties in compliance with OSCE obligations.

After violent unrest in South Kyrgyzstan at the beginning of June Uzbekistan showed itself cooperative and opened its borders. Approx. 375,000 refugees from the Uzbek minority came to Uzbekistan, and foreign aid staff were given unrestricted access. By the end of June the overwhelming majority of refugees returned to Kyrgyzstan.

The Council in its conclusions on Uzbekistan of 25 October underlined continued heavy concerns, most of all in the areas of human rights, democratisation, and the rule of law.

7. Middle East, the Mediterranean and the Gulf States

7.1. The Middle East Peace Process

With its comprehensive and clear statements regarding the central open questions in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict the EU at the Council meeting of Foreign Ministers in December 2009 again confirmed its willingness to actively support the negotiating process. Since the formation of a new Israeli Government under Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, no direct talks had occurred between the Israeli and Palestinian negotiating teams – the US Special Envoy, Senator Mitchell, tried to establish the positions on both sides in proximity talks and provide a basis for resuming negotiations.
The main point of conflict is the continuation of Israeli settlement policy. The Palestinian side pointed out the contradiction between the negotiations on a “Two-State Solution” and the Israeli construction activities on occupied Palestinian territory and requested an absolute stop. Israel was only willing to grant a partial construction stop in the West Bank limited to ten months whereas construction in East Jerusalem was completely exempted from this moratorium.

Nevertheless, at the beginning of September the US managed to bring the negotiating parties back to the negotiating table for direct talks, but the end of the Israeli building moratorium at the end of September again terminated the talks.

The US-President speaking in front of the UN General Assembly (UNGA) nevertheless reiterated his hope of decisive progress within one year by mentioning the possibility of a new member – an independent, sovereign “Palestine” state.

As a partner of the US in the Middle East, the EU participated in efforts to resume negotiations and remained the most important partner for the Palestinian Authority (PA) in its attempts to build up efficient institutions for a future state as provided by the Government Plan 2009–2011. At a donor conference during the UNGA the donor community led by the World Bank confirmed important progress made by the Palestinian Government of Prime Minister Salam Fayyad.

However, attempts to overcome the profound conflict of the two major Palestinian political camps and the split between the West Bank and the Hamas dominated Gaza Strip failed, i.e. only continuously generous international support allowed to keep up minimum public services by the PA and UNRWA (United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East) already going back more than sixty years.

An Israeli military raid against a Turkish flotilla carrying aid for Gaza and trying to break through the Israeli sea blockade against the Gaza Strip at the end of May left nine activists dead and stirred virulent international protests as well as a deep crisis in Israeli-Turkish relations. Subsequently the incident led to Israeli concessions improving supplies for the population in the Gaza Strip; the EU’s demands for a substantial change in Israel’s import policy concerning the Gaza Strip, however, went unheard.

While the leaders of the Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO) in the light of the standstill in the peace process were searching for alternatives such as canvassing recognition for the Palestinian State during the second half of the year armed fighting and missile attacks between armed militant groups in the Gaza Strip and the Israeli army again multiplied.

On Israel’s northern border again for the first time since the end of the 2006 war armed fighting broke out between the Israeli army and the Hezbollah in Southern Lebanon occasionally claiming lives; generally the tense armistice was largely preserved. According to Israeli secret service informa-
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tion Hisbollah militia with the help of Iran and Syria had fully replenished their weapons arsenal since the end of the war in the summer of 2006 thus directly infringing one of the basic requirements of Resolution 1701 (2006) of the UN Security Council, i.e. a ban on all weapons outside the Lebanese army.

No progress was achieved in relations between Israel and Syria with the crisis in the Israeli-Turkish relations making it difficult for Turkey to resume its role as a broker for talks to end the conflict of the Golan Heights.

In December the Council confirmed its previous positions on the Middle East conflict renewing the EU’s willingness to actively support the parties in their efforts of finding a solution to this decade-long conflict.

Federal Minister Spindelegger, in February on a journey to Israel, the Palestinian territories, Syria and Lebanon, obtained a first-hand impression and in contacts with all decision makers in the visited countries discussed the different views on the Middle East Peace Process. He confirmed Austria’s willingness to actively support the resumption of the Peace Process bilaterally and within the EU and to cooperate in the political and economic efforts for a durable peace solution. Federal Minister Spindelegger in this context pointed to the internationally acknowledged position of a two-state-solution and a stop of Israeli settlement construction activities.

7.2. The Middle East

Iraq was supported by the EU through numerous initiatives on national reconciliation, constitutional revision, return of refugees and the build-up of competences for the Iraqi Parliament.

On 7 March parliamentary elections were held which were assessed as transparent and largely free. As much as eight months later, on 11 November, acting President Jalal Talabani was confirmed by the Iraqi Parliament. He commissioned acting Prime Minister Dschawad al Maliki to form a government, a process concluded on 21 December. Out of the 42 ministerial positions one dozen was still vacant by the end of the year. The new Iraqi Government is a government of national unity including Shiites, Sunnites, and Kurds. As a counterweight to the Prime Minister’s influence a “Council for Political Strategies” shall be created in 2011 presided over by Maliki’s secular competitor Iyad Allawi.

Allocation of the highly disputed, oil-rich Northern areas of Kirkuk and Mosul remains incomplete. A census required for a referendum was once more postponed in December.

The EU continued to support the Iraqi authorities in improving the provision of necessary daily supplies. The mandate of the integrated rule of law mission for the Iraq EJUST LEX was extended until 30 June 2012. Since July further training courses have been held not only in the EU Member States but
also in Iraq itself. The draft of the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement between the EU and Iraq was initialled in June.

While the tense domestic policy situation in Iran largely calmed down following the presidential elections on 12 June 2009, the severe human rights problems exacerbated further. In several declarations and démarches the EU expressed its worries dealing particularly with the situation of minorities and human rights activists as well as the frequent imposition of the death penalty. Special attention was given to the trial of seven leading Bahá’í each sentenced to twenty years in prison on 8 September. The trial was condemned in an EU Declaration co-initiated by Austria, and the prison terms have meanwhile been reduced to ten years. On 29 August and 4 November EU démarches were carried out in Tehran and Brussels on 13 persons sentenced to death by lapidation and the predominant repression against human rights activists.

Doubts harboured by the international community regarding the exclusively civilian and peaceful character of the Iranian nuclear programme could so far not be dispersed. By virtue of a Council Decision of 26 July and a Regulation in force since 27 October, the EU implemented Resolution 1929 (2010) of the UN Security Council (UNSC) adopted in June taking its own autonomous measures beyond Resolution 1929. These measures include the extension of payment restrictions and exports to Iran, certain investment bans, additional lists of persons whose assets were frozen and against whom entry and transit bans were imposed, and a reiteration of the uranium enrichment ban. On 23 November the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) declared that Iran was continuing its uranium enrichment activities thereby infringing the Resolutions of the IAEA Board of Governors and the UNSC and has proceeded with construction of the heavy-water facility at Arak as well as the uranium enrichment plant at Fordow near Qom, kept secret until 2009. After a 14-month break talks on the Iranian nuclear programme were held on 6 and 7 December in Geneva between the five permanent members of the UNSC plus Germany and the Union’s High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy with Iran in the so-called E3+3 format. The talks produced no concrete results, with the next negotiating round being scheduled for the end of January 2011 in Istanbul. Surprisingly, on 18 December Ali Akbar Salehi, Iran’s former Permanent Representative to the IAEA and Director of the Atomic Energy Organisation of Iran was appointed new Iranian Foreign Minister.

The failed attempt by a Yemen trained terrorist to blow up a US-American scheduled flight to Detroit on Christmas Day 2009 all of a sudden brought Al-Qaida activities in Yemen and other problems in that country to global attention: tremendous population growth, rising poverty and corruption, the Houthis rebellion in the north, the secession movement in the south.

While the US once more stepped up its efforts to combat terrorism with consultants, military aid, and increased drone use Yemen repeatedly stressed its
need for financial support. Donor countries pointed out the need for reforms in return. A London conference on 27 January established the “Friends of Yemen” (G8 and 14 other countries, plus the UN and other multilateral actors). Two working groups were set up to develop recommendations for steps to strengthen Yemen.

At the first meeting of “Friends of Yemen” in New York at the end of September the first working group (“Economy and Governance”) recommended to continue the political dialogue with the opposition parties. This dialogue is aimed at producing an agreement on fair modalities for the parliamentary elections due in April 2011. The second group (“Justice and Rule of Law”) urged increased efforts to fight corruption and boost the judicial system.

The countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council declared themselves willing to establish a coordination office for the work of the donors in Sana’a.

By mid-December Parliament adopted amendments to the election law against the opposition provoking lengthy protests (demonstrations, sit-ins).

7.3. The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (Union for the Mediterranean)

The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership between the EU and its partners in the Mediterranean was established in 1995, also named “Barcelona Process” taking its name from the city where it was founded. Following its restructuring and enlargement since 2008 it has been known as “Union for the Mediterranean” (UfM). It comprises all EU Member States, all riparian states of the Mediterranean with the exception of Libya, no longer participating since 2008, plus Jordan and Mauritania.

Due to developments in the Middle East conflict the political preconditions for the summit meeting of the Heads of State and Government scheduled in Barcelona no longer existed. On a ministerial level a water conference was held in Barcelona (13 April), a trade ministers’ meeting was held in Brussels (11 November), and a labour ministers’ meeting also in Brussels (22 November). The meeting of education ministers scheduled in Slovenia, however, had to be postponed as was the planned agricultural ministers’ meeting in Cairo.

The UfM Secretariat, approved by the conference of foreign ministers in Marseille in 2008, was established in Barcelona and Jordanian Ambassador Ahmad Masa’deh was appointed Secretary General. Also appointed were the six Deputy Secretaries General, the headquarters agreement with Spain, a working programme, and the budget framework for 2011.

The Anna Lindh Foundation for the Dialogue between Cultures (also see Chapter K.VII.2) continued its work under the Three-Year-Programme 2009 to 2011 and started consultations on the next programme period. Between 4 and 7 March the Foundation-organised Anna Lindh Forum with approx. 500 participants from the civil society was held in Barcelona. In September
the Anna Lindh Foundation published a landmark report on intercultural trends.

The 6th Plenary of the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly took place in Amman (Jordan) on 13 and 14 March. The Presidency passed from Jordan to Italy. Under the chairmanship of Austrian Federal Councillor Stefan Schennach two meetings of the ad-hoc Committee for Energy, Environment and Water were held in Austria: on 28 June in Innsbruck and on 29 and 30 November in Vienna.

7.4. Gulf Cooperation Council

The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) consisting of Bahrain, Qatar, Kuwait, Oman, Saudi-Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates is the EU’s prime trading partner in the Arab world and as such of special strategic importance. The GCC accounts for roughly two fifths of all trade between the EU and the Arab states. For Europe the Gulf region also is an increasingly important partner in issues central for the future such as energy security and the fight against terrorism.

At its summit at the end of 2008 the GCC declared a suspension of the negotiations on a free trade agreement between the EU and the GCC continuously conducted since 1991. The 20th EU-GCC Joint Council and Ministerial Meeting took place in Brussels on 15 June adopting the EU-GCC Joint Action Plan focusing on strengthened cooperation in different strategic fields. Political topics including the Middle East peace process, Iraq, Iran and Yemen were also discussed. Several informal meetings were held between the negotiating partners on the free trade agreement, but no breakthrough could be achieved.

8. North America

8.1. United States of America

Domestically, 2010 was dominated by the fiercely contested “mid-term” elections on 2 November that produced a major shift in the political landscape: when the new Congress convenes in January 2011 with 242 seats out of a total of 435 the Republicans will have a clear majority in the House of Representatives (an increase of 63 seats). In the Senate the Democrats despite losing six seats managed to preserve a majority (including two independent Senators) of 53 versus 47 seats. At the gubernatorial elections the Republican Party was highly successful with a net gain of five states. The results of the gubernatorial elections are also relevant for the reallocation of the congressional districts following the 2010 census often also going against geographic principles producing an advantage for one party (so-called “gerrymandering”). Within the Republican Party the so-called “Tea Party” movement managed further consolidation.
The election campaign focused on the **current economic situation** and **persistently high unemployment**. According to media reports 80% of respondents indicated the economic situation as prime motive for a particular voting choice. The economic measures of the Obama administration centred on steps to revive the economy following the shocks of the financial and economic crisis. In 2010 the US economy managed a slight rebound with moderate economic growth last but not least also thanks to these measures (economic stimulus package etc.). This economic growth, however, did not suffice to secure a marked improvement in the labour market situation. Persistently high unemployment of more than 9% and the generally positive reduction of private debt also weakened traditionally strong domestic demand.

The months in the run-up to the elections were characterised by a partly **rough election campaign and sharp polarisation** between Democrats and Republicans so that at times important national and international political decisions were not taken. In many cases this only became possible during the period between the elections on 2 November and the convening of the new Congress in January 2011. This so-called “lame-duck” phase is seen as one of the most active in recent US history. Adopted new legislation included the following: extension of the tax break introduced by the Bush administration including the prolongation of benefit payments for the long-term unemployed and individual measures of the 2009 economic stimulus package, assumption of the medical treatment costs for rescuers and other survivors of the 9–11 terrorist attacks, abolishing the so-called “Don’t Ask Don’t Tell” regulation banning homosexuals from serving in the US Army, as well as new legislation on food safety.

The new **START Agreement** was also adopted by the Senate on 22 December following months of partly very difficult negotiations. The debate centred on the modernisation of the remaining US arsenal of nuclear weapons and the expansion of the US missile shield. The Agreement was finally adopted by 56 Democrat and 13 Republican Senators.

In its international policy the Obama administration continued its focus on **diplomacy, dialogue and international cooperation**. Obama, however, was also increasingly criticised by conservatives for his willingness to admit past shortcomings of US policy and his somewhat more nuanced stance on the idea of the so-called “American exceptionalism“.

The US and Europe continue to agree on the importance of their **transatlantic relations** to be used for substantial progress also against the background of other increasingly relevant players on the world’s political stage (China, India, etc.).

In **Iraq** the US troops combat mission was terminated in August as planned; a so-called transitional force of up to 50,000 troops remained in the country. Regarding **Afghanistan** the Administration produced a markedly positive
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evaluation of its own strategy; nevertheless the security situation continued to be fragile and progress might be reversed. US commitment was still focused on eliminating Al-Qaeda and other terrorist groups, the fight against insurgents, training Afghan security forces, and supporting reconstruction of the country and its institutions. Regarding Iran the US stepped up bilateral sanctions imposed on the basis of the UNSC Resolution.

Efforts by President Obama to adopt climate protection legislation failed in the Senate. Since the “mid-term” elections at the latest all hope for national climate protection legislation has subsided. What remains are initiatives by individual states (including California) and regional climate protection programmes. Pursuant to a decision by the Supreme Court the Department of Energy has announced plans to impose emission limits for power stations and refineries.

Despite President Obama’s announcement shortly after he came into office to shut down the Guantánamo prison within one year it still has not been closed. This is the consequence of complex legal problems as well as massive resistance mainly from Republican politicians. At present there is no tangible schedule for a shut-down.

According to Secretary of State Clinton the US human rights agenda towards third countries is based on “principled pragmatism”; partly, however, it is also criticised that the Obama Administration fails to sustainably urge third countries to respect human rights.

In 2010 46 people were executed in the US, i.e. six less than in 2009. During the same period 114 new death sentences were imposed. In December a total of 3,261 inmates were on death row (i.e. 36 fewer than in 2009).

8.2. Canada

The Conservative minority government under Prime Minister Stephen Harper, in office since the beginning of 2007, stayed in government. As was widely expected, no new elections were held, also because none of the two major parties (Conservative Party, Liberal Party) could hope for a realistic chance to win an absolute majority. The Liberal Party under Michael Ignatieff did not manage to convince as an alternative to the Harper Government. In the polls it never came ahead of the Conservatives at any time.

The Canadian economy recovered faster than expected from the effects of the international financial crisis. Already during the first quarter GDP managed a growth of 1.4%. During the following months, however, the growth rate flattened (during the second quarter 0.6%, during the third quarter 0.3%). Towards the end of the year at 7.6% unemployment was approx. one percent less than in the previous year. In the budget presented in March the Harper Government announced a mix of growth impulses and austerity measures. On the one hand economic stimulus measures were continued at a lesser
pace while spending was cut back as a way to gradually achieve a balanced budget.

In foreign policy Canada attracted the spotlights mainly as host of various international large-scale events. The Olympic Winter Games and Paralympics in February and March in Vancouver and Whistler turned out an athletic and organisational image success for Canada.

As G8 President Canada hosted the G8 and the G20 summits in Toronto and Muskoka at the end of June. At either summit the Canadian Government managed to set important priorities. A Canadian initiative in the G-8 produced a development policy initiative supporting health measures for mothers and children (an additional 5 billion US dollars until 2015). In the G20 the Canadian Government was largely responsible for specifying reduction targets for budget deficits and public debt.

Canada also played a leading role in the organisation of international aid following the Haiti earthquake and on 25 January hosted an international Haiti conference in Montreal.

In Afghanistan Canada will end its combat mission in the Kandahar province in 2011. The Canadian Government, however, in November announced its intention to retain its troops in Afghanistan until 2014. Roughly 1,000 Canadian soldiers shall be assigned to training missions for the Afghan army in the Kabul area. This domestic and international political compromise was based on a party agreement between the Conservatives and the Liberals.

relations between Canada and the EU enjoyed a clear upswing. In 2010 the current Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) with the EU was amongst the core trade focuses of the Canadian Government.

In the UN Canada at the beginning of October lost the run for a non-permanent seat on the UN Security Council.

8.3. The Institutionalised Transatlantic Dialogue

8.3.1. The institutionalised Dialogue EU-USA

The EU and the USA are each other's principal trading partner with direct positive effects on the respective labour markets. Economic cooperation hence constitutes a priority for the transatlantic partnership. The “Framework for Advancing Transatlantic Economic Integration” concluded between the EU and the USA in 2007 established the Transatlantic Economic Council (TEC) as central body for trade policy and regulatory issues. TEC focuses on abolishing technical regulative trade impediments – even before WTO dispute settlement – and harmonisation of standards. In addition to the so-called horizontal issues such as intellectual property and financial market dialogue TEC also discusses so-called sectorial topics such as pharmaceuticals, biofuels and chemicals. TEC offers a platform for finding pragmatic
solutions to controversial topics. As an institution TEC also is a basis for dialogue fora. The fifth TEC meeting was held in Washington on 17 December.

The **EU-US Summit in Lisbon on 20 November** in the presence of President Obama again confirmed the close Transatlantic Partnership and highlighted three action fields for cooperation: securing economic growth and employment, global challenges including climate change and international development issues as well as stepping up the general security situation for the population. TEC was reconfirmed as a main transatlantic body for boosting the economy and creating new jobs in key industries and new technologies. It also established a working group on cyber security and cybercrime. In parallel to the EU-US summit the annual ministerial-level meeting of the EU-US Energy Council was held with the US represented by Secretary of State Clinton and Special Envoy Morningstar.

### 8.3.2. The Institutionalised Dialogue EU-Canada

The institutionalised dialogue between the EU and Canada is based on the Framework Agreement for Commercial and Economic Co-operation (1976), the Declaration on Transatlantic Relations (1990), the Joint Political Declaration and Action Plan (1996) as well as the 2004 EU-Canada Partnership Agenda. Numerous working and political level meetings constitute the foundations for the dialogue between the EU and Canada.

The negotiations on a **Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA)** adopted at the EU-Canada summit in May 2009 are making good progress. The five negotiating rounds to date have all been held in a constructive atmosphere. At a political stocktaking event at the beginning of December either side confirmed the wish for an ambitious agreement to be concluded before the end of 2011. The implementation of the future agreement by the Canadian provinces figures prominently amongst the core issues particularly for the EU.

A separate negotiating process conducted in parallel to the CETA talks aims at updating the Framework Agreement for Commercial and Economic Cooperation concluded 34 years ago.

### 8.4. The North American Free Trade Agreement

The North American Free Trade Agreement **(NAFTA)** between the US, Canada and Mexico came into force on 1 January 1994. This regional free trade zone covering the transport of goods, services and capital brings together two highly developed industrialised countries and one emerging country in the western hemisphere. Between 1993 and 2008 trade in goods between the NAFTA Member States more than tripled rising from 297 billion US dollars to 946 billion US dollars. In 2009 the trilateral trade volume totalled 735 billion US dollars.

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The NAFTA Agreement provides for different conflict solution mechanisms often applying the dispute settlement procedure for illicit trade practices such as subsidies and dumping. The NAFTA Agreement opened up new paths for investment protection providing particular defences for foreign direct investments through the dispute settlement mechanism in Chapter 11.

9. Latin America and the Caribbean

9.1. Political Developments

In Latin America and the Caribbean in 2010 presidential, congressional and gubernatorial elections were held in Brazil, presidential elections in Chile (second round), presidential elections in Costa Rica, presidential and congressional elections in Colombia as well as presidential elections (first round) and parliamentary elections in Haiti. Parliamentary elections were also held in the Dominican Republic, St. Kitts & Nevis, Venezuela and Suriname (including the indirect election of the President). Efforts continued for regional integration in Latin America and the Caribbean. The region showed remarkable resilience against the global economic and financial crisis and in 2010 enjoyed a recovery of its economic situation as well as relatively fast economic growth.

The 200th anniversary of the beginning of the independence movements (“Bicentenario”) in Argentina, Chile, Ecuador, Colombia, Mexico and Venezuela was celebrated with numerous events. During a two-day working visit to Argentina Federal Minister Michael Spindelegger participated in the festivities in Buenos Aires on 25 May. The economic recovery in numerous emerging countries, mainly Brazil as the number one trading partner in Latin America, and the excellent harvest produced sturdy economic growth and stabilised budgets.

Brazil was dominated by the presidential, congressional and gubernatorial elections in October. The coalition government and its candidate Dilma Rousseff won the presidential elections and achieved major gains at the congressional elections. The opposition managed a partial success at the gubernatorial elections. Again in the last year of President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva’s term the country boasted a very fit economy of which Federal Minister Michael Spindelegger could take note at his May visit. Further success was achieved in the social situation and just distribution. Brazilian foreign policy was actively committed to regional integration (MERCOSUR, UNASUR). Further efforts tried to strengthen the country’s role and profile on an international level and establish it as a partner in different international fora. Another focus was South-South-Cooperation. Visible signs of this reinforced global commitment included hosting the IBSA Summit (India, Brazil, South Africa) and the BRIC Summit (Brazil, Russia, India, China) in Brasilia in mid-April.
**Bolivia** adopted a number of laws on implementing the new constitution based on “representative, participative and community democracy” including also important elements of indigenous values. In matters of international policy the Evo Morales Government preserves its ties with Venezuela, Cuba and Ecuador under the ALBA Alliance.

In **Chile** Conservative candidate Sebastián Piñera Echenique won the second round of the presidential elections in January and was sworn in on 11 March. This was the end of the twenty-year era of the centre-left “Concertación” coalition. The earthquake of 27 February and the subsequent spring tide caused severe damages throughout large parts of the country between Santiago and Concepción. Reconstruction was an urgent priority for the new government. When taking over the rotational presidency of the Rio Group and the Group of LAC countries under the EU-LAC-Dialogue Chile had to act as regional coordinator.

In **Ecuador** President Rafael Correa Delgado had to deal with serious unrest at the end of September caused by parts of the police and some army units. The use of the army, support from the public, and undivided international solidarity had the President emerge from the crisis even stronger than before. Relations with Colombia, discontinued in March 2008 following an attack by the Colombian army on a **FARC** (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia) camp on Ecuadorian territory, were resumed at the end of the year in response to the détente policy pursued by the new Colombian Government under President Santos.

During the first six months of the year **Colombia** was completely dominated by the congressional elections on 14 March and the presidential elections on 30 May with a run-off on 20 June won by Juan Manuel Santos. In its fight against the guerrilla the new Government continued the traditional policy of force. Improving the human rights situation, in particular amends for the conflict’s numerous civilian victims and land restitution were declared political priorities by the Santos Government. Following the accession to office by the new government relations with neighbours Venezuela and Ecuador improved. Relations with Ecuador were resumed.

In **Cuba** the government continued its policy of economic reforms by privatising some trades and granting liberalisations for small companies. Municipal elections were held in April. Since the summer political prisoners were freed following interventions by the Cuban Catholic Church. Almost all emigrated to Spain. Relations with the EU were determined by the Common Position from 1996. In regional policy Cuba tried to consolidate its position – also by organising the CARICOM Ministerial Meeting.

In **Mexico** President Felipe Calderón continued his fight against the drug cartels. The effects of the economic crisis were largely overcome. Many new jobs were created. In 2010 Mexico was dominated not just by the “Bicentenario” festivities but also by numerous important international conferences
including the World Youth Conference in León in August and the 16th session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Cancún in December.

Despite the international financial crisis Peru continued its economic recovery managing strong economic growth. Alan García’s Government focused on the conclusion of further free trade agreements (with the EU, the US, China, Japan, Korea), massive investments into infrastructural projects (mainly completion of the inter-ocean transport links), the fight against poverty, and reforms in the education and health sectors.

In Uruguay José Mujica took over as President on 1 March. Relations with its main partner country Argentina have since markedly improved; most importantly, the dispute concerning the cellulose plant on the Uruguay River was settled.

Venezuela faced the consequences of the global economic crisis accentuating social tensions. Venezuelan domestic policy was dominated by the parliamentary elections of 26 September in which an opposition alliance received a large part of the vote and the governing party narrowly lost the two-third majority in Parliament. The opposition had boycotted the previous parliamentary elections of 2006 and had since not been represented in parliament. Diplomatic relations with Colombia, discontinued in 2009, were resumed after the presidential elections in Colombia.

In Haiti a horrendous quake occurred on 12 January killing more than 200,000 and making hundreds of thousands homeless. The international community responded with extensive aid measures which, however, due to the immensity of the destructions, managed to alleviate the suffering only in parts. In the autumn a cholera epidemic broke out causing numerous victims. On 28 November presidential and parliamentary elections were held. Since none of the candidates running for president managed a majority in the first round a run-off will be held in 2011. Doubts about the election process caused partly heavy riots in various parts of the country.

In Costa Rica on 8 May Laura Chinchilla, who had won the elections of 7 February, became the first female president in the country’s history and announced plans to step up the fight against increasing crime.

In Honduras on 27 January newly elected President Porfrio Lobo took over as successor from President Micheletti not recognised internationally and after the military intervention of June 2009 initiated a normalisation process to consolidate the domestic situation and international political relations. Some LAC countries so far still have not recognised the Lobo government.

In October a border conflict in the San Juan River region re-erupted between Nicaragua and Costa Rica which already in 2009 had been the subject of a ruling by the International Court of Justice. Since Nicaragua declined to honour the competence of the OAS to solve the dispute as demanded by Costa Rica the conflict was again submitted to the ICJ.
9.2. Relations with the European Union

9.2.1. The EU-LAC-Process

Relations between the EU and Latin America as well as the Caribbean are organised in the form of an institutionalised dialogue and summit meetings of the EU Member States with all 33 countries of Latin America and the Caribbean. The EU-LAC summit meetings define the strategic direction for the further development of the relations. Since 1999 five such summit meetings have taken place: at the first summit meeting of the Heads of State and Government 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 on 17 and 18 May 2002 as well as the third summit in Guadalajara (Mexico) on 28 and 29 May 2004 focused on deepening relations in the areas of social cohesion, multilateralism, and strengthening cooperation on combating terrorism and drug trafficking. The fourth summit in Vienna from 11 until 13 May 2006 dealt with a further strengthening of the strategic partnership. Energy and biodiversity were defined as new and important topics of cooperation. The fifth summit in Lima on 15 and 16 May 2008 focused on issues such as climate change, energy and energy security and the expansion of alternative energy sources as well as continuing efforts to strengthen social cohesion.

At the sixth EU-LAC Summit Meeting on 17 and 18 May in Madrid on “Innovation and Technology for Sustainable Development and Social Inclusion” participants advocated a joint solution for global challenges and strengthening the bi-regional partnership. The Summit adopted an Action Plan for the years 2010–2012. Other important events included the establishment of an EU-LAC Foundation, the resumption of the EU-MERCOSUR negotiations and the foundation of the LAIF (Latin American Investment Facility).

9.2.2. Relations with Brazil, Mexico and Chile, MERCOSUR, Central America, CAN and CARIFORUM

The EU holds regular meetings with the Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR, with Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay as full members), Central America, the Andean Community, Brazil, Mexico and Chile.

During the EU-LAC Summit in Madrid summits were also organised with the Andean Community, Central America, CARIFORUM, Chile, Mexico and the MERCOSUR.

Regarding negotiations between the EU and the Andean Community, the European Commission on 1 March announced that the 9th negotiating round of talks with Peru and Colombia regarding trade accords had been concluded. The agreement was initialled by the parties at the Madrid EU-LAC Summit.

During the Summit leading politicians from the EU and Central America (SICA) advocated speedy ratification and enforcement of the association
agreement further negotiated in April. In addition to opening the market and improving market access the agreement reduces customs tariffs.

On 17 May a Joint Council Meeting of the Economic Partnership Agreement of the EU and CARIFORUM was held.

Also on 17 May the EU and Chile confirmed their wish to intensify international cooperation on global issues and bilateral affairs.

The fifth EU-Mexico Summit took place in Comillas (Spain) on 16 May. The partners agreed to the Strategic Partnership Joint Executive Plan stressing their profound interest in joint initiatives and specific activities.

The fourth EU-Brazil Summit took place in Brasilia on 14 July. The Heads of State and Government welcomed the intensification of relations and the effective implementation of the Joint Action Plan. Discussions centred on current topics such as the economic crisis, climate change, multilateral disarmament and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, cooperation with G20 members and the fight against poverty.

9.3. Regional Integration Fora

The 39th MERCOSUR Summit was held in San Juan (Argentina) on 3 August. It mainly produced progress on customs. Under the Brazilian presidency a summit meeting was held in Foz do Iguazú (Brazil) on 17 December. The main topics were the joint strategy plan for a regional social policy and increased cooperation on immigration.

On 4 May the Heads of State and Government of the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR) convened in Buenos Aires for an extraordinary summit. Argentinian Ex-President Néstor Kirchner was elected first officiating Secretary General of UNASUR but died unexpectedly on 27 October. On 26 November the Heads of State and Government convened in Georgetown (Guyana) for the fourth special summit. The summit amended the charta by a democracy clause reiterating the wish for increased cooperation and regional integration.

Within the framework of the Central American Integration System (SICA) the Central American states continued their work towards greater economic harmonisation.

The foreign ministers of the Andean Community (Bolivia, Ecuador, Colombia and Peru) met in Lima on 22 July taking a series of decisions on increased cooperation e.g. on food and foodstuff safety and sovereignty.

Resolutions adopted by the 31st Summit Meeting of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) between 4 and 7 July in Montego Bay (Jamaica) included declarations on trafficking in humans and the situation in Haiti.

The 40th OAS General Assembly was held in Lima from 6 until 8 June and was dedicated to “peace, security and cooperation”. The General Assembly
decided to dispatch a high-level fact-finding mission to Honduras and agreed to increase the OAS budget by 3%. During the second half of the year OAS work was mainly dominated by the border dispute between Nicaragua and Costa Rica.

The 20th **Ibero-American Summit** was held in Mar del Plata (Argentina) on 3 and 4 December dedicated to the theme of “education for social justice“.

## 10. Sub-Saharan Africa

### 10.1. General Developments

The FIFA Soccer World Championship showed the world a new and emerging Africa. This positive image is also visible from the economic data. Out of the world’s ten fastest growing countries measured by GDP, six are African. Africa is increasingly demanding greater weight in international fora such as the UN Security Council to which South Africa was again elected as non-permanent member after just two years. Nevertheless, also in 2010 Africa still harbours major crisis spots (Sudan, Horn of Africa, Guinea and Niger). In response to the hostage-taking of European citizens in Niger the EU launched a comprehensive Sahel strategy. Piracy off the Somali coast peaked once more in 2010. Elections were held also in Ethiopia, Burundi and Ruanda. In Ivory Coast presidential elections were followed by a deadlock and unrest that continued throughout the year. On 29 and 30 November Libya hosted the third **Africa-EU Summit** under the motto of “Investment, Economic Growth and Job Creation”. The action plan adopted by the Summit constitutes the basis for the partnership between Africa and the EU from 2011 to 2013.

### 10.2. Developments in the Regions

#### 10.2.1. The Horn of Africa and Central Africa

Regarding the Sudan Initiative by Federal Minister Michael Spindelegger please refer to Chapter C.III.1.

**Ethiopia’s** shift in international policy interests from traditional Western donors to the BRIC countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China) continued. Amongst other reasons this development also was the result of the **“National Growth and Transformation Plan”** first presented by the Ethiopian Government in August planning to convert Ethiopia into a midle income country of income and oriented towards export markets as well as foreign investors (including China, India, South Korea).

The suspended **border conflict with Eritrea** did not experience any progress even on the 10th anniversary of the Algiers Agreement.

The parliamentary elections on 23 May produced a victory for the governing **EPRDF** (Ethiopian People’s Revolutionary Democratic Front) party now holding 545 out of the total of 547 seats. Even though the elections were
largely peaceful the final report by the EU election observer mission identified lack of transparency, party competition, and independence. On 4 October incumbent Prime Minister Meles Zenawi was sworn in for another five years.

In April the Djibouti parliament adopted a constitutional amendment allowing President Ismail Omar Guelleh to run for a third term at the upcoming presidential elections in April 2011. Even though an agreement was reached in the border dispute between Djibouti and Eritrea on 6 June providing also for the withdrawal of Eritrean troops from the border region pursuant to UNSC Resolution 1862 (2009), negotiations for a solution of the border conflict under the aegis of Qatar have so far failed to produce results and the process of border demarcation is further protracted. The sanctions against Eritrea imposed by the United Nations Security Council and the arms embargo remain in force.

In Somalia the transitional government and moderate Islamic Ahlu Sunna Wal Jamaa in March signed a cooperation agreement to jointly fight the insurgents which, however, was only implemented rudimentarily. The transitional government – supported by AMISOM troops from the African Union – controlled only some parts of the capital of Mogadishu. Internal tensions led to the abdication of the Parliament President and some months later of the Prime Minister. The new government mainly consists of members of the Somali diaspora of an Islamic-conservative background. Soldiers trained by the EU in Uganda are still waiting to return to Somalia since their integration into regular army service remains unsure.

In Somaliland which had declared independence presidential elections were held in June and as expected were won by the opposition candidate. Both the transition of power and the following government formation were peaceful.

10.2.2. Southern Africa

The Government of Andry Rajoelina in Madagascar, lacking international recognition, in November organised a referendum on a new constitution to be followed by elections. International and national brokering attempts proved abortive. The country’s membership in SADC and AU remained suspended.

In South Africa President Jacob Zuma reshuffled his government aiming to enhance the benefits from government and the administration for the population. After a break of just two years South Africa was again elected onto the UN Security Council for the period 2011–2012. In foreign policy South Africa acted as intermediary in Zimbabwe, Sudan and the Ivory Coast. South Africa also successfully applied for admission into the BRIC group (Brazil, Russia, India, China).

In Zimbabwe the unity government of the long-serving government party Zanu-PF under President Robert Mugabe and former opposition parties MDC-T and MDC-M continued. While the country’s economy stabilised it
also experienced increasing tensions between the government parties in the course of the year.

10.2.3. Great Lakes Region

In the **Democratic Republic of the Congo** the situation particularly in the East is still characterised by violence. Numerous groups, most of all the FDLR (Forces Démocratiques pour la Libération du Rwanda), continue their activities focusing mainly on controlling the wealth of raw materials produced in Congo’s East. Violence sadly peaked with the rape of hundreds of women within a few days in July/August with the UN MONUSCO Mission undergoing acute criticism for its belated interference. Since the beginning of the year government troops partly supported by the United Nations have been fighting the rebels as part of Operation Amani Leo but despite reiterated success reports failed to bring the situation under control. There are also frequent reports of infringements of human rights by government troops with the UN having suspended its support for army units guilty of human rights violations. In October the Government decided to discontinue all exploitation of raw materials in the country’s East trying to bar illegal production and smuggling. Actually the army, composed in the East mainly from integrated former rebels, assumed control of the mines thus continuing illegal exploitation under the eyes of the government troops.

On 1 July, the 50th anniversary of Congo’s independence, the UN Mission was re-baptised from MONUC into **MONUSCO** (United Nations Stabilisation Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo) and American Roger Meece was appointed new head to stress the country’s progress. Simultaneously international creditors wrote off debts on a massive scale.

In **Burundi** all state organs were re-elected in five elections. Following accusations of massive local election fraud by the opposition against the Government it boycotted all further election rounds enabling the governing party to achieve a massive victory and President Pierre Nkurunziza to be re-elected without any rival.

In the presidential elections in **Ruanda** President Paul Kagame was re-elected for another **seven years**. The elections were peaceful, yet produced international criticism in the run-up since no real opposition parties had been admitted to participate.

10.2.4. Eastern Africa

**Kenya** adopted a new constitution on 27 August. The International Criminal Court (ICC) continued its investigations into the eruptions of violence following the 2007/2008 elections. On 15 December chief prosecutor Luis Moreno-Ocampo submitted an application to the Pre-Trial Chamber to charge six prominent Kenyans including former as well as still active ministers.
The European Union’s External Relations

In November and December elections were held on the Comoros, afflicted by major irregularities, so that the then Vice-President and close confidant of President Ahmed Abdallah Mohamed Sambi, Ikililou Dhoinine, won the elections without ever giving the opposition a real chance.

10.2.5. Western Africa

While Africa’s major crisis spots such as Ivory Coast, Sudan and the Central African Republic as well as the internal conflicts in Nigeria continue to remain at the centre of international attention, several countries are seeing a positive development of their political, civil and economic rights. These are Ghana, Togo and Benin accompanied by a positive trend in Chad as a result of the peace agreement with Sudan. The global economic and financial crisis has largely been overcome. Structural weaknesses in governance and the financial systems, however, constitute heavy burdens for sustainable development.

An increase in new security risks – particularly organised cross-border crime and religious extremism – has become visible. Some countries, including Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea-Bissau and Ivory Coast risked succumbing to a military, authoritarian style of government as a consequence of the manipulation of national constitutions and election laws. The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) seized these developments as an opportunity for accelerating the establishment of the ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework (ECPF) and started political activities with regard to Niger, Guinea, Togo and Ivory Coast.

In 2010 Western Africa was dominated by the 50th anniversary celebrations for the independence of Benin, Burkina Faso, Ivory Coast, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal, Togo and Nigeria.

Austrian relations with Nigeria deepened and widened thanks to the close and trusting cooperation between the two countries as non-permanent Members of the UN Security Council. Celebrations were also held to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the successful rescue mission of the Austrian sanitary contingent deployed during the UN Mission in the Congo (1960–64) by Nigerian UN soldiers. The signing of the founding treaty of the International Anti-Corruption Academy in Vienna in December by Senior Advocate of Nigeria Mohammed Bello Adoke made both countries partners in this field. The highlight was the commissioning of two university hospitals in Kano and Sokoto, to be procured by Austrian companies, by President Goodluck Jonathan at which Austria was also officially represented.

For more than forty years Northern Nigeria, particularly the so-called Middle Belt, has been increasingly suffering from violent unrest between different ethnic and religious groups as a result of different complex and intertwined factors exacerbated by historical deficiencies, political manipulation as well as ethnic and religious rivalries.
Against the background of the different elections in Nigeria in April 2011 (presidential elections, parliamentary elections, gubernatorial and diet elections) the north was struck by several subsequent violent attacks by islamist groups at the end of the year and one attack was made on army barracks in Abuja.

The EU achieved little progress in its negotiations with Nigeria regarding an economic and partnership agreement. Money from the European Development Fund (EDF) for the period 2009–2013 allows cooperation in three strategic areas: peace and security, good governance and human rights as well as trade and regional integration and is used to support conflict resolution and the peace process in the Niger river delta.

In Gabon Ali Bongo who in 2009 had won the presidential elections following 40 years of government by his father consolidated his leadership and introduced reforms. Austria enjoyed an excellent cooperation with Gabon during its term as a non-permanent member of UN Security Council.

In Senegal the political debate was dominated by the presidential elections in February 2012. In the run-up to the elections, for which President Abdoulaye Wade is planning another candidature, the electoral roll will be thoroughly revised with EU support. To revive the economy and promote development, the government launched a number of major infrastructural projects. Efforts in this area, however, are particularly hampered by the precarious situation of the energy sector with continuous electricity rationing.

Mali President Amadou Toumani Touré continued his efforts for constitutional reform with the aim of achieving clearer relations among the democratic institutions. Touré confirmed his decision not to run for a third mandate. The country’s north suffers an increased risk of smuggling, a frequent local phenomenon in the region, particularly of cocaine from Latin America. The region, which is hard to control, is also used by the “Al-Qaeda in Islamic Maghreb” (AQIM) terrorist group as a retreat to keep hostages. One French NGO employee was killed following an abortive rescue mission. To step up cooperation against AQIM, the countries in the region granted each other the mutual right to prosecute across borders. In July and September the Mauritanian army launched a first military operation against AQIM on Mali territory.

The President of Burkina Faso, Blaise Compaoré, acted as honest broker on missions including Ivory Coast and Guinea. At the presidential elections on 21 November Compaoré was re-elected in the first round at 80.1% of the vote.

Based on the Declaration of Ouagadougou of 15 January, a transitional government and a national transition council were appointed in Guinea preparing the new constitution and the presidential elections. Following irregularities in the first round on 26 June, in the repeatedly postponed run-off on 7 November Alpha Condé won with 52.5% of the vote over Cellou Dalein Diallo who alleged election fraud but accepted the result. The campaign for
the run-off and the post-electoral period were characterised by strong ethnic
divisions and riots. Nevertheless it was Guinea’s first democratic election of
a head of state since independence and terminated the rule of the military
junta in power since 24 December 2008. This change has triggered general
hope for an end to Guinea’s structural crisis.

In Guinea-Bissau it has not been possible to achieve lasting stabilisation.
The first failed coup attempt on 1 April toppled the chief-of-staff who was
arrested. Prime Minister Carlos Gomes Jr. was in the power of the military for
some hours. The army subsequently declared its loyalty towards the elected
organs but keeps political life hostage as demonstrated by the legitimisation
of Antonio Indjai as chief-of-staff. The EU hence terminated its ESDP
operation EU SSR Guinea-Bissau. In September President Malam Bacai
Sanhá requested help for the reform of the security sector from the ECOWAS
regional organisation.

In Ivory Coast the presidential elections, which since 2005 had been repeat-
edly postponed, were at last held but triggered the worst crisis since the civil
war. The run-off on 28 November was won by Alassane Ouattara against
President Laurent Gbagbo at roughly 54% of the vote. The constitutional
court close to Gbagbo, however, annulled the result and declared Gbagbo to
be the winner. The United Nations on the other hand declared the original
result announced by the independent national electoral commission to be
authentic and the UN, AU, ECOWAS, EU and US recognised Ouattara as
winner. This produced a deadlock with Gbagbo and his supporters control-
ling the south of the country including Abidjan, but in total international iso-
lation. The international community including the EU and the US, towards
the end of the year paved the way for adequate sanctions against Gbagbo and
his followers. Despite international support Ouattara could not assert his
claim to the capital of Abidjan. Both ECOWAS and the AU repeatedly tried
to find a solution. More than 200 people were killed in clashes up to the end
of the year. A resurgence of civil war fighting was being feared.

Reconstruction and financial consolidation in Liberia achieved major pro-
gress also thanks to the condonement of the remaining international debt. The
political situation was already characterised by increasing polarisation in
the run-up to the presidential and parliamentary elections 2011. The recom-
mandations of the final report by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission
were not implemented. The trial of former President Charles Taylor before
the Special Court for Sierra Leone was continued as the last on-going trial in
The Hague.

In Sierra Leone the conflict between the governing party and the opposi-
tion heated up further with the Government being accused of systematic
discrimination against the ethnic groups of the south for the benefit of those
in the north.
10.3. Relations with the EU

In November the first EU-Africa Summit was held in Tripoli adopting also the new and revised EU-Africa Strategy and a new action plan.

The EU has been enjoying long and partnership-style relations with the ACP states. Based on the Cotonou Agreement (2000) the EU also negotiates economic partnership agreements with western Africa. Trade and development policy are to be intertwined to kick off important reform processes in the ACP countries, promote sustainable development, and contribute to the fight against poverty. In a next step the aim is to work out budget priorities and specific time schedules, institutional implementation capacities through ECOWAS and a link between the national and regional levels.

10.4. Regional Integration Issues

In 2010 Malawi had the Presidency of the African Union. Pursuant to the previous year’s Tripoli Declaration 2010 was declared year of peace with a multitude of events throughout Africa. The main topics dealt with by the AU and its Peace and Security Council were Sudan, the on-going AU operation in Somalia (AMISOM), the national crisis in Madagascar and the unrest connected with the past presidential elections in Ivory Coast. Ivory Coast and Niger (following a military coup in February) had their membership status suspended.

The Common Market Protocol modelled on the EU and signed on 20 November 2009 by the East African Community (EAC) entered into force as scheduled on 1 July. Numerous national regulations of the five member states (Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi), however, must still be amended before the Common Market can finally be implemented.

SADC brokering activities in Zimbabwe continued and the SADC also still tries to restore constitutional order in Madagascar. Namibia took over the one-year SADC presidency, Zambia the one-year presidency of the Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation. In December Austria and the SADC held annual consultations as part of the bilateral Memorandum of Understanding.

11. Asia

11.1. General Developments

Asia continued to develop into one of the world’s most dynamic regions. Some Asian countries seem to have been strengthened by the financial and economic crisis. The biggest challenge for the strongly growing markets, however, will be setting effective political and social measures so that social development will keep pace with economic development. Austria has a vivid interest in global cooperation with Asia in fields such as human rights, non-proliferation, energy security, environment, climate change, natural disasters, and the fight against terror.
11.1.1. Northeast Asia

The foreign policy of the People’s Republic of China mainly aims to preserve and restore national unity and secure the Chinese modernisation process externally. China takes a multi-polar approach to the world and views itself as a leading advocate of developing countries. Through its permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council China is constantly part of the decision-making process on questions of international security. Safeguarding the country’s supply of scarce raw materials and energy sources is a main motivation of Chinese foreign policy. In 2010 free maritime traffic in the South China Sea was of special relevance for Chinese foreign policy.

The EU and China have had diplomatic relations since 1975. Since 2007 negotiations are under way on a Partnership and Cooperation Agreement. The President of the European Commission, José Manuel Durão Barroso, visited Beijing and Shanghai between 29 April and 1 May. The EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the Commission, Catherine Ashton, travelled to China from 30 August to 4 September to hold the first “Strategic Dialogue” between the EU and China together with National Counsellor Dai Bingguo. On 6 October the 14th EU-China Summit was held in Brussels followed on 21 December in Beijing by the third high-level Economic and Trade Dialogue (HED).

The EU is China’s number one trading partner and investor, while China in turn is the EU’s second largest trading partner trailing only the US. Trade and economic policy issues continue to represent an important part of the talks between the EU and China. After the EU-China Human Rights Dialogue in Madrid at the end of June the dialogue scheduled for the second half of the year was cancelled by the Chinese.

Détente with Taiwan continued under the Kuomintang in power since 2008. The trade agreement signed in Chongqing on 29 June is the most important milestone in relations between the two partners since 1949. Economic experts expect the annual trade volume to increase by approximately 100 billion US dollars.

The strategic partnership with the US continues to be the cornerstone of Japanese foreign policy. Consolidating the position in the Asian region and denuclearising the Korean peninsula as well as non-proliferation and the fight against terrorism are further foreign policy focuses. Consolidating bilateral relations with China greatly strained by the Senkaku Island incident in the autumn is of great importance. The apology by Prime Minister Naoto Kan on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the annexation of Korea by Japan on 29 August is a significant sign of amends in the joint history of Japan and the Republic of Korea.

Japan used its non-permanent seat on the UN Security Council during the period 2009/2010 to promote UN reform. Gaining a permanent seat on the UNSC remains a top priority of Japanese foreign policy. The new Government
also takes an interest in building up a multilateral institutional structure in the Pacific region and in November hosted the APEC summit in Yokohama.

The situation on the Korean peninsula remained tense. Special pressure was triggered when the South Korean navy ship Cheonan sank in March taking 46 sailors with her. In a South Korean investigation report drafted with international participation this incident was attributed to a North Korean torpedo attack. Tensions escalated further in November as a North Korean artillery attack on the South Korean island of Yeonpyeong-do killed two troops and two civilians. The UN Security Council in none of these cases came up with a clear condemnation of North Korea. The Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK) subsequently announced its interest in resuming six-party talks. No progress was achieved on denuclearisation. On 12 November US scientist Siegfried Hecker reported the on-going construction of an experimental light water reactor in the nuclear facility of Yongbyon (DPRK).

The Republic of Korea’s foreign policy activities focused on security policy crisis management on the peninsula and the respective relations with the regional powers, mainly the US, China and Japan. The EU and the Republic of Korea signed a free trade agreement in Brussels on 6 October.

After a difficult year 2009 Mongolia – mainly due to the continuous expansion of the mining sector and the appertaining infrastructure – once more managed solid economic growth. Mongolian President Tsakhiagiin Elbegdorj by mid-January announced a moratorium on the death penalty. A partnership and cooperation agreement with the EU – generally dubbed by Mongolia as “third neighbour” (next to China and Russia) – was initialised on 20 December constituting the basis for relations during the coming years.

11.1.2. Afghanistan

The situation in Afghanistan did not stabilise in 2010 either. Despite support from the international community the Kabul government did not manage any decisive success against the fundamentalist Taliban. Massive deployment by the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan (ISAF) together with the Afghan national army was not strong enough to break Taliban resistance. 2010 has been the bloodiest year so far for international troops. Faced with these challenges the US came up with a strategy to support Afghanistan and Pakistan in a joint context. The Afghanistan conferences in London on 28 January and in Kabul on 20 July aimed at transferring greater responsibility to the Afghan government both for security policy as well as for finances and the rule of law (“Afghan Ownership”). The Lisbon NATO summit on 20 November decided to withdraw the combat troops from NATO countries by the end of 2014. On 18 September parliamentary elections were held but on many occasions disturbed by the Taliban who had called for an election boycott. There also were many irregularities. In the new parliament President Hamid Karzai’s supporters do not have the majority.
11.1.3. South and South-East Asia
At first sight the greatest challenge for Pakistan seems to be the threat from fundamentalist extremism and terrorism. Despite success in combating terrorism the country continuously suffers bloody terror attacks. The fight against terrorism claimed most of the available funds and efforts so that it was not possible to proceed with a solution for the country’s major economic and social problems. In April a unanimous parliamentary decision reversed the constitutional amendments enacted under Pervez Musharraf fully restoring parliamentary democracy. In August heavy floods following monsoon rains devastated large parts of Pakistan. National as well as international aid and rehabilitation measures are still under way. The EU provided aid worth approx. 241 million euros for the victims of the flood catastrophe. On 4 June the second EU-Pakistan Summit was held in Brussels.

The détente process between India and Pakistan strained for decades by the Kashmir issue suffered from terror attacks by Islamist groups on Indian targets and had come to a standstill after the attack on the financial metropolis of Mumbai at the end of November 2008. India accuses Pakistan of tolerating on Pakistan soil Islamist terror organisations such as the Lakshar-e-Toiba, held responsible for most attacks in India and not to proceed energetically enough against their backers. A meeting between the two prime ministers in April during the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) in Thimphu failed to produce the hoped-for breakthrough. Even though meetings have since been arranged between the Foreign Ministers and Ministers of the Interior no success has been achieved on the main issues of the dispute.

The focus of Indian foreign policy was strengthening relations with its neighbours, resuming civilian nuclear trade, and in preparation of its UNSC membership for the years 2011/2012 the partly strategic, partly economic rapprochement to the five permanent UNSC members. India is striving for a close partnership with the US mainly in the joint fight against terrorism and civilian nuclear cooperation. One main topic at the 11th EU-India summit in Brussels on 10 December were the negotiations on a free trade agreement launched in 2007 which were scheduled to be concluded during the first six months of 2011. As a regional superpower in South Asia, India – increasingly competing with China – tries to stabilise the crisis-shaken neighbours of Nepal, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka.

In Bangladesh leftist Awami League under Sheikh Hasina wages a stern war on corruption and started to investigate the war crimes committed during and after the war of independence against Pakistan at the beginning of the seventies and to hold the perpetrators responsible. In contrast to the Islamic-nationalist orientation of the previous government the Hasina administration is decidedly pro-Indian. On a visit to India in January Hasina agreed to closely cooperate on the prosecution of anti-Indian rebels in hiding in Bangladesh.
The Kingdom of **Bhutan** continued the King’s “Gross National Happiness” government programme. In foreign policy the country is strongly focused on India, by far its prime partner also economically, particularly for water power.

The political situation in **Nepal** tensed up again during the summer when Prime Minister Madhav Kumar Nepal had to resign at the end of June after roughly one year in office due to pressure from the Maoist opposition. The most important task for the young Republic remains to work out a constitution and advance the peace process by integrating and rehabilitating former rebel fighters promoting a satisfactory division of power across all parties.

Re-running President Mahinda Rajapaksa scored an important victory at the presidential elections in **Sri Lanka** at the beginning of the year. President Rajapaksa and his United People’s Freedom Alliance multi-party alliance also won the parliamentary elections in April with more than 60% of the vote. After the military victory by the government over the separatist Liberation Tigers by Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**) in May 2009 the country still faces the difficult challenge of finding a political solution to the decade-old conflict between the Tamil minority and the Sinhalese majority population.

On the **Maldives** President Mohammed Nasheed still tried to advance the democratic opening of the Muslim island state after thirty years of sole rule by President Maumoon Abdul Gayoom, fight corruption, and investigate earlier human rights infringements. The political climate between government and opposition, however, remained poisoned.

The domestic political situation in **Thailand** remained tense. The deep rift between supporters of now exiled former Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra (“Red Shirts”) and his opponents (“Yellow Shirts”) further exacerbated following the violent events in April and May with numerous dead, casualties, and burnt-down buildings. Between 14 March and 10 May followers of the opposition (UDD United Front for Democracy and Development) occupied some central locations in Bangkok requesting the government’s resignation and immediate new elections. The demonstration was forcibly dispersed by the Thai military and numerous Red Shirt leaders were arrested. Several provinces were subsequently put under emergency law. Following these violent events the Thai government submitted a National Plan for Reconciliation establishing two commissions for this purpose. Major political challenges for the government also include further problems in the three predominantly Muslim southern provinces where trust in the government is low. Thailand managed to recover from the economic crisis faster than expected.

In the first case of the court jointly established in 2006 by the UN and **Cambodia** to prosecute crimes committed by the Red Khmer, on 24 July, following lengthy negotiations, a verdict was delivered on defendant Khank Khek Leu (Duch), the former Head of the infamous S-21 security prison.
Laos organised the First Convention on Cluster Munitions Conference in Vientiane from 9 to 12 November.

Myanmar held parliamentary and regional elections on 7 November. This closed the seven-step Road Map for Political Reforms launched in 2003. The governing USDP (Union Solidarity and Development Party) won almost eighty percent of the vote. The democratic opposition parties managed only a small portion of the vote. In the regional parliaments created by the new constitution some ethnic opposition parties achieved respectable gains. Considerable influence by the military on both Houses of Parliament, the House of Representatives and the House of Nationalities was already determined in the country’s new constitution from 2008. The EU and western governments criticised the elections as neither free nor fair. Large parts of the opposition were excluded from the start. The human rights situation remained dreadful. Ethnic minorities are subjected to systematic prosecution and torture. There still are more than 2,100 political prisoners. Opposition leader and Peace Nobel Prize winner Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, under house arrest since 1989 except for short interruptions, was released on 13 November. She announced her plans to keep on fighting for the democratisation process in Myanmar while also stressing her readiness to negotiate with the present regime.

Since the end of the authoritarian regime of long-term President Suharto in 1998 democracy in Indonesia managed to consolidate and entrench with media freedom being exemplary in the regional context. Indonesia was hardly affected by the global financial and economic crisis; the positive economic development was the result of a booming stock exchange and an economic growth rate of approx. 6%.

Timor-Leste – also thanks to the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) established since 2006 and with the Australian-New Zealand international peace keeping force – has seen further consolidation. The local police are gradually assuming security tasks in the country.

On the Philippines nationwide presidential, parliamentary, gubernatorial, and local elections were held on 10 May; a total of approx. 18,000 political officials were newly elected, thus determining the country’s political orientation during the coming six years. The presidential elections were won by a clear margin by former Senator Benigno S. Aquino III, son of former President Corazon and Benigno Aquino II, the hero of the Philippine democracy movement killed in 1983. Regarding the country’s internal conflicts President Aquino stressed his readiness for rapprochements with the Muslim population and to find a peaceful solution to all armed conflicts, first of all in Mindanao. Negotiations with the EU on a Partnership and Cooperation Agreement were successfully concluded in June.

Under Vietnam’s Chairmanship of ASEAN the first meeting of the “ASEAN Defence Ministers plus 8” (Australia, China, India, Japan, Republic of Korea,
New Zealand, Russian Federation, USA) was held and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton travelled to Hanoi twice (July and October). On 14 September EU-Vietnam negotiations on a new Partnership and Cooperation Agreement were successfully concluded. The country’s economy got into trouble particularly during the second half of the year: news spread of the indebtedness of the state-owned Vinashin ship building group, rising sovereign debt and trade balance deficit as well as a devaluation of the national currency.

11.2. The EU-Asia Partnership

The Asia-Europe-Meeting (ASEM) process is of major relevance as a forum for dialogue between the EU and Asia. On 4 and 5 October the 8th ASEM Summit of Heads of State and Government was held in Brussels. Australia, Russia and New Zealand participated for the first time as new members. The main topic at the Summit was coping with the world economic crisis.

The Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF) with headquarters in Singapore is the only permanent institution of ASEM with the aim of promoting relations between the ASEM states particularly in the cultural-scientific sphere.

The EU actively cooperates in the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) dealing with security issues in the Asian-Pacific Region. The 17th ARF Ministerial Meeting took place in July in Hanoi also addressing territorial issues in the South China Sea.

11.3. Regional Organisations

The ten ASEAN Member States (Brunei, Indonesia, Cambodia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam) met in Hanoi between 28 and 30 October for the 17th ASEAN Summit which adopted a master plan for the promotion of ASEAN interconnectivity.

The ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR) became operative and established a separate commission for women and children (ASEAN Commission on the Rights of Women and Children, ACWC).

The long-term goal of ASEAN is the creation of a community with three pillars (politics/security, economy and socio-cultural issues) with the economic community to be realised as early as 2015.

The 18th EU-ASEAN Ministerial Meeting, now of much greater importance with ASEM expanded to 48 members as a setting for a free exchange of opinion, was held in Madrid on 26 May.

The EU plans to join ASEAN’S Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC). At the 43rd ASEAN Ministerial Meeting in Hanoi in July a TAC protocol was signed now allowing the future accession of the EU.

Since preliminary negotiations for a Free Trade Agreement with ASEAN had failed, the EU initiated negotiations on bilateral free-trade agreements.
with Singapore and Malaysia and has plans for further agreements with other countries in the region.

In 2010 Vietnam held the rotating ASEAN Presidency which in 2011 will be taken over by Indonesia. The Austrian representative to ASEAN is Klaus Wölfer, Austria’s Ambassador to Indonesia.

Thanks to the close economic contacts of many ASEAN countries with China, Japan and the Republic of Korea further integration levels ASEAN+3 and the East Asia Summit (EAS) have developed in parallel. The US and Russia were officially invited to participate in EAS whereas the EU has so far not been invited.

The eight-state South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) held its 16th Summit in Thimphu on 28 and 29 April. The EU participates as observer.

12. Australia, New Zealand, Oceania

12.1. Australia

On 24 June Prime Minister Kevin Rudd was replaced as head of government by his deputy Julia Gillard. After the August elections Prime Minister Gillard on 14 September formed a minority government (with Kevin Rudd as Foreign Minister). Australia’s foreign policy priorities remained the same: cooperation with the US (“AUSMIN” meeting in Melbourne in November), an active role in multilateral affairs particularly at the United Nations, the fight against terrorism as well as intensifying relations in the Asia-Pacific region. Australia’s commitment in its neighbourhood, particularly on the Pacific island states, is still strongly focused on the political and economic stability of this region. Climate change remains a priority of Australian policy, domestic political discussion regarding the possible introduction of a carbon emission levy is controversial. In October Australia suggested supplementing the 2008 partnership agreement with the EU by a legally binding agreement. Australia was admitted into the ASEM process.

12.2. New Zealand

The government of Prime Minister John Key, in office since November 2008, continues to pursue New Zealand’s traditional priorities in foreign policy: active multilateralism, climate protection, safeguarding the outlets for predominantly agricultural products, liberalising global trade both in WTO negotiations (Doha Round) and the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) as well as relations with the EU.

Special attention is being paid to exchange – particularly on the economic level – with the Asian region. In this context, from New Zealand’s perspective the free trade agreement concluded with China in 2008 has proved
highly important. Efforts to intensify relations with the US were successfully continued. New Zealand was also admitted to the ASEM Process.

On 4 November New Zealand opened a bilateral embassy in Vienna also to act as a bridgehead to Europe’s southeast.

12.3. Oceania

All Pacific island states are members of the group of African, Caribbean and Pacific countries (ACP countries). The EU is the second largest donor of development aid for the Pacific right after Australia. Strategy papers were signed with 13 countries in the South Pacific under the 10th European Development Fund. A total of 452 million euros is earmarked for development cooperation in the region between 2008 and 2013. The focus is on good governance, curbing the effects of rising sea levels, sustainable procurement of natural resources, energy supply, and health sector projects.

The regionally most relevant political subject is Fiji’s return to democracy. Austria participated in this year’s 41st Pacific Island Forum (PIF) in Vanuatu (4 and 5 August). The Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI) under Australian leadership is continued.

Austria further intensified its relations with the Pacific countries. Federal President Heinz Fischer announced the continuation of the Austrian-Italian regional cooperation project for the Pacific Small Island Developing States (SIDS) on renewable energies launched in 2007.
B. Austria in other European Fora

I. European Security Policy

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

1.1. Developments within NATO

At the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) Lisbon Summit on 19 and 20 November NATO adopted a new strategic concept replacing the preceding version of 1999. The concept particularly considers the new security challenges (especially terrorism, “cyber defence”, energy security, non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction), the necessity of increased cooperation with partners and the necessity of a more efficient use of resources. Collective defence, crisis management, and cooperative security are defined as the three core tasks of NATO. The classic role of NATO as a defence alliance is stressed, including the principle of nuclear deterrence as long as nuclear weapons exist. At the same time NATO for the first time also advocates a world free of nuclear weapons. It also takes the basic decision of setting up a missile defence system for Europe in which Russia is invited to participate. Regarding international crisis management the importance of the “comprehensive approach” (i.e. task sharing among all actors according to the principle of comparative advantages) and of prevention is underlined. For better cooperation with other actors, particularly the UN and the EU, NATO will set up limited civil capacities. The role of the partners for collective security shall be clearly upgraded and substantial reforms of the NATO partnership policy shall be carried out. Finally it also aims to enhance its role as an international consultation platform for security policy issues. NATO partners including Austria were closely involved in the development of the new strategic concept. Austria actively participated in the preparatory meetings open to partners in Brussels (July 2009), Brdo/Slovenia (November 2009), Oslo (January 2010) and Helsinki (March 2010) and contributed working papers on the “comprehensive approach” and on partnerships.

On 7 December the Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs cooperated on an information event on NATO’s new strategic concept and its relevance for partners held in Parliament.

At the Lisbon NATO-Russia Summit it was decided that relations between Russia and NATO should be started anew. NATO’s new Strategic Concept no longer regards Russia as a foe nor does NATO itself represent an enemy for Russia but rather aims at a strategic partnership between the two.

The essential material consequences of the NATO summit for Afghanistan on the one hand are the beginning of a new phase of the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan (ISAF) with the announcement of the beginning of the transfer of security competences to the Afghan institutions at the beginning of 2011 to be completed gradually until 2014 and, on the
other, the signing of a long-term partnership between NATO and Afghanistan.

NATO also continues its “open door policy” towards countries interested in joining. Currently three countries – Macedonia, Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) – participate in the Membership Action Plan (MAP), one of NATO’s counselling and support programmes for candidates tailored to the specific needs of prospects. Macedonia had been admitted into MAP in 1999, but the as yet unresolved conflict with Greece regarding the country’s name still constitutes an impediment for accession. Montenegro was awarded MAP status in 2009. At the meeting of NATO Foreign Ministers in Tallinn in April accession of Bosnia and Herzegovina into the MAP was approved subject to BiH sorting out the unsolved issue of the transfer of properties required by the army national forces into national property. Since no agreement has been found on this question to date no MAP activities have as yet taken place.

Even though Ukraine, following the change of government in February, does not intend to join NATO, it continues to be interested in an active cooperation with NATO – on the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC), the NATO-Ukraine Commission, and in NATO-led operations.

Continued interest in admission to the MAP is signalled by Georgia, given a perspective of future accession by NATO at the 2008 Bucharest Summit – albeit without a specific time horizon. The NATO-Georgia-Commission, created in 2008 after the conflict between Georgia and Russia, continues to be the main forum for intensifying relations between Georgia and NATO.

1.2. Austria in NATO-led operations, the Partnership for Peace and the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council

In 2010 Austria with approx. 450 soldiers provided the largest contingent of a partner state in the NATO-led Kosovo Force (KFOR) with the Austrian contingent deployed within the Multinational Battle Group South together with Germany, Switzerland and Turkey. Together with Germany Austria also participated in the operative reserve force. Moreover, Austria provides three trainers for the training of the Kosovo Security Force (KSF) as part of the Military Civil Advisory Division (MCAD). In June 2009 NATO decided to downsize Operation KFOR in several steps. In a first step in February KFOR was cut to roughly 10,000 troops. In October it was decided to further reduce troop size to approx. 5,000, a step to be completed by the end of February 2011. In the course of the year prime responsibility for the protection of five of the nine religious and cultural sites was transferred from KFOR to Kosovar police.

Austria was also present with three staff officers at the headquarters of NATO-led ISAF in Afghanistan.
Six Austrian officers were deployed under different NATO commandos as part of a three-year international assignment for training and evaluation.

In 2010 Austria participated in the following Partnership for Peace ( PfP) Trust Fund Projects: destruction of small arms and light weapons; man- portable air defence systems and ammunition in the Ukraine; destruction of residual explosives in Jordan; creating alternative livelihoods for former troops in Serbia; developing training programmes to promote the fight against corruption in the defence sector.

II. Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe

1. The “Corfu Process” and the Astana OSCE Summit

A highly intense and comprehensive discussion on security in Europe and the Euro-Asian area covering all OSCE dimensions took place under the informal “Corfu Process” whose continuation was approved by the OSCE Council of Ministers in Athens in December 2009. In addition to confirming OSCE basic values it also focused on strengthening the organisation and its mechanisms throughout the entire conflict range. Austria and the EU actively participated in the discussion. The EU, USA and Canada mainly focused on progress in unresolved conflicts, strengthening of OSCE institutions, progress on conventional armament control and confidence and security-building measures, better implementation of commitments of the human dimension and further development of the OSCE instruments for conflict resolution. By contrast the Russian Federation particularly stressed compliance with the consensus principle, providing the OSCE with statutes and unilateral efforts for strengthening the political-military dimension as an amendment to the Russian draft of a pan-European security treaty advocated by President Medvedev. By virtue of this draft treaty the Russian Federation intended to produce legally binding, undivided security amongst all signatory states. From an EU and Austrian perspective the draft, however, places too much importance on purely political-military concerns leaving out central elements such as human rights, democracy, rule of law and new non-military threats. Russian security concerns shall also furthermore be handled under the broad and established OSCE security definition.

At the informal OSCE foreign ministers meeting in Almaty (16 and 17 July) the tracks were set for the OSCE summit on 1 and 2 December in Astana. This was the first OSCE summit since 1999 and the first in Central Asia. Austria was represented by Federal President Heinz Fischer. Even though adoption of an action plan specifying detailed tasks failed, due to unresolved conflicts (Nagorno-Karabakh, Georgia, Transnistria), the summit adopted the Astana Commemorative Declaration towards a Security Community. Especially positive was the fact that it contains the clear reiteration of OSCE commitments to the human dimension, the cross-dimensional approach for
fighting transnational threats, support for the negotiating process for the further development of a conventional armament control regime (Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe), the willingness to modernise the 1999 Vienna Document on confidence and security building measures and the strengthening of the dialogue on energy security. The OSCE Presidencies of Lithuania in 2011, Ireland in 2012 and Ukraine in 2013 were commissioned to establish a detailed action plan. Another success was the joint statement by the co-chairs of the Minsk Group on the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict issued during the meeting with the Presidents of Armenia and Azerbaijan requesting both sides to intensify conflict resolution efforts and specific confidence and security building measures in all fields.

2. Regional Issues and Field Activities

At the end of the year the Permanent Council agreed to extend all OSCE missions with the exception of the Minsk office (blocked by Belarus). The Kosovo mandate is still extended on a monthly basis save objections from a participating country. The decision in favour of a continuation of the Zagreb office was also approved at the end of December. On 1 January 2011 Lithuania takes over the OSCE presidency.

The OSCE had 17 field operations in South Eastern Europe and the CIS requiring the major share of its budget (62%) and staff resources. Austria deployed 28 civilian experts to more than half of these field operations. The majority were deployed in South Eastern Europe.

In project financing Austria focused on the countries in dire need for consolidating democratic structures, human rights, and the rule of law.

It also supports individual activities of the political-military as well as economic and environmental dimension as defined by the balance of the three dimensions. Thanks to its own geographic location Austria offers special expertise on mountainous border management in high altitudes meeting with high demand. Here personnel and financial support was provided for projects in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan in direct connection with the international stabilisation efforts in Afghanistan.

2.1. South Eastern Europe

The OSCE’s principal field operations continue to focus on South Eastern Europe with missions in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Kosovo. The two largest missions in Kosovo and in Bosnia and Herzegovina were further reduced in personnel and budget. The mandate of the OSCE Zagreb office was extended through the end of 2011.

OSCE field operations provide an important contribution to the development of democratic and legal structures and the development and consolidation
of multi-ethnic societies in South Eastern Europe. In some areas the OSCE’s role shifted towards closer monitoring and counselling of the local administrative and political structures. In cooperation with the EU and other actors the OSCE covers numerous tasks indispensable in the rapprochement process of these countries to Euro-Atlantic structures.

2.2. Moldova/Transnistria

The simmering conflict in Transnistria still has not yet been resolved. The internationally recognised “5+2 Format” (5: Moldova, Transnistria, OSCE, Russian Federation and Ukraine as facilitators + 2: EU and USA as observers) met five times in 2010 (most recently on 16 November in Kiev). For years the negotiating format has been convening only for informal meetings. All negotiating parties, however, indicated the possibility that formal negotiations might be resumed after the Moldova parliamentary elections (28 November) and the subsequent government formation. For the first time also direct bilateral talks on a political level were held between the parties to clear the way for more technical issues (1+1 format). Moldovan Prime Minister Vlad Filat and the Transnistrian political leader Igor Smirnov also met in August and September at two football matches (“football diplomacy”). The resumption of rail transport between Chisinau and Odessa via Tiraspol is a concrete success of the working groups for strengthening confidence building measures established since 2008. The main goal of the OSCE mission in Moldova is to provide help for a permanent political solution of the Transnistria conflict. The mission deals with human rights issues, democratisation, freedom of the media, fighting trafficking of human beings, and the implementation of confidence-building measures. The OSCE Astana Summit failed to reach an agreement on an explicit clarification of the situation in Moldova/Transnistria.

2.3. Belarus

The OSCE office in Minsk is active in all three OSCE dimensions and particularly concentrated on economic and environmental project management, developing democratic institutions, the rule of law and civil society. With respect to the economic and environmental dimension its focus was on the continuation of the project for promoting development in the regions affected by the Chernobyl catastrophe and energy security, in the human dimension the fight against trafficking of human beings. The office’s mandate was not extended for the time being at the end of the year.

2.4. Ukraine

The Mission in Ukraine consists of a project coordinator’s office carrying out projects for the promotion of the economy, fight against trafficking of human beings, democratisation, and the promotion of the civil society in close cooperation with the local authorities and the civil society. The project coordina-
tor’s office is active in all three OSCE dimensions and also cooperates both with the Ukrainian authorities as well as with NGOs.

2.5. South Caucasus

The vast majority of OSCE countries continued to request a substantial and cross-dimensional part of the OSCE by setting up an OSCE mission in Georgia. The Russian Federation, however, continued to insist on a mandate complying with the unilateral recognition of Abkhazian and South Ossetian independence by the Russian Federation; this, however, continued to be unacceptable for the vast majority of states. At the Geneva talks the OSCE as co-chair continued its active efforts for the creation of greater mutual trust between the conflicting parties. Informal support by the OSCE chair for gas and water supply between South Ossetia and the rest of Georgia was also continued.

The OSCE offices in Baku and Yerevan support the two countries in the implementation of OSCE obligations in all three dimensions with a particular focus on democratisation (administrative reform, reform of election law), rule of law, good governance, freedom of the media, assembly and religion as well as support for the civil society. Especially problems of poor freedom of the media in Azerbaijan also related to the parliamentary elections had to be handled repeatedly in the Permanent Council.

Finding a solution for the conflict in Nagorno Karabakh is being further pursued in the Minsk Group under the joint presidency of the US, France and the Russian Federation. A personal representative of the OSCE Chair is responsible for the technical aspects of conflict resolution and development of confidence-building measures. Moreover, the Vienna-based High-Level Planning Group develops proposals for the possible establishment of a multinational OSCE peacekeeping operation. Reports by the OSCE Chair’s Special Representative increasingly indicated a deterioration of the security situation along the armistice line triggered also by the ample use of snipers on both sides. Two meetings by the Presidents and Foreign Ministers of Armenia and Azerbaijan followed and the intention to find a peaceful solution was reconfirmed also in a joint declaration on the Nagorno Karabakh conflict at the OSCE Astana summit.

2.6. Central Asia

In the Central Asian countries the OSCE is one of the most important international actors, particularly under a first Central Asian Chair. The OSCE mission in Kazakhstan supported the activities of the Chair-in-office in this demanding task with a wealth of activities. Other OSCE field missions in the region on the one hand concentrated on support for the government with expertise in the rule of law, building a democratic society, respect of human rights, democratic media policy, and anti-corruption measures. On the other
hand the OSCE also was involved in numerous training activities (in particular the OSCE Academy in Bishkek).

During the Kyrgyzstan crisis the OSCE Centre in Bishkek assumed a coordinating role amongst international actors. The police reform programme was extended by the internationally staffed Community Security Initiative in response to the inter-ethnic conflicts in June. Border management is another priority task of this field mission, especially the development of local capacities.

In Tajikistan as well the OSCE keeps focusing on the systematic development of effective border management along the frontier with Afghanistan. In Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan cooperation between the OSCE and the Uzbek authorities remained very limited.

3. The OSCE’s Human Dimension

The human dimension is a core element of OSCE activities focusing on the respect for human rights, promotion of democracy and the rule of law. The OSCE’s operative institution for this purpose is the Warsaw-based Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR).

ODIHR activities include the promotion of democratic elections, the development of democratic structures, human rights, tolerance, non-discrimination, and rule of law. The election observer office has an internationally renowned leading position keeping track of national elections in 20 participating countries including not only “new democracies”, but e.g. also the federal presidential elections in Austria in April. Austria participated in the ODIHR election observer activities by deploying a total of 38 short-term observers and nine long-term observers for the elections in Ukraine, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan (referendum and parliamentary elections), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Azerbaijan, Moldova and Belarus.

Another central task of ODIHR is monitoring compliance with duties of the human dimension. Instead of the annual implementation meetings on the human dimension the first part of the review conference of the human dimension took place in Warsaw between 30 September and 8 October in preparation of the OSCE summit. The second part in Astana followed between 26 and 28 November. The three annual supplementary human dimension meetings in Vienna were each dedicated to specific topics: Gender Balance and Women’s Participation in Political and Public Life (6 and 7 May), Education of Persons Belonging to National Minorities: Integration and Equality (22 and 23 July) and Freedom of Religion or Belief (9 and 10 December). The equally annual “Human Dimension Seminar” was dedicated to Strengthening Judicial Independence and Public Access to Justice (Warsaw, 17 to 19 May).
In January the Chair-in-office extended the terms of his three special representatives responsible for implementation of OSCE work in the different parts of the tolerance spectrum: Rabbi Andrew Baker (USA, responsible for combating anti-Semitism), Adil Akhmetov (Kazakhstan, responsible for combating intolerance and discrimination against Muslims) and Mario Mauro (Italy, responsible for combating racism, xenophobia and discrimination against Christians and members of other religions). In January Maria Grazia Giammarinaro (Italy) was appointed new special representative of the chair-in-office for combating trafficking in human beings. Former Norwegian Foreign Minister Knut Vollebæk continued his activities as High Commissioner for National Minorities. His task is to identify ethnic tensions that might threaten peace, stability or good relations between OSCE participating countries and search for solutions. Dunja Mijatovic, representative on freedom of the media newly appointed in March is responsible for monitoring media development in the Member States and reporting severe infringements against OSCE principles and duties related to freedom of opinion and of the media.

4. The OSCE’s Political-Military Dimension

The Athens Ministerial Council Decision on the activities of the Forum for Security Cooperation (FSC), with decision-making power in political-military issues, and the Corfu Process intensified the FSC security dialogue on military doctrine, small and light arms including storage of conventional ammunition stocks, non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and the regional implementation of UNSC-Resolution 1325 (2000) on women, peace and security. Together with the Permanent Council the effects of the START Treaty, cooperation between OSCE and the Collective Security Treaty Organisation and “Cyber Security” were discussed. Two basic decisions on the review of the Vienna Document from 1999 on confidence and security building measures and producing an updated Vienna Document 2011 were adopted. A decision was also taken to hold a seminar on military doctrine (the first since 2006) and to better implement the action plan on small and light arms and conventional ammunition stocks. The Annual Security Review Conference on security issues took place in Vienna between 14 and 16 June.

Austria continues to act as coordinator in the debate on the improvement of the Code of Conduct on Politico-military Aspects of Security. Austria also supported an experts’ conference on this issue and together with the five other OSCE countries commissioned a study on elaborating reference guidelines.

Non-military aspects were increasingly discussed in the Security Committee. Terrorism, organised crime, non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, trafficking in drugs and people as well as money laundering
were defined as real new threats and discussed in the Security Committee as well as in the Corfu Process. Efforts to develop the strategic action plan on OSCE police activities as commissioned for 2011 continued. Developing a clearer role for the OSCE in support of UN efforts on non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction was also commissioned. In this context Austria particularly strived for a closer cooperation of all the international organisations based in Vienna also with the aim of strengthening Vienna’s role as a hub for security policy.

5. The OSCE’s Economic and Environmental Dimension

The OSCE’s economic and environmental dimension was dominated by transport as the topic chosen by the Kazakh presidency for the Economic and Environmental Forum 2010 ("Promoting good governance at border crossings, improving the security of land transportation and facilitating international transport by road and rail in the OSCE region"). The two liaison meetings for the Forum took place in Vienna and in Minsk. As key issue for the Economic Forum 2011 next year’s president Lithuania suggested energy security and transport ("Promotion of Common Actions and cooperation in the OSCE area in the Fields of Development of Sustainable Energy and Transport").

6. The OSCE Parliamentary Assembly

The OSCE Parliamentary Assembly headquartered in Copenhagen and with a branch office in Vienna since 2002 consists of 320 MPs from 56 participating countries. The 19th Annual Assembly was held in Oslo from 6 to 10 July dedicated to the topic of “Rule of Law: Combating Transnational Crime and Corruption”. At the meeting Petros Efthymiou (Greece) was elected President. Since 2008 Wolfgang Grossruck, member of the National Council, has been one of the assembly’s nine Deputy Presidents. The winter meeting, held in Vienna since 2002, took place on 18 and 19 February.

III. Council of Europe

1. Political developments

At the Council of Europe, at 61 years Europe’s oldest regional organisation, the entire year was dedicated to reforms. These on the one hand directly focus on the work of the Council of Europe itself, energetically pushed ahead by Secretary General Thorbjørn Jagland since he came into office in 2009 and aiming at rendering the organisation more politically relevant, efficient and visible. Reforms include new budgeting processes, uniting programming and budgeting, and setting clear priorities for the work of the Council of Europe.
On the other hand the continuously growing number of cases submitted to the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) also makes reforms indispensable. This reform was scheduled over a long term particularly through the declaration plus action plan adopted by the Interlaken conference on 18 and 19 February initiated by the Swiss Presidency and ECHR President Jean-Paul Costa (cf. Chapter H.V. Human Rights).

The work of the Council of Europe was dominated by concentration on the core tasks of democracy, human rights and rule of law:

The Swiss presidency of the Committee of Ministers on 3 and 4 May organised an international conference on democracy and decentralisation in St. Gallen where participants could deepen and exchange views on experiences on diverse aspects of democracy, decentralisation and participation.

At the 120th session of the Committee of Ministers on 11 May in Strasbourg a number of decisions on pursuing the above-mentioned Interlaken process of ECHR reform was taken. It reconfirmed the joint responsibility of the contracting parties, the ECHR and the Committee of Ministers to implement the Interlaken declaration plus action plan and the subsidiary character of the convention system. Before the end of the year a new and simplified monitoring mechanism of decision implementation by the Member States was adopted (“twin-tracking”).

The 7th European Council Conference on equality between women and men was held in Baku on 24 and 25 May adopting a resolution and an action plan for achieving equality between women and men both de iure and de facto.

On 7 July negotiations between the EU and the Council of Europe were officially launched on EU accession to the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR). When the 14th protocol to the ECHR came into force on 1 June it created the possibility of accession, a goal long coveted by Austria. The Lisbon Treaty had created the respective legal basis for this step.

Between 19 and 21 October the Forum for the future of democracy on principles and challenges for democracy in Europe was held in Yerevan. 270 politicians, civil servants, journalists, representatives from science and civil society discussed the influence of the internet on democracy.

On 20 October a High-Level Meeting on Roma convoked by Secretary General Jagland and the Macedonian chairman of the Ministerial Committee convened in Strasbourg and ended with the adoption of the “Strasbourg Declaration” containing specific measures for improving the situation of Roma in Europe.

In Istanbul the 30th Council of Europe Conference of Ministers of Justice was held between 24 and 26 November electing Federal Minister Claudia Bandion-Ortner Vice-Chair.

On 29 November the Council of Europe’s campaign for combating sexual violence against children was launched in Rome.
On 8 December the Ministerial Delegates Committee decided to set up a panel of lawyers for the evaluation of candidates proposed by the Member States as judges for the ECHR. The purpose of this measure was to improve the quality of ECHR judges elected by the Parliamentary Assembly from a group of three in line with the Interlaken action plan. The panel includes seven high-level lawyers.

The text of a European Convention against Counterfeiting Medical Products developed under Austrian chairmanship was also adopted on 8 December offering enhanced protection for European citizens against the threats to human health from counterfeited medication.

2. Relations with other international organisations

Relations between the Council of Europe and the EU were oriented towards the Memorandum of Understanding signed by the two organisations in 2007 offering an institutional framework for increased cooperation in areas of joint interest such as democracy, human rights, rule of law, culture, education and social cohesion as well as the role of the Council of Europe as a reference for democracy, human rights and rule of law. The close cooperation between the Council of Europe and the EU was further intensified. Regular information exchanges on current activities and projects are organised on working level between the Council of Europe Secretariat and the European Commission. The Council of Europe has a permanent office in Brussels. The EU participates in meetings of the Council of Europe and has a representation in Strasbourg. An EU representative also participates in the ministerial conferences. One special focus is the jointly drafted and co-financed programmes for South-eastern and Eastern European countries providing for increased assistance regarding legislation, rule of law and democracy. In 2010 a total of 43 joint projects were implemented – approx. 30% of the programmatic activities of the Council of Europe. The EU thus is by far the biggest voluntary donor for Council of Europe projects. So-called quadrilateral meetings including the presidencies of the Council of Europe and of the EU Council, the Council of Europe Secretary General and a high-level European Commission representative are held on a political level. Cooperation with the EU’s Vienna-based Agency for Fundamental Rights is of special importance. Both institutions mutually inform each other on planned activities and act in close coordination. Under the European Neighbourhood Policy the Council of Europe takes part in two of four platforms of the Eastern Partnership (democracy, good governance and stability as well as contacts between people).

Cooperation between the Council of Europe and the OSCE occurs in the institutional setting of the so-called 2+2 meetings (presidents and secretaries general) and various working groups. The 2+2 meeting was held in Geneva on 5 March. Cooperation between the Council of Europe and the OSCE was
also continued in the coordination group in Vienna on 22 October. The four principal areas of cooperation are the fight against terrorism, protection of national minorities, combating trafficking of human beings, and promoting tolerance and non-discrimination.

Regular contacts are also held between the Council of Europe and the UN. The UN initiative for the global abolition of the death penalty receives unrestricted support from the Council of Europe. The annual high-level tripartite plus meeting of representatives from all three organisations (Council of Europe, UN and OSCE) and other international organisations on “Gender and Security” took place in Vienna on 14 June. The meeting was dedicated to the role of women in conflict prevention and control and approved closer cooperation and coordination in this field as well as the fight against violence against women. UNSG Ban Ki-moon on 19 October participated in a celebration of the 60th anniversary of the ECHR in Strasbourg.

3. Human Rights
See Chapter H.V.

4. Monitoring
Monitoring the commitments of the Member States relating to their membership in the Council of Europe in the areas of human rights, pluralistic democracy and freedom of opinion and information belongs to the organisation’s principal instruments.

The Monitoring Committee of the Parliamentary Assembly dealt with Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Moldova, Montenegro, Russia, Serbia and Ukraine and organised respective inspection trips. Post-monitoring-dialogues are led with four further states (Bulgaria, Turkey, Monaco and Macedonia) for strengthening their democratic institutions. Moreover, the Committee publishes biannual country reports and recommendations adopted by the Plenary of the Parliamentary Assembly.

Monitoring of the Committee of Ministers can happen on different bases: commitments from accession proceedings (e.g. in the cases of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia and Montenegro) or imposed on the respective Member State due to specific problems after it had joined (Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine). Monitoring can also be related to specific topics. In any case it is a confidential process over a longer period.

Monitoring the national implementation of ECHR decisions by the Committee of Ministers is based on Article 46 of the EHRC and its 11th amending protocol in four annual sessions.

The Secretariat issues quarterly reports on Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia and Montenegro to the Committee of Ministers; once every six months
on Georgia. Assessment reports also monitor the situation in Moldova. The offices of the special representative of the Council of Europe’s Secretary General and other offices outside Strasbourg in Baku, Belgrade, Yerevan, Chişinău, Podgorica, Pristina, Sarajevo and Tbilisi as well as Tirana and Skopje release almost monthly reports on developments in the respective countries. The consequences of the war between Georgia and the Russian Federation in August 2008 also figure prominently on the Council of Europe’s agenda trying to contribute most of all to improving the human rights situation in the affected territories. These activities particularly focus on the work of the Human Rights Commissioner, the Anti-Torture Committee and the specific aid project for support for traumatised children. 

Specific monitoring covers multiple aspects. The European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT) including all Member States of the Council of Europe, carries out periodical and ad hoc inspections of national prisons. The Group of States against Corruption (GRECO) was set up with the goal of introducing reforms of national legislation through mutual evaluation and group pressure to comply with Council of Europe standards on corruption. GRECO is also open to non-members of the Council of Europe and during the period under report comprised 46 Members including Austria and the US. With Helmut Sax at the meeting of contracting states of the Convention on Action against Human Trafficking (GRETA) in force since 2008 an Austrian was also elected member of the expert committee monitoring the implementation of the Convention. Austria’s Permanent Representative to the Council of Europe, Ambassador Thomas Hajnoczi, was re-elected Vice-President of the committee of signatory member states. The advisory body of the framework convention for the protection of national minorities evaluates the national implementation of the commitments in the Convention. The European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) pursues its tasks mainly through country reviews, handling of specific topics, and cooperation with the civil society.

5. Aid Programmes

In addition to defining standards and monitoring the Council of Europe mainly supports the countries of South Eastern Europe and the Caucasus as well as Russia in implementing the goals of the Council of Europe. Aid programmes range from promotion of human rights, realisation of a pluralistic democracy and the rule of law via awareness building on joint cultural identity in its full scope; consolidating Europe’s democratic stability by promoting political, legislative, and constitutional reforms to the search for solutions to the problems facing European societies including discrimination against minorities, drugs and organised crime as well as predominantly EU-financed, but jointly implemented “joint projects” also concentrating on these countries and priorities.
6. The Organs of the Council of Europe

6.1. The Committee of Ministers

The Committee of Ministers is the highest decision-making organ of the Council of Europe and consists of the Foreign Ministers of the 47 Member States and their Permanent Representatives (“Delegate Ministers”). The Presidency rotates on a six-monthly basis and the Committee usually convenes once a year on ministerial level. Delegate Ministers convene once a week for meetings not only focusing on debates but particularly taking decisions prepared in the numerous topic-related committees staffed by representatives from the respective Austrian ministries and representations in Strasbourg.

6.2. The Parliamentary Assembly

The Parliamentary Assembly (PA) has 318 members from the national parliaments and 318 deputies in five fractions: the Socialist Group (SOC), the European People’s Party (EPP/CD), the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE), the European Democrats Group (EDG) and the Group of the Unified European Left (UEL). 18 members are independent. Austria has six members and six substitute members delegated by the National Council and the Federal Council (see Annex VII.6.). The PA convenes four times a year for one week each in a plenary meeting and periodically in committees. It addresses the Committee of Ministers, national governments, Parliaments or political parties in resolutions, recommendations, opinions and guidelines. The Assembly also fulfils monitoring and election observer tasks. In January Mevlüt Çavusoglu (Turkey, AK Party) was elected PA President.

6.3. The Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe

The Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe (established in 1957) in 1994 became an advisory organ of the Council of Europe. The 318 members convene twice a year for one week in Strasbourg. The Congress has the task of making recommendations to the Committee of Ministers on urban and municipal democracy, environmental protection, disaster management and social cohesion. In Austria these tasks are covered by the Associations of Towns and Municipalities, respectively, the hub between the Provinces and the ministries. The Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe provides important tasks particularly in monitoring and promoting municipal and regional democracy and monitoring regional and local elections also including commitments of the Member States. For South Eastern Europe the Congress offers projects of the stability pact (development and strengthening democracy on a local level) and for the riparian states on the southern Mediterranean coast programmes for developing municipal and regional democracy. In autumn Keith
Withmore from the United Kingdom was elected President of the Congress and President of the Diet of the the Federal Province of Tyrol Herwig van Staa, Head of the Austrian Delegation, was elected President of the Chamber of the Regions. Austrian Andreas Kiefer has been Secretary General of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities since April.

6.4. The Secretary General

The Secretary General is elected by the Council of Europe’s Parliamentary Assembly on recommendation by the Committee of Ministers for five years. The Secretary General sets the strategic tracks for the working programme and the organisation’s budget. He is also responsible for the Council of Europe Secretariat consisting of 16 organisational units with approx. 2,150 employees. Currently former Norwegian President of Parliament, Prime and Foreign Minister Thorbjørn Jagland is Secretary General of the Council of Europe.

7. The Council of Europe and Austria

Austria pursues highly committed activities in the Council of Europe having up to now provided three Secretaries General, two PA Presidents and one President of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities. Austria is particularly active on defending the right to filing individual complaints with the ECHR, supporting reforms and developing the Forum for the Future of Democracy. An approximate total of twenty Austrians are employed with the Council of Europe with higher positions including the Secretary General of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities, one head of department at the Venice Commission, the head of two departments at the ECHR, one head of department at the General Secretariat, one head of department at the Secretariat of the Congress and one head of department at the anti-torture convention secretariat.

Austria’s Permanent Representation to the Council of Europe particularly focused on cooperation with the monitoring of Armenia and Azerbaijan (Ago Group) and reforming the ECHR. Austria’s Permanent Representative was also elected President of its liaison committee by the Committee of the Delegate Ministers to the ECHR and Thematic Coordinator on Information Policy including questions of the information society and Internet Governance. The representation also informs interested Austrians about the Council of Europe’s objectives and tasks.

IV. Central European Initiative

The prime objective of the 18-state Central European Initiative (CEI) is cooperation between the Member States from Central, Eastern and South Eastern Europe on regional stability.
At their annual meetings CEI Foreign Ministers in June under the Montene-
igrin chairmanship adopted the so-called Budva Recommendations aiming at
greater visibility of the Organisation, tying it closer to the EU (mainly via the
Danube Strategy) and to act as a bridgehead between the macro-regions of the
Baltics-Danube Area/Black Sea-Adriatic.

The CEI’s traditional role as a forum for the political dialogue with states
wishing to move closer to the EU shall be further boosted through increased
interaction between the CEI and the EU. Increased cooperation on a regional
level occurred between the CEI Executive Secretariat and the Secretariat of
the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC) as well as the UNESCO Regional
Office for Science and Culture in Europe.

After Italy Austria is the second largest contributor to the CEI budget sup-
porting the organisation mainly in its know-how exchange programme estab-
lished in 2004. This programme promotes the know-how transfer between
EU and non-EU CEI Member States.

The annual meeting of the Parliamentary Assembly was held in Budva on
27 November.

Austrian Diplomat Ambassador Gerhard Pfanzelter was confirmed in his
office as Secretary General of CEI for another three years.

V. Neighbourhood Policy

1. Regional Partnership

The 2001 Regional Partnership (RP) concept with the neighbouring Czech
Republic, Hungary, Slovakia and Slovenia, as well as with the “cultural
neighbour” Poland is a logical consequence of close cooperation in Central
Europe.

While prior to EU enlargement in 2004 the Regional Partnership mainly
served to minimise possible problems and provide support for the partner
countries during accession talks as well as consultations on the EU consti-
tutional convention as well as the Lisbon process, since enlargement it has
increasingly been used to define common concerns and their implementa-
tion within the EU.

Following the 2004 initiatives on the future of Kosovo as well as the EU
action plan for Ukraine in autumn 2005 a sustainable and specific contribu-
tion was made to support integration of the Western Balkan countries with
the launch of the Budapest Process at the RP’s Western Balkan conference in
Budapest.

Cooperation on visa and consular issues has further improved in efficiency
since all regional partners joined the Schengen area in December 2007.

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In contrast to the related Visegrad Group with which the RP keeps exploring cooperation possibilities on different occasions and topics the RP is special because it completely renounces on institutional and administrative structures. In July Poland took over the informal chairmanship from the Czech Republic for one year.

On 4 and 5 November the Polish Presidency organised the 12th meeting of Parliamentary Presidents in Warsaw which was completely dominated by the upcoming EU Presidencies of the PR countries Hungary and Poland and the Presidency’s priority of energy security and ENP/Eastern Partnership.

Among the various Federal Ministries in recent years particularly cooperation with the Ministers of the Interior in Forum Salzburg, launched almost simultaneously with the RP and comprising Bulgaria, Romania, and Croatia as observers in addition to the six RP countries, has seen an autonomous and fruitful development.

2. Switzerland, Liechtenstein

2.1. Switzerland

Bilateral relations are characterised by comprehensive agreements and a traditionally vivid exchange of visits on all levels. At present approximately 60,000 Austrians permanently reside in Switzerland and roughly 7,000 commute on a regular basis. Presently cooperations exist in various fields, including the UN, CFSP/ESDP, crisis control, Human Security Network, development cooperation, migration and asylum issues, consular and diplomatic exchanges. Annual bilateral meetings of nuclear experts are organised in accordance with the bilateral nuclear information agreement, most recently on 11 June in Switzerland. Bilateral economic talks were held on 13 and 14 September in Klagenfurt.

Relations between Switzerland and the EU are based on the two pillars of bilateral agreements and autonomous compliance by Switzerland. In its evaluation report on Swiss European policy of 17 September the Federal Council again declared bilateralism to be the best option for Switzerland and shall hence be continued and extended. It shall be further dynamised to achieve harmonisation with EU law.

Current negotiations include electricity agreements and agricultural accords, participation in diverse EU projects including Galileo, health authority, Eurojust, civilian crisis management, REACH (chemistry) and emission trading as well as a framework agreement. In agriculture an agreement was found on the dynamic adjustment to the EU acquis. On 15 February bilateral agreements were signed on Switzerland’s participation in the EU educational, professional training and youth programmes allowing equal access to all EU mobility and cooperation projects from 2011. A dialogue was initiated on the adjustment of cantonal taxes/subsidies and a working group on institutio-
nal issues was set up under the bilateral accords. Switzerland contributes to minimising the economic and social imbalances in the enlarged EU (1 billion CHF / 5 years).

Since 29 March 2009 Switzerland has been a full member of the Schengen system. Continuation of the agreement on the free circulation of people with the EU and an extension of the agreement to Bulgaria and Romania were approved by a referendum on 8 February 2009.

Swiss foreign policy continues to focus primarily on relations with the EU and large third countries, like the US and the so-called BRIC countries of Brazil, Russia, India and China. The Western Balkan countries are also a priority. Traditionally special weight is given to international economic policy and neutrality as well as global issues of peace policy and development. Internationally Switzerland tries to provide Good Services, for instance in Georgia/Russian Federation, Cuba/USA, USA/Iran and South Sudan/Darfur.

In the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) Switzerland continued negotiations on free trade accords with diverse third countries.

On tax issues Switzerland in March 2009 committed itself to redirecting international cooperation on tax issues and assuming the new OECD standards regarding legal aid in tax cases. In September 2009 Switzerland was deleted from the OECD’s “grey” list of uncooperative countries”. To date negotiations have been completed on 30 double taxation agreements (DTA) and numerous accords have been signed. The new DTA with Austria enters into force on 1 March 2011 and will apply as from 1 January 2012.

2.2. Liechtenstein

Austria and Liechtenstein have a tradition of close and excellent relations in all spheres of public life with regular mutual visits between the two countries. Each day almost 7,000 people commute from Austria to Liechtenstein, more than 2,000 Austrians live in the Principality.

As a member of EFTA, the Council of Europe, the EEA, the OSCE, the UN and the WTO Liechtenstein orients its foreign policy towards preserving its sovereignty, maximum free access to the European and extra-European markets and good relations with the neighbouring countries.

A tax evasion affair with Germany and increased international fiscal competition had direct effects on Liechtenstein as a financial venue. In March 2009 Liechtenstein acknowledged the current OECD standard on information exchange on fiscal issues. The Government used the tax evasion controversy as a reason for requesting an exit strategy for the country securing sufficient information exchange and legal certainty, safeguarding the banking secret, and positioning Liechtenstein as a serious and renowned financial centre. Liechtenstein following the conclusion of a sufficient number of double taxation agreements was dropped from the OECD “grey list” in November
2009. At the end of 2010 the Principality had concluded double taxation agreements or Tax Information Exchange Agreements (TIEA) with a total of 25 countries, 15 of whom were OECD member states. Negotiations with the European Union on a fraud combat agreement providing for a comprehensive information exchange on direct and indirect taxes are still under way. Liechtenstein as a financial centre has so far benefitted from its cooperative behaviour; capital flows into Liechtenstein have lately again increased.

Liechtenstein’s accession to the Schengen area, originally planned simultaneously with Switzerland for November 2008, is delayed for technical reasons. Liechtenstein expects to join during the second half of 2011.

3. South Tyrol

In Austrian foreign policy South Tyrol continues to be of special relevance. The Federal Government complies with its protection function for South Tyrol laid down in the Treaty of Paris of 5 September 1946. It is demonstrated by a continuous supportive interest for South Tyrol’s autonomy developments and general events as well as in regular meetings between the competent politicians from Vienna, Innsbruck and Bolzano. Developments show that the autonomy can also be regarded as a joint asset of all three language groups in South Tyrol (German, Italian, Ladin) to be preserved and dynamically enhanced. With Italy Austria enjoys highly amicable and neighbourly relations. On a European level South Tyrol’s autonomy has a model function for solving minority conflicts. Austria’s and Italy’s joint membership of the European Union has created additional ties also benefiting South Tyrol.

On 16 May municipal elections were held in Trentino-South Tyrol. Elections were held in 111 of the 116 South Tyrolean municipalities. The governing SPP managed to prevail as “mayor’s party” providing 106 of the 116 mayors in total. At 57.4% against 59.4% in 2005 it nevertheless had to accept a minus of two percent and the loss of 73 seats on the municipal councils.

Part of the government’s agenda is a solution of the toponomastics issue, i.e. issuing a law on local place names pursuant to § 101 Autonomy Statute. A draft for a toponomastics law was submitted to the provincial government in the summer. As part of a systematic cleansing of thousands of obsolete Italian laws in December 2009 the Tolomei Decree was almost abolished. The provincial government submitted a complaint against the act regarding the remaining in force of the Tolomei Decree with the Italian constitutional court. German-only signs by the Alpine Association caused troubles during late spring and summer to which Minister of the Regions Raffaele Fitto also responded. An agreement in the “war of the signs” was found on 22 September through the conclusion of a protocol. A commission consisting of two South Tyrolean and two Italian representatives will try to find a solution for the approximately 1,500 disputed names on signs.
The Milan accords from 2009 between Governor Luis Durnwalder and Minister for Economic Affairs Giulio Tremonti provides that nine tenths of all taxes raised in the region are returned to the region. As a result of this nine-tenth-solution South Tyrol now no longer needs to annually renegotiate the variable portions of the budget with Rome. The Milan accords also constitute a contribution from the Region of Trentino-South Tyrol to the Italian stability pact and the implementation of fiscal federalism in Italy preventing South Tyrol from suffering major cuts during budget consolidation.

Comprehensive talks between Governor Durnwalder and Foreign Minister Franco Frattini on 16 October in South Tyrol on possible future competences for the region including postal administration were felt to be positive.

Towards the end of the year the Council of Ministers in Rome approved a by-law for the future administration of the Stilfserjoch National Park by the Regions of South Tyrol, Trentino and Lombardy.

The European region of “Tirol, South Tyrol, Trentino” is committed to manifold activities in cross-border cooperation in the fields of business, transport and communication, health, research, culture, education, energy, environment and tourism. The application for the establishment of a European Grouping for Territorial Cooperation (EGTC) is in the approval phase.

Considerations to allow the optional acquisition of Austrian nationality in addition to Italian citizenship to assure South Tyrol of closer emotional and symbolic ties to Austria were also addressed by Governor Durnwalder towards Federal Minister Spindelegger and are subject of ongoing deliberations.

On 25 May former Governor Silvius Magnago died aged 96. Another architect of South Tyrolean autonomy, Alfons Benedikter, died on 3 November aged 92.

There is an active exchange of visits between Austria and South Tyrol on all levels: on 20 February Governor Günther Platter and President of the Diet Herwig van Staa participated in the 200-year commemorations of the death of Andreas Hofer in Mantova. Governor Erwin Pröll visited Governor Durnwalder on 26 February in Bolzano. Federal President Heinz Fischer met Governor Luis Durnwalder while on a private visit in South Tyrol between 7 and 16 May. Federal Chancellor Werner Faymann, Vice-Chancellor Josef Pröll and Governor Günther Platter attended the mourning services for former Governor Silvius Magnago in Bolzano on 28 May. Governor Erwin Pröll on 24 September visited Governor Durnwalder in Bolzano. EU Regional Commissioner Johannes Hahn visited Bolzano on 1 June. In Obergurgl Federal Minister Spindelegger and Governor Platter met Governor Durnwalder and SPP Chairman Richard Theiner on 2 November. Governor Gerhard Dörfer received the South Tyrolean Governor in Klagenfurt on 10 and 11 March. On 3 December Governor Durnwalder was guest in ORF’s Press Hour.
4. Nuclear Safety

Austria continues to claim that nuclear energy neither constitutes a sustainable form of energy supply nor a viable option for fighting climate change and provides its partners with factual arguments while advocating an end to nuclear energy. This goal was pursued in numerous bilateral and international discussions and interventions on a political and expert level. The establishment of and compliance with top safety standards for nuclear plants was a particular focus.

The safety dialogue with neighbours operating or planning nuclear power stations (NPS) was thus actively continued. Expert meetings as part of the bilateral nuclear information agreements were held with the Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia and Switzerland. First exploratory talks with Italy which had committed itself to initiating negotiations on the conclusion of such an agreement were held on 8 November.

A special meeting with Germany, based on the bilateral nuclear information agreement, was held on 19 October occasioned by the decision of the German Federal Government on extending the lifecycle of nuclear power stations, at which Austria’s positions on nuclear power in general and the current decision of the German Federal Government in particular were advocated and Austrian safety standards, particularly regarding the shut-down of first generation plants, were presented.

Regarding the NPP of Temelín Austria continues to pursue the full implementation of the Brussels Accords (conclusions of the Melk Process). The research projects to clarify seismic issues recommended by the mixed parliamentary committee are run in cooperation with the Czech partners. Under the environmental impact assessment (EIA) on extension plans by the operators of the NPP Temelín, Austria has transmitted an expert opinion and the statements received from the public to the Czech side and has initiated consultations on the Austrian concerns.

Regarding the expansion of NPP Mochovce in the Slovak Republic Austria continues to avail itself of all available rights of involvement and influence. The issues unanswered during the EIA process were dealt with in detail at several expert workshops. The EIA position on the expansion of the NPP issued by the Slovak Ministry for the Environment in spring particularly
advocates the release of information to Austria, the organisation of further expert workshops, and consideration of the results of bilateral consultations on issuing the construction permit for the NPP.

On EU-level efforts were also continued to create high and legally binding security standards for nuclear plants. In November negotiations started for a directive on the treatment of used fuel elements and radioactive waste.

Under the energy partnerships with CEE countries cooperation was particularly intensified with Bulgaria, Ukraine and Belarus.

5. Alpine Convention

2010 was dominated by extensive discussions on the future and structural debates amongst the Alpine countries ranging from cosmetic changes to complex discussions on fundamentals. Discussions increasingly focused on a future “Macro-regional strategy for the Alps” together with the central question of the position of the Alpine Convention.

Work still focused on implementing the 2009 Climate Action Plan. Under the “lead country” Slovenia activities were launched to advance the study on a climate-neutral Alpine area by 2050 as a project of European Territorial Cooperation (ETC).

The compliance committee meanwhile largely completed the second compliance assessment on the implementation of the Alpine Convention and its protocols. The corresponding final report is submitted to the ministers. The respective national activities on implementing the “Population and Culture” Declaration were also integrated in a standardised reporting structure and merged in a first draft report. The above-mentioned debate on the Alpine Convention’s future working mode also generates the question of a possible new definition of the compliance committee’s role. Here again the next ministerial conference should provide a clarification.

6. Cooperation in the Danube Region and the Black Sea Region

6.1. Cooperation in the Danube Region

Austria’s traditional commitment and interest in Central and South Eastern Europe produced an initiative – first launched with Romania – to boost the sensitivity of the European Commission and the EU as a whole for the opportunities and the challenges of the Danube Region.

After the European Commission subsequently first mentioned the possibility of developing an EU-Strategy for the Danube Region modelled on the Strategy for the Baltic Sea, an Austrian-Romanian strategy inspired by Federal Minister Michael Spindelegger managed to attract the 14 countries of the Danube Cooperation, a loose consultation platform launched in 2002
and including Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Germany, Moldova, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia, the Slovak Republic, Slovenia, the Czech Republic, Ukraine and Hungary.

Subsequently all Union Member States were convinced of this plan and in June 2009 the European Council mandated the European Commission to develop a comprehensive EU Strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR) until the end of 2010 in consultation with all the countries and actors involved. The Strategy aims to provide a framework and catalyse projects and activities without any additional funds or institutions. A public consultation and five “stakeholder” conferences (one of which was held in April as an Austrian-Slovak joint event in Vienna and Bratislava) were followed by intense consultations between the European Commission and the EUSDR countries.

On 8 December the European Commission presented the EU Strategy for the Danube Region as well as the appertaining concrete action plan. The action plan’s four pillars include eleven priorities such as transport, energy, environmental protection, culture, tourism, research, education and information technology as well as economy, institutional capacity, security etc.

The strategy shall be adopted by the Council under the Hungarian Presidency during the first six months of 2011.

6.2. Black Sea Focus

The Black Sea Region, directly bordering the Danube Region, is a focus of European neighbourhood – as an area of trade and energy transit, a venue of political change, a bridge to Central Asia and the Middle East, but also for its stability risks through stalemate conflicts, cross-border crime, migration and competition for energy resources.

The EU set clear signals with initiatives, such as the Black Sea Synergy and the Eastern Partnership launched in 2009, for cooperation with partner countries of this highly sensitive region, for strengthening stability in the region and dealing with topics only manageable through an active European approach to our new neighbours in the east. Austria also must try its best to use the enormous opportunities in this region and increasingly accompany the existing economic commitment with political, diplomatic and cultural activities. Federal Minister Michael Spindelegger visited Azerbaijan, Armenia and Georgia in June and while visiting Turkey attended the groundbreaking ceremony for an OMV gas power station in the town of Samsun on the shores of the Black Sea on 8 October.

Federal Minister Spindelegger and Federal Minister Mitterlehner on 17 June presented a study by the Austrian Economic Research Institute on economic relations between Austria and the Black Sea riparian states Moldova, Turkey, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, Armenia and Georgia. Also of relevance was the preparation of the World Economic Forum’s Regional Forum scheduled to take
place in Vienna on 8 and 9 June 2011 and mainly dedicated to the Danube Region, the Black Sea Region, the South Caucasus and Central Asia.

6.3. Danube Shipping

Harmonisation of waterway traffic codes relevant for Danube shipping was achieved through adoption of Revision 4 of the European Code for Inland Waterways (CEVNI). The Danube Commission has already adapted its “Basic Provisions Governing Navigation on the Danube” (BPGND) to Revision 4 of the CEVNI and recommends its Member States to apply the new version from 1 January 2012. The other European river commissions are still analysing this UNECE recommendation to adapt the codes as closely as possible to the CEVNI in their own spheres of competence.

Work on the implementation of the Integrated European Action Programme for Inland Waterway Transport (NAIADES) begun already back in 2008 under the Austria-coordinated Platina Project was continued successfully.

In the Danube Commission technical and nautical harmonisation were successfully continued. Considering the as yet unforeseeable entry into force of the revised Belgrade Accord providing for binding unanimous decisions in 2009 the Secretariat of the Danube Commission was appointed for another three-year term. France and Turkey shall also join and the EU shall be awarded membership status in the Danube Commission’s revised statutes.
C. Global Cooperation – The United Nations

I. Introduction

UN Secretary General (UNSG) Ban Ki-moon declared 2010 “Year of Development”. Despite first signs of a global recovery from the economic and financial crisis, ups and downs in the economy, new conflicts, natural disasters, poor food safety, and pressure on natural resources represented permanent threats. The United Nations (UN) responded to these challenges utilising the Millennium Declaration and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), with the high-level UN General Assembly (UNGA) plenary organised in September on the MDGs specifically aiming at accelerating progress until 2015 by further measures. Continuing conflicts and political tensions underline the urgency of the global community’s commitment to protect human rights, reinforce the rule of law and promote democracy and good governance.

At the UN, Austria, particularly also during the second year of its membership of the Security Council (UNSC), advocated strengthening protection for the civilian population in armed conflict including special protection for children and women, the rule of law, protection of human rights and disarmament. Austria was thus intensely involved in the preparations for the 10th anniversary of the adoption of SC Resolution 1325 (2000) on women, peace and security as well as developing indicators providing better information on the progress made in the implementation of this Resolution.

After the Lisbon Treaty had entered into force on 1 December 2009 the EU continued working for a basis for improved external representation of the EU in the UN, particularly its work in the UNGA.

II. The UN General Assembly

1. Organisational Issues

1.1. General debate, high-level meetings on the Millennium Development Goals and Small Island Developing States

The General Debate of the 65th UNGA took place in New York between 23 and 29 September. The Austrian Delegation was headed by Federal President Heinz Fischer and Federal Minister Michael Spindelegger. From 20 to 22 September the UNGA held a high-level meeting on the MDGs and on 24 and 25 September a high-level meeting on the situation of the Small Island Developing States (SIDS). Federal President Fischer delivered the Austrian statements and gave a presentation at a UNIDO event on this occasion on the topic of “Access to Energy“.

During the General Debate on 23 September a UNSC summit on improving the role of the UNSC in maintaining international peace and security was held under the chairmanship of Turkish President Abdullah Gül in which
Federal President Heinz Fischer and Federal Minister Michael Spindelegger also participated. On 23 September the fifth ministerial conference for the promotion of the coming into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) was held, at which Federal Minister Spindelegger participated. At the invitation of the UNSG a high-level meeting on revitalising the Geneva Disarmament Conference (DC) and a high-level meeting on Sudan were held on 24 September. At either meeting Federal Minister Spindelegger delivered the Austrian statement. Also on 24 September Federal Minister Spindelegger attended a ministerial meeting of the Alliance of Civilisations. On 25 September Federal Minister Spindelegger took over as co-chair of a ministerial meeting on the 10th anniversary of SC Resolution 1325 (2000) on women, peace and security together with his colleagues from Canada, Great Britain, Sierra Leone, Bangladesh, Namibia, Chile and Liberia. On 27 September Federal Minister Spindelegger attended the SC meeting on fighting terrorism chaired by Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu.

Federal Minister Spindelegger in his speech before the UNGA on 25 September addressed the current situation in the Middle East underlining that either side must be aware of its responsibility for peace. In addition to demanding a reform of the UNSC he reiterated the necessity of improved participation rights for the EU in the UNGA in the light of the coming into force of the Lisbon Treaty. Regarding UN efforts to secure peace he stressed that protection of civilians was increasingly becoming a core task of peacekeeping missions requesting full implementation of the relevant SC Resolution 1894 (2009) adopted under the Austrian SC presidency in November of the previous year. He also welcomed progress on disarmament announcing the founding of a Vienna-based centre for nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. Federal Minister Spindelegger also pointed to Austria’s candidature for the Human Rights Council and in clear terms advocated multilateral cooperation in the UN.

During the ministerial week Federal President Heinz Fischer and Federal Minister Michael Spindelegger engaged in numerous bilateral talks. Federal President Fischer met the Presidents of Kyrgyzstan, Ukraine, Turkey, Lebanon and Iraq. Federal Minister Spindelegger had talks with the President of the Palestinian Authority and the Foreign Ministers of Egypt, Algeria, Israel, Canada, Cuba, Morocco, San Marino, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Uganda and high-level representatives of South Sudan. He also met for talks with the Presidents of the UNGA, the UNSG and the Secretary General of the Arab League.

2. Political Issues

2.1. Middle East

The EU failed to agree on a joint voting position on the Arab successor resolution on the UN fact-finding mission for the Gaza conflict adopted on
26 February. Austria voted in favour of the resolution together with Belgium, Cyprus, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Greece, Ireland, Luxembourg, Malta, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, and United Kingdom. The other EU Member States abstained. On the 19 annual Middle East resolutions of the 65th UNGA the EU agreed on joint voting behaviour with the exception of the resolutions on the “Syrian Golan”, the “Committee on the exercise of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people” and the “Division of Palestinian rights of the Secretariat”. Cyprus and Malta as members of the committee supported the last two resolutions contrary to the abstaining remaining EU Member States. Cyprus also voted in favour of the resolution on the “Syrian Golan” whereas the other EU Member States abstained. The EU-introduced resolution on “Aid for the Palestinian population” was the only Middle East resolution adopted unanimously by all UN-Member States. The EU also supported the successor resolution to the previous year’s resolution re-submitted by Lebanon on the “Oil spill off the Lebanese coast”.

2.2. Disarmament and International Security

The Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) in May in New York unexpectedly agreed on comprehensive action plans on the three pillars of the NPT (nuclear disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation and peaceful use of nuclear energy) and initiated a process for nuclear weapon free zones in the Middle East. This success allowed overcoming the failure of the previous conference (2005) and restore credibility of the non-proliferation regime. The main novelties of the action plan for nuclear disarmament established under Austrian leadership were the first recognition of the objective of a nuclear-weapon-free world, reference to the humanitarian consequences of the use of nuclear weapons, and a convention for the ban of nuclear weapons as well as improving transparency regarding nuclear disarmament and setting up a database for nuclear disarmament steps based with the UNSG. Regarding support for further use of nuclear energy Austria made it clear in a declaration after the adoption of the conclusions that it would only implement these measures in accordance with the Austrian Federal Constitution and Austrian legislation.

The 4th biennial meeting of states on the implementation of the UN Programme of Action against Illegal Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons from 14 to 18 July managed to adopt a substantial closing document by consensus for the first time since its start. Central issues of consultations were international cooperation and support as well as strengthening a follow-up mechanism for the UN action programme. Austria underlined its commitment to control of small arms and light weapons particularly in Africa.

A first preparatory committee of a future global arms trade treaty (ATT) between 12 and 23 July discussed the scope, principles, objectives, criteria and implementation. The general feasibility of a treaty to regulate imports,
exports and transition of conventional weapons was no longer questioned by so far skeptical UN-Member States such as Pakistan, Egypt, China, India, Iran and the Russian Federation. The USA for the first time explicitly declared its support provided that the treaty would be adopted by consensus at the conference scheduled for 2012. Austria advocated consideration of human rights and international humanitarian law as parameters of ATT and recognition of the work provided by the civil society. Together with Australia and Luxembourg, Austria supported a Symposium in Boston (USA) where representatives of states and the civil society discussed individual possible elements of an ATT.

On 23 September the 5th Ministerial Meeting in Support of the Entry into Force of the CTBT took place in New York. In contrast to the previous such ministerial meeting organised by Austria and Costa Rica as co-chairs of the Article XIV process (2008) this meeting with only 30 participating UN-Member States fell far short of expectations. In the Joint Statement adopted on the occasion the nine remaining Annex 2 countries were requested to speed up ratification of the CTBT. Numerous countries stressed the advantages of the CTBT verification system. Federal Minister Spindelegger stressed the common goal of all UN-Member States of a world free from nuclear weapons and requested an accelerated process for the CTBT to enter into force.

On the initiative and invitation by the UNSG a high-level meeting for revitalising the disarmament conference (DC) and multilateral disarmament efforts took place in New York on 24 September offering an opportunity for an open exchange of views between all UN members to overcome the stalemate in the Geneva DC. Pakistan had been the only DC member blocking the start of negotiations on the Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty (FMCT). The written summary by the UNSG reflects the range of views on causes and possible solutions of the DC blockade and points out possible next steps. Federal Minister Spindelegger participated in the debate. He pronounced himself in favour of a functioning DC requesting a review of the DC working methods and the start of substantial negotiations. Austria then submitted a resolution on this meeting to the First Committee.

Consultations in the First Committee (Disarmament and international Security) of the UNGA thanks to recent success on disarmament and non-proliferation again benefited from a good atmosphere. Much of the discussions centred on the DC with special importance being attributed to the new resolution on the follow-up on the high-level meeting on 24 September regarding the revitalisation of the work of the Geneva disarmament talks established by Austria and unanimously approved. The annual resolution “Report of the DC” was this time negotiated by DC chair Cameroon. Regarding financial and material funds for the DC only Mexico, Norway, New Zealand and Austria abstained. The explanation of vote presented by Norway on behalf of Austria, New Zealand and Norway stated that DC funding could not be viewed as automatic due to the approximately twelve-year blockade. The Committee
showed great willingness to soon start negotiations for the FMCT. Pakistan was thus isolated and was the only UN Member State to oppose the FMCT resolution. The resolution on the Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation (HCOC) submitted by the EU and adopted with 149 votes in favour was co-sponsored by approx. 90 countries, 18 countries abstained, only Iran opposed the resolution. Other new resolutions included the resolution on the START successor treaty proposed by the Russian Federation and the USA and the resolution on the role of women in disarmament, weapons control and non-proliferation submitted by Trinidad and Tobago. Austria in its declaration praised the successful NPT review conference, requested a solution to DC blockade and announced the establishment of a Centre for Disarmament and Non-Proliferation in Vienna. In its work in the committee Austria after prolonged efforts achieved the establishment of a liaison office of the UN Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) in Vienna as from 2011.

2.3. The United Nations Disarmament Commission

The UN Disarmament Commission (UNDC) at its meeting between 29 March and 16 April during the second year of its three-year working cycle could not complete work on “Recommendations for nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation” as well as elements for a draft statement on the 2010 decade as fourth disarmament decade. At the high-level meeting for revitalising the multilateral disarmament machinery on 24 September Austria co-initiated a broader debate on the reform of the UNDC working methods. Austria issued statements on the CTBT, the FMCT and the Nuclear Weapons Convention opposing any mentioning of promoting international cooperation in the area of nuclear energy in the draft declaration.

3. Economic, development and environmental issues

Work in the Second Committee (Economic and Financial Committee) focused on the effects of the global financial and economic crisis, the food crisis, climate change and environmental destruction on implementation of the MDGs by 2015. In a UNGA plenary between 20 and 22 September a closing document was adopted reiterating joint responsibility for the implementation of the MDGs evaluating success to date and recommending strategies for the implementation of each single MDG. Another UNGA plenary on 24 and 25 September assessed the progress of small island developing countries on sustainable development through implementation of the 2005 Mauritius strategy. For Austria, Federal President Heinz Fischer participated in either meeting.

Biodiversity was one of the main topics in the field of environment and sustainability. On the occasion of the International Year of Biodiversity 2010 and in preparation of the Biodiversity Conference in Nagoya (Japan) an UNGA plenary was held on this issue on 22 September. The Committee moreover
adopted important resolutions on climate protection, disaster management, desert formation, and water cooperation. Austria actively contributed to a resolution declaring 2012 the International Year for Sustainable Energy for All.

4. **Human Rights**

See Chapter G and Section C. III.

5. **International Drug Control**

Drug abuse continues to be a global challenge which the Vienna-based United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) is trying to combat in all aspects. Targeted measures for minimising supply and demand shall reduce the cultivation, the production, the trade and consumption of addictive drugs. Austria supports the efforts of the UN and UNODC to promote international cooperation on the basis of a balanced approach taking into account aspects of humanitarian law.

The UN Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) convening annually in Vienna is the “lead agency” for implementing UN drug policy. The 53rd meeting of CND between 8 and 12 March in Vienna stressed the relevance of UNODC work in international drug policy. The discussion on minimising the negative consequences of drug addiction (“harm reduction”) launched in 2009 was continued. 16 resolutions were adopted at the meeting. Austria contributed to the resolutions on HIV/aids and prevention of drug consumption. In preparation of the XVIIIth World Aids Conference in Vienna in July HIV/AIDS was chosen as one of the focuses of the meeting.

6. **International Crime Prevention**

In 2010 again Austria provided important support for UNODC activities in the area of crime control.

The 19th session of the UN Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (CCPCJ) held between 17 and 21 May in Vienna dealt with current questions of terrorism, human trafficking, and corruption. A total of 14 resolutions on different topics were adopted, including improved collection of data and information on new crime trends and developing efficient working methods for breaking up criminal networks.

The 12th UN Crime Congress in Salvador, Brazil, from 12 to 19 April focused on developing comprehensive strategies for combating crime in a globalised world. In the closing declaration the UN Member States confirm their intention to face global challenges and intensify their efforts in combating crime. The active participation of the Austrian delegation also helped include dis-
punted issues such as the protection of prisoner rights and environmental penal law into the closing declaration.

With its comprehensive expertise on combating drugs and crime the UNODC also assumes an important role in managing new challenges to security. During its membership of the UN Security Council Austria advocated increased management of the link between cross-border organised crime, conflict and development on the UN Security Council.

Austria attributes major importance to the fight against corruption and has hence committed itself to the establishment of the International Anti-Corruption Academy (IACA) in Laxenburg, Lower Austria, under the leadership of the Federal Ministry of the Interior. After the successful founding conference on 2 and 3 September in Vienna’s Hofburg the Treaty was signed by a total of 53 parties (51 states and 2 IOs) in 2010. Austria was the first country to ratify the agreement at the end of December. IACA provides an important contribution to the effective implementation of the United Nations Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC) and other regional and international agreements and conventions based on a global approach and in consideration of global diversity.

7. Social Policy

The topics of the 48th meeting of the Commission for Social Development (CSODC) on 3 to 19 February were social integration, the social consequences of the financial and economic crisis and its gender dimension as well as reviewing the implementation of action programmes for social groups. Federal Minister Rudolf Hundstorfer took part in a high-level panel discussion on the 15th anniversary of the Copenhagen World Summit for Social Development. The CSODC adopted resolutions on social integration, reviewing the Madrid international Plan of Action on Ageing, mainstreaming of handicaps in the development agenda as well as the social dimension of the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD). All resolutions in the Third Committee (social, humanitarian and cultural issues) centred on resolutions on social issues and were adopted by the UNGA by consensus. Austria led EU negotiations on the resolution on ageing.

8. International Women’s Issues

See Chapter G.

9. Humanitarian Issues

The Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) for 2011 had a total budget of 358 million US dollars through voluntary contributions from UN Member
States. The Fund thus for the second time in a row missed its defined annual financing target of 450 million US dollars and also fell short of the previous year’s budget of 399.9 million US dollars. Its prime task of immediately providing funds for financing aid measures in humanitarian crises will thus not be fully met. The total number of UN donor countries has increased to 124 with Kyrgyzstan, Costa Rica and Gambia. The ten largest donor countries (of which seven EU states) finance approx. 90% of total donation volumes (+7% compared with 2009). Austria stepped up its core contribution for 2010 (300,000 euros) by another 100,000 euros through the call for donations launched on 15 January following the earthquake in Haiti.

The resolutions on issues adopted by consensus in the UNGA plenary concerned Haiti, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Chernobyl and topical issues (safety of humanitarian personnel, coordination of humanitarian aid, support to the Palestinian people). Negotiations on the draft resolution of “international cooperation on humanitarian assistance in the field of natural disasters” was completed by the end of December. The EU participated as main contributor and facilitator of the draft resolution concerning the safety of humanitarian personnel and support of the Palestinians. Austria supported four of the six plenary resolutions so far as co-sponsor. Resolutions on the Haiti earthquake and the Pakistan floods were adopted by consensus.

10. Peaceful Use of Outer Space

At the 53rd session of the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS) from 9 to 18 June in Vienna the importance of this forum for promoting international cooperation in civil space travel was confirmed and the important contribution of space technology to the socio-economic development and facing global challenges, particularly regarding climate and the environment, was confirmed. Austria chaired the working group of the Legal Sub-Committee on National Legislation on Outer Space. A Moon Treaty seminar at the Diplomatic Academy on 25 March attracted broad recognition. Austria continued to support the UN Platform for Space-Based Information for Disaster Management and Emergency Response (UN-SPIDER) of the Vienna-based Office for Outer Space Affairs (OOSA) and financed a regional workshop for Africa from 6 to 9 July in Ethiopia for an improved use of space-based solutions. The annual Space Symposium in Graz from 21 to 24 September was dedicated to the topic of “Small Satellite Programmes for Sustainable Development: Payloads for Small Satellite Programmes”.

11. Administrative and Budgetary Questions

The main topic on the Fifth Committee (Administrative and Budgetary) was the continuation of UN management reform. Agreement was achieved on the system-wide harmonisation of on-site deployment conditions creating

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uniform wage packages for peacekeeping personnel and political special missions and for staff of funds and programmes. Moreover, the reform for simplifying UN staff contracts launched by the 63rd UNGA was completed by defining conditions for granting unlimited contracts. Local staff at headquarters outside New York (including Vienna) will also benefit from this measure. Important progress was also achieved in strengthening the responsibility within the UN regarding a more efficient use of UN funds. The UN system of administration of justice in force since 1 July 2009 underwent a first review and strengthening measures were adopted.

The Fifth Committee also reviewed several supplementary budget amendments proposed by the UNSG, e.g. for financing the political special missions, the new “UN Women” gender unit and the UNSG Special Representative (SRSG) on Sexual Violence in Conflict. The revised draft for the ordinary UN budget 2010/2011 was fixed at 5.4 billion US dollars. Austria’s mandatory contribution to the ordinary 2011 UN budget accounts for 0.851%. The annual UN budget earmarked for peacekeeping missions from July 2010 to June 2011 is 7.8 billion US dollars. Austria also makes a mandatory 0.851% contribution to the peacekeeping budget.

12. International Law

The main focus of the Sixth Committee (Legal) was on the annual International Law Week, the legal questions of the reform of internal UN Judicature, as well as terrorism, universal jurisdiction, penal competence for UN staff and experts on UN missions, and the rule of law. The Committee also handled reports by the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL) whose resolutions are coordinated by Austria and the Charter Committee as well as the Committee on Relations with the Host Country.

12.1. International Law Week

At the International Law Week, based on an Austrian proposal, legal consultants convened between 25 and 29 October to discuss issues of international law in the Sixth Committee. Debates centred on the Report by the International Law Commission on current issues of international law including caveats, expulsions of third-country nationals, effects of armed conflicts on treaties, treaties in the course of time, mandatory extraditions or penal prosecution, and joint natural resources. An interactive dialogue with special rapporteurs from the International Law Commission was held as part of the Austrian-Swedish initiative for revitalising the Sixth Committee.

12.2. Reform of the UN System of Administration of Justice

At the first review of the new system the Sixth Committee found that the system’s budget volume must be able to guarantee compliance with certain
rule of law standards. Austria as UN host country during the negotiations advocated an improved legal position of UN staff not enjoying official personnel status. Negotiations will be continued in autumn 2011 on the basis of a report by the UNSG.

12.3. Universal Jurisdiction

The discussion on Universal Jurisdiction reiterated its anchoring in current international law and its relevance in the fight against impunity. Questions of its application and a possible politicisation were also discussed. Discussions will be continued in autumn 2011 based on a report by the UNSG.

12.4. Rule of Law

The special topic discussed in the Sixth Committee under agenda item Rule of Law read “Laws and practices of Member States in implementing international law”. GA Resolution 65/32 confirmed the intention of continuing on an international level the dialogue initiated by the Rule-of-Law Unit in the UN Secretariat (Rol-Unit) with the UN-Member States on the rule of law. The necessity was stressed to provide the Rol-Unit with the necessary resources and the required personnel for an effective compliance with its tasks. The special topic for the 66th UNGA will be “Rule of law and transitional justice in conflict and post-conflict situations”. An interactive thematic GA debate shall be held in spring 2011 in preparation of a high-level meeting on “Rule of Law” during the ministerial week of the 67th UNGA.

12.5. Terrorism

See Chapter H.

12.6. Other Topics

Regarding penal competence GA Resolution 65/20 confirmed short-term measures such as reasons for jurisdiction provided by states for severe crimes committed by their nationals as UN staff members or experts. Discussions on a convention will be continued by the 67th UNGA. The establishment of conventions on state responsibility, diplomatic protection and prevention of cross-border damage through dangerous activities was postponed to the 68th UNGA. The UNGA also adopted resolutions on the status quo of the Geneva conventions and protocols, for the protection and safety of diplomatic and consular missions and representatives and reports by the Charter and Host State Committees. The Presidents of the International Court of Justice (ICJ), the International Criminal Court (ICC) and the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) and for Ruanda (ICTR) presented their
annual reports to the UNGA. The UNGA adopted the annual maritime law and fisheries resolutions.

III. The UN Security Council

1. Austrian Membership of the Security Council

From 1 January 2009 to 31 December 2010 Austria served a third membership term on the UNSC – after 1973/74 and 1991/92. During the second year of Austrian membership, the UNSC consisted of the five permanent members (P-5) France, People’s Republic of China, Russian Federation, United Kingdom and USA and of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Gabon, Japan, Lebanon, Mexico, Nigeria, Turkey and Uganda as non-permanent members.

During the two years of Austrian membership the UNSC held a total of 403 formal meetings and 212 informal consultations. Based on these consultations the UNSC adopted 107 resolutions, 65 Presidential Statements and 88 press statements. In addition to current crises it discussed developments in all countries where the UN is engaged in peace missions or through UNSG special or other representatives as well as cross-cutting issues.

Austria again in the second year of its mandate set clear priorities. By focusing on topics like human rights, the rule of law, protection of civilians, especially of women and children and issues of non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, Austria managed to contribute to specific progress on UNSC work. At the same time Austria also endeavoured to provide constructive and committed contributions to the overall SC agenda, including the highly important activities of the sanctions committee and other UNSC sub- organs. Austria also continued to preside over the Al-Qaeda/Taliban sanctions committee, the Sudan sanctions committee and the working group for international tribunals.

Austria as an EU Member State on the UNSC particularly tried to keep the respective EU Presidency, the other EU Member States and the New York EU Delegation informed about all relevant activities on the UNSC. An Austrian initiative enabled Catherine Ashton, the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (EU-HR), to take the floor before the UNSC for the first time in May in the framework of a debate on cooperation possibilities between UN and EU, which was also attended by Federal Minister Spindelegger.

Also during the second year of its membership of the UNSC, Austria strove for transparency on the decisions of the UNSC towards the totality of UN Member States by whom it had been elected onto the UNSC by a large majority while also trying to pursue an active information policy towards the civil society and media representatives.

The permanent representatives of most SC members and many more UN member states participated in the “UN Retreat” once more organised by
Austria in Alpbach. This event was used in particular for the preparation of the 10th anniversary of the adoption of Resolution 1325 (2000) in October. Moreover the Retreat was also combined with the UNSG’s “Senior Management Retreat”. UNSG Ban Ki-moon brought all top UN Secretariat staff to Alpbach for this internal closed-door meeting (Deputy UN Secretary-General Asha-Rose Migiro, and all Under-Secretary-Generals, totalling more than 70 people in all).

Just like in the year before, also during the second year of Austria’s membership on the UNSC, protection of civilians in conflict situations was once more in the focus of activities. Chad was one country in which protection of civilians in UNSC work was of prime relevance. From its start the mandate of the UN Mission in the Central African Republic and in Chad (MINURCAT) had concentrated on protection of civilians in the refugee camps. At the beginning of the year the Chad government, however, informed the UN that it was not planning to agree to an extension of the MINURCAT mandate. Following difficult negotiations SR Resolution 1923 (2010) still brought an agreement in May on extending the MINURCAT mandate until the end of the year; the mission’s down-sized military component, however, by now was only responsible for protecting the civilian UN presence. At Austria’s instigations an emergency clause was included into the Resolution authorising MINURCAT to respond to acts of violence against civilians in the mission’s direct surroundings. SR Resolution 1923 (2010) also very clearly defines the responsibility of the Chad government for protecting civilians.

UNSC debates also triggered a broad discussion on the principle of host country consent: the UNSC is increasingly convinced that host countries of UN missions should enter into an agreement (“compact”) with the UN on compliance with a specific task turning a unilateral withdrawal of consent to the continuation of the respective UN mission prior to the fulfilment of its tasks into an infringement of this accord.

This was also the approach taken by the vast majority of SC members to President Joseph Kabila’s request for a gradual withdrawal of the UN mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC). The majority of SC members agreed that an early withdrawal of what at 20,000 troops still was the world’s largest UN peacekeeping operation would bring about catastrophic results for the civilian population mainly in eastern Congo. In May the UN mission was extended until mid-2011.

African topics traditionally dominate the UNSC agenda. The UNSC particularly focused on conflict management in the Great Lakes Region, West Africa, Sudan and the Horn of Africa. Both years of Austrian SC membership were dominated by increasing cooperation between the UN, the African Union (AU) and African regional organisations like the Economic Community Of West African States (ECOWAS), at the end of the year mainly also in Ivory Coast. Generally Austria’s activities on the SC on African issues without a doubt clearly increased Austria’s visibility. One specific example of
this commitment was Austria’s integration last year into the country-specific configuration of the UN Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) for Sierra Leone.

Austria also actively contributed to UNSC debates on Sudan. This Austrian commitment launched at the initiative of Federal Minister Spindelegger was facilitated by the fact that Austria is regarded by both Khartoum and South Sudan as a partner both objectively as well as historically free from legacies. Federal Minister Spindelegger in 2010 alone met his Sudanese counterpart Ali Karti seven times and in December visited Khartoum and Juba (South Sudan). The Austrian offer of helping either side in the event of a secession of the South with expertise on legal questions, particularly regarding citizenship and issues of national succession, met with a generally positive response in both the North and the South. In November a Sudan meeting with high-level participants from the North and the South was held in Vienna and Baden – on the initiative of the Austrian Institute for European Security Policy and the Political Academy.

An African topic repeatedly on the agenda during Austria’s SC membership was the Western Sahara. No progress could be achieved on the core issue of the future status of this territory. After the conflict parties had met for informal talks in Dürnstein in August of the previous year presided over by UN Special Envoy Christopher Ross at the invitation of Austria, three further rounds of talks were held in New York in March, November and December. The SC consultations held in November regarding the violence in connection with the clearing of the Saharaüi camp near El Aaiun again underlined the urgency of progress to be achieved in finding a solution to this ongoing conflict – including a substantial dialogue of the parties on humanitarian issues.

A central topic of special relevance from an Austrian point of view and which was handled by the UNSC in the past two years was the fight against nuclear proliferation. Austria adamantly and with conviction supported these efforts with regard to a clear position of principles as IAEA host country.

In June the UNSC responded to the continuation of Iran’s nuclear programme and the discovery of a secret nuclear enrichment facility at Qom after difficult “E3+3” (Germany, France, United Kingdom plus the Russian Federation, USA and People’s Republic of China) negotiations by clearly expanding and toughening the existing sanctions regime. SC Resolution 1929 (2010), adopted by twelve pros and two cons (Brazil, Turkey) and one abstention (Lebanon), also provides for a missile test ban, a comprehensive weapons embargo, and restrictions on the Iranian transport, banking and financial services sector. In December, Austria – in cooperation with UNSC Committee 1540 responsible for measures for combating a possible proliferation of weapons of mass destruction in the hands of terrorists – held a conference in Vienna in which 25 regional organisations participated.

On the UNSC Austria continued its systematic and targeted work for the protection of women and children in conflict situations. SC Resolution
1960 (2010) on “women, peace and security” was adopted on these issues in December requesting the UNSC to attach lists of groups committing such violence to its annual reports to the UNSC on sexual violence in armed conflict and creating the respective “monitoring, analysis and reporting arrangements”. Austria actively contributed to this Resolution.

Austria moreover for many months intensely participated in the preparations of the 10th anniversary of the adoption of SC Resolution 1325 (2000) (“on women, peace and security”) on 26 October. The principal steps of this preparation process were the Austrian UN-Retreat in Alpbach at the beginning of September, a “Commitment Conference” during the UNGA at the end of September in New York (organised jointly by Canadian Foreign Minister Lawrence Cannon and Federal Minister Spindelegger) and (in October jointly organised by Austria, Mexico and United Kingdom) a public meeting of SC members with representatives from the civil society.

Building on this work the UNSC in its public session on 26 October, attended also by US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and Federal Minister Spindelegger, adopted a Presidential Statement in which the UNSC advocated the use of 26 indicators as a future measure for progress in the implementation of SC Resolution 1325 (2000). According to many observers, at no time during the ten years since the adoption of SC Resolution 1325 (2000) on “women, peace and security” had there been so many concrete developments as during the two previous years; a result to which Austria according to many had contributed substantially.

Austria had particularly striven for chairmanship of Committee 1267 responsible for managing the Al-Qaida/Taliban sanctions list because in the view of many critics and the European Court of Justice (ECJ) its procedures concerning the rule of law and the procedural justice were in dire need of reform. The Austrian President of the Committee was mainly responsible for the first comprehensive review of the list in the committee’s history. All in all 488 entries were reviewed over 18 months, of which approx. 270 for the first time since 2001; 46 names were dropped from the list; another approx. 50 further delisting demands are still being reviewed. The UNSG in June appointed former Canadian judge Kimberly Prost for the position of an independent ombudsperson created at Austria’s proposal.

As President of the Informal UNSC Working Group for International Tribunals Austria contributed to the fight against impunity. In this capacity Austria during the two years of its SC membership proposed a total of nine SC Resolutions in support of the work of the UN Criminal Tribunals for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) and Ruanda (ICTR). After almost two years of negotiations, the UNSC on 22 December adopted SC Resolution 1966 (2010) creating a residual mechanism for ICTR as from mid-2012 and for ICTY as from mid-2013. Its prime purpose is to guarantee that as yet fugitive war criminals such as Ratko Mladic or Félicien Kabuga shall remain subject to international jurisdiction even once the tribunals have been closed down.
A detailed description of Austria’s positions on the individual issues on the
UNSC agenda in 2010 can be found in the directly following sections on SC
activities.


2.1. Africa

Conflicts on the African continent accounted for much of the UNSC’s work.
Work centred on UN contributions to peacekeeping and consolidation in the
Region of the Great Lakes, in West Africa, in Sudan and the Horn of Africa.

2.1.1. Sudan

Sudan was central to UNSC deliberations both with respect to the situation
in Darfur as well as implementation of a Comprehensive Peace Agreement
(CPA) between North and South Sudan. During the second half of the year
preparations for the referendum on independence on 9 January 2011 moved
to the centre of attention. The UNSC mission to Sudan in October offered an
opportunity for discussing preparations for the referendum on South Sudan-
ese independence with the parties of the CPA in the south (Juba) and in the
north (Khartoum) and expressing hopes that the referendum would be held
in time and its result would be respected. The central importance of develop-
ments in Sudan also showed at a high-level meeting in New York.

The UN mission in Sudan (UNMIS) is stationed in the country’s south.
UNMIS mandates were extended by another twelve months in April through
SC Resolution 1919 (2010). The mandate centres on the implementation of
the CPA. UNMIS provided technical and logistical support for preparing the
elections of 10 to 15 April. UNMIS also supported preparations of the indepen-
dence referendum. Austria mainly advocated prioritisation of protection
for civilians under the UNMIS mandate and its full implementation. UNMIS
developed an adequate strategy to be able to respond directly to infringe-
ments of human rights during and after the referendum.

Darfur again saw regular violent conflicts between government troops and
rebels and attacks on UN troops and humanitarian personnel. The man-
date of the joint mission of the UN and the AU (UNAMID) was extended
by another twelve months in July through SC Resolution 1935 (2010). As a
result of Austria’s efforts the Resolution aims to prioritise protection of civil-
ians and access to humanitarian organisations to the population. Austria also
inspired the inclusion of an explicit demand for compliance with human
rights and humanitarian international law in the Resolution.

The 1591 Committee chaired by Austria is responsible for monitoring the san-
cctions regime in Darfur including a comprehensive arms embargo and specific
sanctions (travel ban, freezing of assets) against individuals. Committee work
also focused on sensitising companies for greater diligence in Darfur. SC Res-
olution 1945 (2010) extended the mandate of the Committee expert group by another year and better defined exemptions to the arms embargo.

On Federal Minister Michael Spindelegger’s Sudan initiative see Chapter C.III.1.

2.1.2. Somalia

The authorisation of the AU mission in Somalia (AMISOM) was extended by twelve months through SC Resolution 1910 (2010). SC Resolution 1964 (2010) extended authorisation of the mission until 30 September 2011 and troop size was increased from 8,000 to 12,000. The 2009 UN support package for AU troops in Somalia was extended. SC Resolution 1950 (2010) authorised measures against piracy off the Somali coast for another year. SC Resolution 1918 (2010) for the first time requested the UNSG to submit a report on possible options for the criminal prosecution of pirates. With a view to the sanctions regime in Somalia SC Resolution 1916 (2010) introduced a temporary exemption from the financial embargo for payments necessary to secure the timely supply of urgently needed humanitarian aid in Somalia. The UNSC also made it clear that international, regional (e.g. EU) and subregional organisations can also apply for exemptions from the Somali weapons embargo.

2.1.3. Democratic Republic of the Congo

Considering the expiration of the existing mandate of the UN mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) the government in May requested the termination of MONUC even though protection of the civilian population, the mission’s principal task, was not yet secured. Following challenging negotiations and a trip by the UNSC to the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DR Congo) the UNSC agreed to only slightly downsize the mission and extend it until 30 June. The United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) by virtue of SC Resolution 1925 (2010) replaced MONUC as of 1 July. MONUSCO’s top priority remains protection for civilians, followed by stabilisation and peace consolidation. In the negotiations, Austria successfully claimed the inclusion of the relevant terms of SC Resolution 1894 (2009) for the protection of the civilian population in armed conflict in the mandates of MONUSCO. As a result of mass pillage and rape by rebel groups in Walikale in the east of the DR Congo the UNSC on 17 September adopted a Presidential Statement stressing the country’s prime responsibility for guaranteeing the security and protection of the civilian population. The Government was requested to grant victims shelter and terminate impunity as well as promote reforms of the security sector. The UNSC supported the activities of SCSR on Sexual Violence in Conflict, Margot Wallström, and declared its willingness to consider all adequate measures including targeted sanctions against those responsible.
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In November the UNSC through Resolution 1952 (2010) extended the sanctions regime on DR Congo and the mandates of the expert group by another twelve months. This Resolution for the first time defined diligence provisions to minimise risks of directly or indirectly supporting illegal armed groups, sanctioned persons, criminal networks and other groups guilty of severe human rights infringements when trading in natural resources from the east of the DR Congo. In December the Committee agreed on targeted sanctions against four individuals who had infringed the imposed sanction regime.

2.1.4. Chad and the Central African Republic

At the beginning of the year President Idriss Déby of Chad informed the UN that his country no longer wanted to agree to an extension of the UN Mission in the Central African Republic and in Chad (MINURCAT). Some SC members including Austria, the UN Secretariat and numerous NGOs were worried about the perspective of MINURCAT withdrawal since at the time no functioning protection for the civilian population seemed guaranteed. The UNSC with SC Resolution 1923 (2010) agreed to extend MINURCAT’s mandate until the end of the year with responsibility of the mission’s downsized military component now only responsible for protection of the civilian UN presence. At Austria’s urging requests, an emergency clause was included authorising MINURCAT to respond to acts of violence in the mission’s direct surroundings. The Resolution also underlines the Chadian government’s responsibility for protecting the civilian population. In a final Presidential Statement on MINURCAT of 20 December the UNSC requested a UNSG report on the development in the east of Chad regarding protection of the civilian population.

The tasks of the United Nations Peacebuilding Office in the Central African Republic / Bureau Intégré des Nations Unies pour la Consolidation de la Paix en République centrafricaine (BINUCA) concentrated on supporting the national dialogue, disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration of rebels, security sector reform, the restitution of state authority as well as respect for human rights and the rule of law. At Austria’s instigation the mandate was extended by the protection of children. In December BINUCA was extended by another twelve months. Following the withdrawal of MINURCAT the Government of the Central African Republic requested the UN to support the build-up of capacities in the national army.

2.1.5. Ivory Coast

UNSC work on Ivory Coast centred on the implementation of the Ouagadougou Agreement. Core issues are disarmament and demobilisation of the militias, the re-unification of the parts of the country practically separated since the civil war, restitution of state authority throughout the entire national ter-
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ritory, elections and national reconciliation. The mandate of the UN-Mission in Ivory Coast (UNOCI) was extended until 30 June 2011 through SC Resolution 1962 (2010). On 24 November, directly after the second round of the presidential elections, the UNSC through SC Resolution 1951 (2010) authorised a reinforcement for UNOCI with UN troops from the (UNMIL) mission in neighbouring Liberia for a period of four weeks. After electoral lists had been successfully drawn up, the first round of presidential elections were held on 31 October. On 28 November the second round was held between then President Laurent Gbagbo and Alassane Ouattara. The independent election authority pronounced Ouattara winner at more than 54% of the vote. The Head of UNOCI, SRSG Young-jin Choi, confirmed the election result on 3 December, exercising the certifying function awarded to him through SC Resolution 1765 (2007). The refusal by incumbent Gbagbo to honour the result and hand over office to Ouattara caused a severe political crisis also occasioning violent clashes. The sanctions regime in Ivory Coast and the mandate of the expert group of Committee 1572 was extended through SC Resolution 1946 (2010).

2.1.6. Guinea-Bissau

SC Resolution 1949 (2010) of 23 November extended the Mandate of the Integrated Peace-Building Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNIOGBIS) until 31 December 2011. The UNSC expressed concern about the subsisting political and military instability and threats from drug trafficking and organised crime. UNIOGBIS shall support Guinea-Bissau on political dialogue, efficient fight of impunity and a comprehensive reform of the security sector and promote the work of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) in Guinea-Bissau.

2.1.7. Liberia

The UNSC extended the mandate of the UN-Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) through Resolution 1938 (2010) by another twelve months. The Resolution for the first time provides for a preparation of the transfer of tasks for preserving domestic security to the Liberian security forces. Despite progress on security sector reform challenges persist in the justice and correction system as well as in the fight against corruption. Other important topics of the stabilisation process were the confirmation of appointments for the national human rights commission by the Liberian Senate as well as the implementation of the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Liberia. The provisions on the travel ban and freezing of assets of persons close to former President Charles Taylor and the mandate of the expert panel of Committee 1521 on the sanctions regime for Liberia, were extended by SC Resolution 1961 (2010) until 16 December 2011.

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2.1.8. Sierra Leone

The UNSC through Resolution 1941 (2010) extended the mandate of the Integrated United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Sierra Leone (UNIPSIL) by another twelve months. The Resolution stresses the necessity of the implementation of the strategy documents for Sierra Leone (“Joint Vision” and “Agenda for Change”), to be achieved by UNIPSIL jointly with the UN country team and the Government as well as the PBC. The mission’s main tasks are support for the preparations of the 2012 elections and good governance, human rights, combating youth unemployment as well as the fight against organised crime, drug trafficking and corruption. The UNSC on 29 September also adopted Resolution 1940 (2010) ending the sanctions regime on Sierra Leone with immediate effect.

2.1.9. Burundi

The UN Integrated Office in Burundi (BINUB) was replaced by the new UN Office in Burundi (BNUB) through SC Resolution 1959 (2010) on 1 January 2011 and shall support the Government also in the build-up of national institutions, promotion of inter-party dialogue, fight against impunity, transitional jurisdiction, reviewing compliance with human rights and minimising poverty. Positive aspects are five successful elections and developments in transitional jurisdiction.

2.1.10. Western Sahara

The Personal Envoy of the UNSG (PE) to the Western Sahara, Christopher Ross, continued his efforts for a resumption of peace talks between Morocco and the Polisario. Representatives of Algeria and Mauritania also participated in three rounds of informal party talks outside New York. The mandate of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) was extended by twelve months by SC Resolution 1920 (2010) in which the UNSC appealed to the parties to show greater political will for a negotiated solution. The parties were encouraged to cooperate with the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) on land-based family visits and resuming visits by air. In the negotiations on the resolution Austria advocated a dialogue of the parties with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). The UNSC also dealt with the clearing of the Gdim Izik camp near El Aaiun by Moroccan security forces in November. Austria supported UNSC consultations on this issue.

2.2. Middle East

2.2.1. Israel / Palestinian Territories

In response to the storming of the Gaza aid flotilla by Israel on 31 May the UNSC on 1 June issued a Presidential Statement calling for a prompt, impartial, credible and transparent investigation of events in harmony with inter-
national standards. In a press statement of 4 August the UNSC welcomed the establishment of a Commission for investigating the incident by the UNSG and the acknowledgement by Israel and Turkey of comprehensive cooperation with the mixed Israeli-Turkish committee headed by former New Zealand Prime Minister Geoffrey Palmer and former Colombian President Alvaro Uribe.

2.2.2. Lebanon

On 3 August South Lebanon suffered the harshest clashes between the Israeli and the Lebanese armies since 2006 causing casualties and wounded on either side. The UNSC agreed on remarks by the SC Presidency towards the press calling both parties to utmost restraint and compliance with the ceasefire. Its fragility again also shows regular infringements of Lebanese air space by the Israeli air force and other incidents. Generally the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) succeeded in preserving the fragile peace south of the Litani River with troops faced with restricted freedom of movement. SC Resolution 1937 (2010) extended the UNIFIL mandate by another year to 31 August 2011. In UNSC consultations on Lebanon Austria advocated termination of violations of the Lebanese airspace by Israeli overflights, withdrawal of Israeli troops from Ghajar and the area of the Shebaa farms in South Lebanon and disarmament of Hezbollah and Palestinian militia in the UNRWA refugee camps in Lebanon. Considering ongoing reports of arms smuggling in South Lebanon, Austria requested strict compliance with the arms embargo.

The Special Envoy of the UNSG for the implementation of the Resolution 1559 (2004), Terje Rød-Larsen, twice briefed the UNSC on relevant developments. The resolution requested all foreign troops to withdraw from Lebanon and all active militia in Lebanon to disarm. The Lebanese Government was also promised support in extending control over the entire national territory.

Speculations regarding possible charges by the Special Tribunal for Lebanon increasingly contributed to domestic political tensions. On 5 November the UNSC dealt with attacks on a team of investigators from the Special Tribunal for Lebanon Chief Prosecutor’s Office in Beirut. Austria advocated preservation of the Special Tribunal’s independence, underlining its support for activities serving the fight against impunity and strengthening the rule of law.

2.2.3. Iraq

In his capacity as Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), Special Representative of the Secretary-General Ad Melkert briefed the UNSC about the situation in Iraq on a quarterly basis. After actively supporting the Iraqi election commission in the preparation and execution of the parliamentary elections on 7 March, the UN concentrated their efforts on accompanying the government formation process lasting more than
eight months. This political stalemate largely brought UNAMI initiatives for solving domestic border conflicts and open constitutional questions to a standstill. Austria supported UNAMI efforts for national reconciliation and strengthening the protection of human rights and minorities as well as the rule of law. SC Resolution 1936 (2010) extended the UNAMI mandate until 31 July 2011. In a press statement of 10 November the UNSC condemned series of attacks on Christian and Muslim places of worship and an attack on the convoy of SRSG Melkert. On 15 December the UNSC, with Secretary General Johannes Kyrle participating, by adopting three Resolutions lifted a number of sanctions against Iraq and terminated two programmes based on a mandate under Chapter VII of the UN Charter. SC Resolution 1956 (2010) extended the privileges and immunities as well as the International Advisory and Monitoring Board for the Iraq Development Fund (DFI) for the last time until 30 June 2011. SC Resolution 1957 (2010) lifted the 1991 sanctions against Iraqi weapons of mass destruction programmes and restrictions in civilian nuclear development. SC Resolution 1958 (2010) initiated the liquidation of the Oil-for-Food Programme. Regarding the lifting of sanctions in connection with the Iraqi programme of weapons of mass destruction, Austria advocated speedy ratification of the additional protocol to the IAEA Safeguards Agreement and the CTBT. The UNSC on 17 December extended funding of the mandate of the UNSG’s High-Level Coordinator, Gennady Tarasov to investigate the fate of missing Kuwaiti nationals and third-country citizens as well as the returning of Kuwaiti assets on 30 June 2011. In a press statement on 21 December the UNSC approved the formation of a government of national partnership by the Iraqi parliament. An appeal was launched to the country’s political leaders to promote national reconciliation.

Austria also presided over the Governing Council of the United Nations Compensation Commission (UNCC), a Geneva-based subsidiary organ of the UNSC installed pursuant to SC Resolution 692 (1991) to handle compensation claims relating to Iraq’s occupation of Kuwait in 1990/91. The Austrian position on the one hand reflected support for Iraqi efforts to completely restore its international status prior to 1991 and, on the other, to recognise legitimate Kuwaiti security concerns.

2.2.4. Iran

In June the UNSC, following challenging E3+3 (Germany, France, United Kingdom plus the Russian Federation, USA and the People’s Republic of China) negotiations, responded to the continued Iranian nuclear programme and discovery of a secret nuclear enrichment plant in Qom with a clear expansion and tightening of the existing sanctions regime. SC Resolution 1929 (2010) adopted by twelve pros and two cons (Brazil, Turkey) as well as one abstention (Lebanon) also includes a missile test ban, a comprehensive arms embargo, and restrictions for the Iranian transport, banking and financial services sector and provides for the establishment of an expert panel.
Austria made constructive contributions to the negotiations on the Resolution and advocated strengthening legal certainty and clarity of the resolution texts. At Austria’s instigation requests for a speedy ratification of the CTBT and the additional protocol to the IAEA Safeguards Agreement were included. In its explanation of vote at the adoption of Resolution 1929 (2010) on 9 June Austria stressed its support for the EU’s long-standing double track policy (diplomatic negotiations with Iran in parallel to tightening sanctions for non-cooperation) and again requested Iran to respond to the offers of negotiations made by the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (EU-HR) Catherine Ashton. In this respect Austria also supported the two E3+3 incentive packages from 2006 and 2008 hoping that Iran would commence dialogue with the E3+3 and EU-HR Ashton without any preconditions to achieve a comprehensive solution of the nuclear dossier. This position had also been clearly expressed by Federal Minister Michael Spindelegger during the visit of Iranian Foreign Minister Manouchehr Mottaki in April in Vienna.

The Sanctions Committee on Iran established by SC Resolution 1737 (2006) continued its monitoring activities. Resolution 1929 (2010) established a new expert panel at first for one year. Its purpose is to provide support for the 1737 Committee through information analyses, recommendations and reports. Already on 14 December the expert panel held talks with representatives of the Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs and other ministries in Vienna. The experts were briefed in detail on the Austrian efforts on implementing commitments under the special SC Resolutions and the EU autonomous sanctions against Iran.

2.3. Asia

2.3.1. Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK)

Tensions on the Korean peninsula again sharpened as a result of two military incidents in the Yellow Sea. The sinking of the South Korean navy ship Cheonan on 26 March killed 46 seamen from the Republic of Korea. An investigation report published by the Republic of Korea in cooperation with international experts stated that the Cheonan had been sunk by a torpedo from DPRK stocks. On 14 June informal interactive dialogues of the UNSC with the permanent representatives of the Republic of Korea and the DPRK were held. The Presidential Statement adopted on 9 July by the UNSC condemns the attack on the Cheonan without mentioning its origins. The DPRK artillery attack on the island of Yongpyong on the Republic of Korea’s sovereign territory on 23 November was the biggest infringement of the 1953 armistice to date. The incident occurred at around the time of publication of a report by an American expert team (so-called “Hecker Report”) on DPRK activities related to a uranium enrichment plant and construction of a light water reactor. Informal consultations on the UNSC produced no result. Faced with
continuous threats of military violence by the DPRK in the event of military exercises, as announced by the Republic of Korea for 18 to 21 December, the Russian Federation requested a UNSC emergency meeting for 19 December. The UNSC failed to agree on a press statement. The expert panel of the 1718 Sanctions Committee in March and September held talks with the competent Austrian authorities on the implementation of the sanctions in place against the DPRK under SC Resolutions 1718 (2006) and 1874 (2009).

2.3.2. Afghanistan

The UNSC in the course of the year convened for five public debates on Afghanistan. In press statements on 5 February and 23 July the UNSC called for a swift implementation of the findings and projects defined at the London and Kabul Afghanistan Conferences. Staffan de Mistura on 13 March replaced Kai Eide as Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA). Resolution 1917 (2010) on 22 March extended the UNSC UNAMA mandate by another twelve months. Defined UNAMA working priorities include the coordination of the international aid, improvements of the civilian-military coordination, provision of Good Services in support of the Afghan re-integration and reconciliation programme as well as technical support for the parliamentary elections and the election reform process. Between 21 and 24 June the UNSC visited Afghanistan, also meeting Afghan national and government leaders, members of parliament and representatives from the civil society. The international Security Assistance Force (ISAF) mandate was extended by another twelve months until 13 October 2011 through SC Resolution 1943 (2010). In December the UNSC responded with a press statement to the publication of the final results of the Afghan parliamentary elections on 18 September.

2.3.3. Kyrgyzstan

Following the fall of the Bakiyev government in April and the violent conflicts between the Kyrgyz and the Uzbek minority in the southern Kyrgyz areas of Osh and Dzhalalabad in June the UNSC repeatedly dealt with the developments in the Central Asian Republic. The UNSG informed the UNSC on 15 April about the agreement found on President Kurmanbek Bakiyev’s departure and requested Kyrgyzstan to restore the rule of law. The SC Members welcome the effective cooperation between the UN and the EU and the OSCE in handling the crisis. On 14 June UN Under-Secretary-General (USG) for Political Affairs Lynn Pascoe briefed the UNSC on the latest developments in Kyrgyzstan expressing concern about instigations to ethnic violence and providing information on UN humanitarian aid measures for the approx. 75,000 refugees. In the UNSC consultations on 24 June Assistant UN-Secretary-General (ASG) for Political Affairs Oscar Fernández-Taranco pointed to the continuously unstable situation in Kyrgyzstan. UNSC consultations failed to produce concrete results. In his semi-annual briefing on the
work of the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia (UNRCCA) on 5 August, SRSG Miroslav Jenča, in his capacity as Head of UNRCCA briefed the UNSC on the centre’s activities for overcoming the Kyrgyzstan crisis. The UNSC adopted a press statement welcoming the role of UNRCCA in connection with the events in Kyrgyzstan.

2.3.4. Nepal

The Head of the UN Mission in Nepal (UNMIN) and representative of the UNSG (RSG), Karin Landgren, briefed the UNSC in January, May and September on the political situation in Nepal. The main task of UNMIN was monitoring management of arms and armed personnel of the former parties to the civil war. In the light of the stagnating peace process and the unsolved question of transferring the monitoring tasks to Nepalese actors the UNMIN mandate was extended three times by four months each. SC Resolution 1909 (2010) provided for an extension until 15 May and also requested preparations for the Mission’s withdrawal. On 12 May the UNMIN mandate was again extended in unchanged form through SC Resolution 1921 (2010) by another four months until 15 September. In her briefing on 7 September RSG Landgren informed the UNSC about worrying developments in Nepal after the resignation of Prime Minister Madhav Kumar Nepal at the end of June. The extension of the deadline for drafting the new constitution until 28 May 2011 managed to secure the temporary continuation of the peace process. SC Resolution 1939 (2010) extended the UNMIN mandate one last time by four months until 15 January 2011. In October and December USG Pascoe travelled to Nepal as broker and provided a subsequent report to the UNSC. On 20 October the UNSC adopted a press statement requesting the Nepalese parties to engage in increased cooperation. During the entire year Austria participated in UNMIN with two military experts (“Arms Monitors”).

2.3.5. Myanmar

On 24 March the UNSC convened for closed consultations on Myanmar during which UNSG Chief-of-Staff Under-Secretary-General Vijay Namibiar, in his capacity as Special Adviser to the UNSG (SA) for Myanmar, informed about the situation following publication of the election laws for the parliamentary elections in November. The SC Members voiced broad support for the UN’s Good Services stressing the necessity of working towards a political process also including the opposition. After the elections on 7 November and the subsequent release of Peace Nobel Prize winner Daw Aung San Suu Kyi from house arrest the UNSC on 18 November again convened for closed consultations with SA Namibiar. Austria together with the majority of SC Members pointed out that the elections had not lived up to democratic standards, welcomed the end of house arrest for Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, and requested the release of all other political prisoners. On 6 December SA
Nambiar briefed the UNSC in closed consultations about his first official visit to Myanmar on 27 and 28 November.

2.3.6. Timor-Leste

The UNSC on the basis of the semi-annual reports of the UNSG discussed the situation in Timor-Leste in two open debates showing further stabilisation over the year last but not least thanks to the continued presence of the UN Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT). The UNMIT mandate was extended by another year through SC Resolution 1912 (2010) of 26 February. In an open debate of the UNSC on 23 February the new Head of UNMIT, SRSG Ameenah Haq, showed herself confident that the ongoing process of transferring police tasks to Timorese police would soon be completed if efforts for compliance with the agreed criteria would be continued in concentrated form. Regarding the future of UNMIT SRSG Haq informed the UNSC in an open debate on 19 October about the establishment of a mechanism under which the government of Timor-Leste and UNMIT shall jointly assume planning for transition from UNMIT to a different form of UN presence in 2012.

2.4. Europe

2.4.1. Kosovo

The UNSC discussed the UNSG’s quarterly reports on the UN Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) four times in total (22 January, 17 May, 3 August and 12 November) with representatives of Serbia and Kosovo. Upon request by Serbia the UNSC on 6 July also dealt with the security situation in Kosovo after unrest had broken out on 2 July in North Mitrovica due to the opening of an administration office in which one person had been killed. While the situation in Kosovo remained largely stable, only little progress was achieved on practical cooperation between Serbia and Kosovo in the domains of law, customs and cultural heritage. The integration of the north into the national Kosovar structures continued to prove difficult. The Kosovar government showed decreasing willingness for cooperation with UNMIK. The SC meeting on 12 November also discussed the resolution on the legal opinion by the International Court of Justice (ICJ) concerning the legality of the Kosovar declaration of independence (welcoming the EU’s willingness to support a dialogue between the parties).

2.4.2. Bosnia and Herzegovina

SC Resolution 1948 (2010) adopted on 18 November extended the mandate of the EU’s military operation in Bosnia and Herzegovina (EUFOR Althea) by another twelve months. On 24 May and 11 November Ambassador Valentin Inzko, in his capacity as High Representative, briefed the UNSC about the lat-
est developments in Bosnia and Herzegovina on the basis of his semi-annual reports to the UNSG.

2.4.3. Cyprus

The direct negotiations between the two ethnic group leaders Dimitris Christofas and Mehmet Ali Talat and his successor Derviş Eroğlu on the island’s re-unification, launched in September 2008, were continued. Based on reports by the UNSG on the UN peacekeeping force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) and the Good Services the UNSC was informed about the progress in negotiations and the situation in Cyprus, generally described as stable and quiet, by the Special Advisor to the UNSG on his Good Services in Cyprus, Alexander Downer, and Assistant UN-Secretary- General (ASG) Atul Khare on 10 June as well as the SRSG for Cyprus, Lisa Buttenheim, on 8 December. After the meeting of the two ethnic group leaders with the UNSG in New York on 18 November, Special Envoy Downer on 30 November submitted the UNSG’s detailed progress report on the negotiations to the UNSC. The UNSC supported the current direct negotiations and underlined the relevance of confidence-building measures for further progress. SC Resolutions 1930 (2010) of 15 June and 1953 (2010) of 14 December extended the UNFICYP mandates by six months each. Turkey stated that UNFICYP presence on the island was generally perceived as positive, but, arguing that ever since the start of the mission the UN had always only requested approval from the Republic of Cyprus but not from the Turkish-Cypriot side, ended up being the only SC member to oppose the respective resolution.

2.5. Latin America

2.5.1. Haiti

As a result of the strong earthquake in Haiti on 12 January, the UNSC by virtue of Resolution 1908 (2010) on 19 January temporarily expanded the UN Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) by 1,500 personnel in the police and 2,000 personnel in the military component. This should enable MINUSTAH to support direct aid measures and efforts for reconstruction and guarantee stability in Haiti. During the preparations for the donor conference for Haiti on 31 March in New York, John Holmes, USG for Humanitarian Affairs, and Alain Le Roy, USG for Peacekeeping, briefed the UNSC on the situation in Haiti on 19 February. The UNSC agreed on remarks by the SC President to the press underlining solidarity with Haiti and the Haitian government’s leadership role for reconstruction. On 1 April the UNSG appointed Edmond Mulet as new Special Representative for Haiti and successor to Hédi Annabi, the former head of MINUSTAH who had perished in the earthquake. With SC Resolution 1927 (2010) of 4 June, the UNSC approved the temporary expansion of MINUSTAH’s police component by another 680 personnel and adaptation of its mandate providing for logistical support and provision of
technical expertise by the Mission for the rule of law. On 14 October the UNSC through Resolution 1944 (2010) extended the mandate of MINUSTAH by another twelve months. Following the first round of presidential and parliamentary elections on 28 November ASG Khare and USG Le Roy on 30 November and 10 December briefed the UNSC on the situation in Haiti. In a press statement the UNSC expressed concern on the alleged election fraud and appealed to candidates to stay calm and search for a solution within the framework of the provided legal mechanisms.


3.1. Constitutionality and Rule of Law

Strengthening international law and the rule of law were leitmotivs of the Austrian membership of the UNSC. Austria continuously worked on implementing these principles in daily UNSC work. On 29 June under the Mexican presidency, strengthening the rule of law was discussed for the first time in four years in an open debate on the SC. The Presidential Statement adopted in the process was substantially reinforced through Austrian proposals for the protection of civilians, the fight against impunity, and a reference to the ICC Review Conference in Kampala. The UNSG was requested to produce a report within twelve months investigating the implementation of earlier recommendations and further steps for promoting the rule of law in conflict and post-conflict situations.

Austria continued to advocate strengthening transparency in UNSC work. In the open SC debate on the UNSC working methods on 22 April, Austria favoured greater interaction of the UNSC with the UN Member States, requesting enhanced cooperation between the UNSC and the PBC. The SC President’s note on the UNSC working methods in the Informal UNSC working group on documentation and other procedural questions and its adoption by the UNSC on 27 July constituted another step towards strengthening transparency in UNSC work.

3.2. International Tribunals and Courts

As President of the Informal UNSC Working Group for International Tribunals Austria contributed substantially to strengthening the rule of law and fighting impunity. The prime task of this working group is to support the work of the Yugoslavia and Ruanda Tribunals (ICTY, ICTR) and prepare a mechanism for taking over the remaining functions of the tribunals. After negotiations of more than two years, the UNSC on 22 December adopted SC Resolution 1966 (2010), introduced by Austria, on establishing residual mechanisms. Adopting the Resolution was an important step and a clear message from the UNSC against impunity. The Residual Mechanism with offices in The Hague (Netherlands) and Arusha (Tanzania) guarantees that
war criminals like Ratko Mladic or Félicien Kabuga will be brought to court even once the tribunals will have closed down. In addition to court proceedings the Residual Mechanism will also control the execution of sentences, witness and victim protection, reviewing sentences and administration of archives. Compromise solutions were found on all disputed issues in the legally and politically complex resolution negotiations. As chair of the Working Group Austria also introduced SC Resolutions 1915 (2010), 1931 (2010), 1932 (2010), 1954 (2010) and 1955 (2010) in support of the work of the UN criminal tribunals.

3.3. Preserving International Peace and Security, Preventive Diplomacy

Under the Nigerian Presidency the UNSC on 16 July in an open debate discussed the topic of “Optimizing the Use of Preventive Diplomacy Tools: Prospects and Challenges in Africa”. The SC Members stressed the importance of increased commitment to conflict prevention and in this context also called for using the comparative advantages of regional and subregional organisations in Africa. In a Presidential Statement the UNSC requested the UNSG to report within twelve months on how UN efforts in this area within the organisation and in cooperation with regional and subregional organisations could be optimised.

On 23 September an SC summit chaired by Turkish President Abdullah Gül was held on “securing an effective role of the UNSC for maintaining international peace and security”. Discussions centred on a more efficient use of existing UN instruments for the creation and maintenance of peace, better coherence of the numerous actors on regional and UN level, as well as a sharper focus on prevention and early warning mechanisms. Federal President Heinz Fischer and Federal Minister Michael Spindelegger attended the summit on behalf of Austria. As a result the UNSC adopted a Presidential Statement renewing the pledge for an efficient fulfilment of its tasks and recognising new challenges such as terrorism, proliferation of Small and Light Weapons, organised crime, piracy as well as trafficking in drugs and human beings.

3.4. Protection of the Civilian Population in Armed Conflict

Austrian priorities on the UNSC included protection of the civilian population, particularly of women and children in armed conflict which also was a focus of Austrian membership of the Security Council during the second year. Austria continuously strove to include the provisions of SC Resolution 1894 (2009), adopted under the Austrian presidency in November 2009, into the peacekeeping mandates for the protection of the civilian population. This was achieved in the UN missions in Afghanistan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, in Sudan and in Ivory Coast. The open SC debate on 7 July produced a first balance of progress made on the implementation
of SC Resolution 1894 (2009). On 22 November the UNSC in another open debate discussed the most recent UNSG debate on the protection of the civilian population in armed conflict, focusing primarily on the implementation and further development of SC Resolution 1894 (2009). During the debate the UNSC adopted a Presidential Statement stressing, in accordance with an Austrian proposal, the importance of sustainable solutions for refugees and internally displaced persons as well as the necessity of communicating peacekeeping operations to the local population.

Austria continued its active participation in the sessions on the Informal UNSC Expert Group on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict held in the run-up to the extension of peacekeeping mandates.

3.5. Women, Peace and Security – Combating Sexual Violence in Armed Conflict

The year was dominated by the ten-year anniversary of the adoption of SC Resolution 1325 (2000) on Women, Peace and Security. On 27 April the UNSC at a debate for the first time met with the newly appointed SRSG on Sexual Violence in Conflict, Margot Wallström, adopting a Presidential Statement in preparation of the ten-year anniversary.

On the preparation of the anniversary by the UN Retreat in Alpbach and the Commitment Conference see Chapter C.III.1.

Under the Presidency of Uganda an open debate, also attended by Federal Minister Michael Spindelegger and other ministers, was held on the occasion of the anniversary on 26 October adopting a Presidential Statement. The UNSC thus adopted a number of indicators which in the future should better highlight and render quantifiable progress in the implementation of SC Resolution 1325 (2000). In preparation of the open debate Austria, together with Mexico and the United Kingdom, organised an Arria format meeting on the issue of improved implementation of the Resolution areas affected by armed conflict thus allowing civil society representatives to contribute their positions to UNSC work. On 16 December SC Resolution 1960 (2010) was adopted under US Presidency providing the establishment of “Monitoring, Analysis and Reporting Arrangements” – similar to the existing system for the protection of children in armed conflict – on conflict-related sexual violence and requesting the UNSG to attach a list of conflict parties committing rape and other forms of sexual violence to his annual reports on sexual violence in armed conflict to the UNSC in the future. Specific commitments made by these parties (implementation of which is a precondition for deletion from the UNSG list) shall be systematically monitored. After creating a normative setting with SC Resolutions 1820 (2008) and 1888 (2009) this closed important gaps in the implementation and ended the poorer position of victims of sexual violence aged eighteen plus.
3.6. Children and Armed Conflict

The annual open UNSC debate on the topic of “Children and armed conflict” was held on 16 June and chaired by Mexico. The main topics of the debate included the claim for more powerful measures against conflict parties committing continuous or particularly drastic infringements against children in conflict situations. In the Presidential Statement adopted as a result of the debate the UNSC expressed willingness to impose sanctions on these conflict parties. Based on an Austrian-French proposal further provisions were included in the Presidential Statement to facilitate the targeted imposition of sanctions in practice. The declaration also specified that the UNSC working group on “Children and armed conflict” should carry out a first country visit within a year.

The UNSC working group on “Children in armed conflict” convened to five formal meetings and a number of consultations on country-specific conclusions and recommendations. In total the working group handled four country-specific UNSG reports on the situation of children in armed conflict (Democratic Republic of the Congo, Nepal, Philippines and Somalia) and one special report on the situation in Sri Lanka established by Major General Patrick Cammaert commissioned by the SRSG for children and armed conflict, Radhika Coomaraswamy. The working group adopted conclusions and recommendations on five country situations (Colombia, Nepal, Philippines, Sri Lanka and Uganda) appealing to the conflict parties to discontinue their crimes against children, fight impunity, and work out detailed plans for the release of child soldiers. In November under Austrian participation the working group completed its first country visit to Nepal. The aim of the visit was to verify the implementation of the action plan signed by the conflict parties and identify lingering impediments for the reintegration of former child soldiers.

3.7. Peacekeeping Operations

With approx. 125,000 deployed troops, police and civil experts in UN PKOs, a historic high was reached in spring. Scarce personnel resources and the growing complexity of the mandates of multidimensional PKOs require adaptations in the structures and proceedings for the operative leadership of PKOs. The PKO reflection process commenced by the United Kingdom and France in the UNSC at the beginning of 2009 and the UN Secretariat’s “New Horizon” Initiative on PKO reform launched in summer 2009 were continued. In September the first Progress Report on the implementation of the “New Horizon” reform document was published. The four priorities of the reform agenda are the conceptual further development of peacekeeping, measures for mobilising resources and for training optimising logistic PKO support and improvement of mechanisms for PKO planning and monitoring. The UNSC spent three months dealing with generic questions of peacekeeping
and increasingly focused on the intertwining of peacekeeping and peace-building. The PKO reform process was also supported by the UNSC working group on PKO functioning as a forum for dialogue between SC members, the UN Secretariat and troop providers as well as major financial contributors. Austria’s contribution to the reform debate were suggestions for improved information exchange between the UNSC, the UN Secretariat and troop providers as well as a deepened cooperation between the UN and regional crisis management organisations. Austria also advocated measures for the improved protection of the civilian population through PKOs.

The Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations focused on the proposals in the “New Horizon” document on conceptual further development of peacekeeping and optimising structures for PKO execution and monitoring. The Committee for the first time adopted comprehensive recommendations on the protection of civilians thus recognising the great importance of this task in current PKOs. The UN Secretariat was commissioned to draw up a strategic framework for mission-wide protection strategies and development of training modules. Discussions on robust peacekeeping (question of the use of violence in PKOs) and on the working methods in the Committee were controversial. Austria primarily advocated the implementation of SC Resolution 1894 (2009) for the protection of the civilian population in armed conflict, for gender aspects and the protection of children as well as improved cooperation between the UN and regional organisations.

115 countries provided personnel for the 16 PKOs existing at the beginning of the year. The MINURCAT mandate expired on 31 December. The MINUSTAH military and police components had to be significantly increased as a result of the Haiti earthquake on 12 January. The mission in the DR Congo (MONUC) was converted into a stabilisation mission (MONUSCO) and cut in personnel size. For the first time since its launch in 2007, UNAMID nearly reached total mandated personnel size. At the end of the year deployed military and police personnel in all UN missions totalled 98,638 persons (31 December 2009: 98,114). No new missions were planned. The UN Secretariat wishes to use this opportunity for consolidating PKO organisation and execution. The largest operations were UNAMID (22,444 persons), MONUSCO (19,105 persons), MINUSTAH (11,984 persons) and UNIFIL (11,961 persons). Asia and Africa continued to contribute most of the personnel. Scarce resources continued to have a negative effect on the implementation of the PKO mandates particularly regarding the protection of the civilian population. By the end of the year 393 Austrians (382 troops and 11 military observers) were deployed in six UN PKOs and 437 Austrians in the UNSC authorised NATO-led peace mission in Kosovo (KFOR). Austrian Major General Wolfgang Jilke was commander of the UN Disengagement Observer Force on the Golan Heights (UNDOF) until March. Three Austrians participated in the UNSC authorised NATO-led international Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan (ISAF), 336 in the European Union Military Operation in Bosnia and Herzegovina.
(EUFOR Althea). By the end of the year Austria was the fourth largest personnel contributor to UN-led missions and peacekeeping operations among EU countries after Italy, France and Spain. In total Austria scored position 38 amongst 115 UN troop providers.

3.8. Peacebuilding

“Peacebuilding in direct post-conflict situations” was the topic of two SC debates. The main issues were the relevance of national “ownership” and the national build-up of capacities as a basis for peacebuilding, the necessity of parallel peacekeeping and peacebuilding tasks, cooperation between the UN and other international and regional organisations as well as the transition from PKO to so-called “Integrated Peacebuilding Offices” as currently established in Guinea-Bissau and Sierra Leone. Austria requested greater integration of PBC into UNSC work, including the establishment of UN PKO mandates, and advocated more consideration of the work of country-specific PBC configurations in the UNSC. The UNSG report on the participation and involvement of women in peacebuilding, published in September, was debated in the UNSC on 13 October. The Presidential Statement adopted at the occasion stresses the key role of women in peacebuilding and their full and equal participation in peace processes.

On the adoption of SC Resolution 1947 (2010) see Chapter C.IV.

3.9 Transversal Threats

On 24 February the UNSC was given a briefing by the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), Antonio Maria Costa, on transversal threats to peace and security as well as organised crime and drug trafficking. The UNSC adopted a Presidential Statement and provided also for the possibility of regular UNODC briefings on the UNSC. The UNSG was also called upon to consider drug trafficking and cross-border crime as factors in conflict prevention strategies, conflict analysis and in the planning and assessment of integrated UN missions and submit adequate analyses to the UNSC. In the debate Austria stressed the urgent need for the fight against drugs and pointed to the International Anti-Corruption Academy (IACA) established in Laxemburg in September.

On 19 March the UNSC held an open debate on the effects of illegal trade in small arms and light weapons on Central Africa. The discussion centred on the negative effects of illegal arms trade such as prolongation of armed conflicts, prevention of peace-consolidating initiatives, force against civilians including women and children, and human rights violations. The importance of (sub-) regional and international cooperation as well as support of the Central African states for building up capacities was also stressed. The Presidential Statement adopted after the debate includes an appeal for joining the UN Convention against cross-border organised crime (UNTOC) and
provides support for the Economic Community of Central African States Initiative (ECCAS) for a weapons control treaty.

3.10. Combating Terrorism

3.10.1. 1267 Sanctions Committee (Al-Qaida/Taliban)

During the Austrian SC membership Austria presided over the 1267 Sanctions Committee (Al-Qaida/Taliban). The 1267 Committee is responsible for implementing sanctions against persons and entities in contact with Al-Qaida and the Taliban. A so-called “Consolidated List” includes approx. 500 persons and entities with contacts to the two groups sanctioned by asset freezing, travel bans and arms embargos. From an Austrian point of view compliance with the committee-internal proceedings and the implementation of these measures is in line with the international and European measures on the rule of law, transparency and fairness. An important step in this direction was the comprehensive review of all listings pursuant to SC Resolution 1822 (2008) carried out until the middle of the year. This should be accompanied by an updating and dynamisation of the list. The “Review” verified 488 listings and 46 names were dropped from the list. About 50 more de-listing requests are still pending. Considering the current debate on reconciliation with moderate Taliban for stabilising Afghanistan this technical review process has gained in political dynamics. In assessing the respective requests the committee particularly considered whether the persons to be dropped had renounced on violence, cut off ties with Al-Qaida and respected the Afghan constitution. In the end eleven “reconciled” Taliban were deleted from the list. The establishment of an ombudperson for the independent review of requests for deletion from the consolidated list was an essential novelty through SC Resolution 1904 (2009). Canadian judge Kimberly Prost, appointed by the UNSG, took up work at the beginning of July.

3.10.2. Counter-Terrorism Committee

The Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC) established by SC Resolution 1373 (2001) monitors implementation of measures for combating terrorism on member state level and provides adequate support. The Counter-Terrorism Executive Directorate (CTED), supplementing the CTC and consisting of approx. 30 experts, goes on country visits and evaluations and provides bilateral or multilateral technical support. During the discussions of the CTED mandate extension by SC Resolution1963 (2010) Austria advocated strengthening the human rights aspects of work in CTC and CTED. Austria further focused on a transparent working mode of the Counter-Terrorism Committee.

3.11. 1540 Committee

In the 1540 Committee for the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction to non-state actors (terrorists) Austria continuously strove to achieve
improvements on non-proliferation. The comprehensive review of implementation standards of SC Resolution 1540 (2004) was completed on 29 January. First open committee meetings to which representatives of all UN member states and chosen international and regional organisations and entities had been invited were a central part of the review. On 15 and 16 December Austria, in its capacity as coordinator of the 1540 working group on cooperation with international organisations, jointly with UNODA organised a first expert conference at Vienna’s Hofburg on cooperation with international, regional and subregional organisations on the implementation of SC Resolution 1540 (2004). Austria announced its willingness to hold similar meetings.

3.12. Cooperation between the United Nations and Regional Organisations

The debate on cooperation between the UN and regional and subregional organisations on 13 January under Chinese presidency for the preservation of international peace and security was attended by eleven organisations and was the largest meeting to date between the UNSC and regional organisations. In a Presidential Statement the UNSC expressed the intention of holding informal interactive dialogues with regional and subregional organisations.

In a public session initiated by Austria, EUHR Catherine Ashton informed the UNSC on 4 May about the cooperation between the UN and the EU in global peacekeeping. EUHR Ashton pointed out that the EU and UN pursue the same goals, the EU is the biggest collective contributor to the UN and that the partnership between the EU and the UN has seen a clear strengthening in recent years. Austria was represented by Federal Minister Michael Spindelegger who underlined that the Lisbon Treaty had facilitated international representation of the EU.

USG Susana Malcorra, competent for logistic PKO support, on 12 April reported about progress in cooperation between the UN and the African Union (AU). She also mentioned the merger of all Addis Ababa-based UN offices into one integrated office as an important step for strengthening the efficiency of the UN Representation. Austria renewed its offer of supporting the AU in establishing an office in the UN host city of Vienna. In the open SC debate on 22 October the UNSG announced a report on possibilities for strengthening the strategic partnership between the UN and the AU. In a Presidential Statement the UNSC underlined the necessity for sustainable, predictable and flexible AU PKO funding.

3.13. The Reform Debate

The debate on UNSC reform which has been going on for years was continued in international negotiations. One new development was the creation of a text by the president of the international negotiations on SC Reform, systematically structuring all positions of UN Member States under the five core
parts of the reform – membership categories, veto issues, questions of regional representation, number of members in an enlarged UNSC, and UNSC working methods as well as relations between UNSC and UNGA. This shall allow text-based negotiations in the future. Despite intensified discussion of UNSC reform on a political level including general debate no momentum could be built for specific reform steps. In particular no progress was achieved amongst UN Member States regarding enlargement by new permanent members.

IV. The Peacebuilding Commission

The Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) was set up in 2005 as a joint sub-organ of the UNGA and the UNSC and thus has a special position in the UN system. The main task of the PBC is to help bridge the relapsing gap between the end of a PKO and the taking effect of development cooperation thus avoiding states relapsing into new conflicts.

On 31 December the PBC terminated its fourth session period and adopted its fourth annual report. In it it stresses the intention of increasing PBC efficiency, dealing more closely with country-specific focuses, and intensifying the partnership with the civil society and the private sector. Liberia was included in the PBC agenda as fifth country next to Burundi, Sierra Leone, Guinea-Bissau and the Central African Republic. Austria has been a member of the country-specific formation for Sierra Leone since July 2009 and in December in Freetown (Sierra Leone) organised a regional seminar on youth unemployment together with the Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO).

Pursuant to its founding resolutions the PBC five years into its existence should undergo a “PBC review”. The permanent representatives of Ireland, Mexico and South Africa acted as co-facilitators for this review process and, following intense consultations with the UN Member States and the civil society, in the summer presented their final report on the PBC Review. On 29 October the UNSC and the UNGA adopted identical resolutions (SC Resolution 1947 (2010)) welcoming the final report, appealing to all relevant UN actors to implement its recommendations, and scheduling another PBC review in five years.

V. The Economic and Social Council

1. General

The annual meeting of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) took place in New York between 28 June to 23 July. The high-level part was dedicated to evaluating progress on gender equality and strengthening the position of women (MDG 3) and development cooperation. An action-oriented ministerial declaration was adopted on the first topic. The second meeting of the Development Cooperation Forum (DCF) to date took place on the
second issue. Central issues were coherence responsibility and transparency in development cooperation, south-south and triangular cooperation, the effects of the multiple crises on development and the implementation of the MDGs by 2015. In continuation of the high-level meeting section from 2009, the meeting section on cooperation issues focused on implementing MDGs 4, 5 and 6 on health improvement. The meeting section for operative development activities centred on how the UN development system can best reach out to developing countries supporting them in the implementation of their national priorities and compliance with the internationally recognised development goals. The general section dealt with reports by ECOSOC expert committees and groups.

2. The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe

The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) is one of the five UN regional commissions based in Geneva competent for Europe including all successor states of the former Soviet Union as well as Canada, the USA and Israel. The organisation aims at promoting economic cooperation between the Member States by setting norms and technical cooperation in the fields of transport, environment, energy, trade and statistics. Austria supports UNECE above all on energy-efficient construction of residential buildings and ageing societies, the Trans European road and rail projects, and the environment.

VI. The International Court of Justice

The international Court of Justice (ICJ) is the only international court of universal character and general jurisdiction. All 192 UN Member States are contracting parties of the Court statute, 66 have subjected themselves to obligatory jurisdiction pursuant to art 36.2. 16 cases are currently pending before the ICJ.

In April the ICJ ruled on the case of the pulp factories on the Uruguay River that Uruguay during the development phase of the pulp factories had failed to cooperate with Argentina and the Administrative Commission of the Uruguay River and by so doing had infringed its procedural obligations, but not its substantial duties for the protection of the environment under the Uruguay River Statute from 1975. In November the ICJ delivered its judgment on charges brought by the Republic of Guinea that the DR Congo by arresting, imprisoning and expelling Ahmadou Sadio Diallo in 1995 and 1996 had infringed his basic rights, but not his direct rights as shareholder of two companies. Three new cases were submitted to the ICJ. In May Australia brought charges against Japan regarding whale hunting in the Antarctic. Burkina Faso and Niger jointly submitted a border dispute to the ICJ in July. In November Costa Rica applied for provisional measures regarding territorial disputes
with Nicaragua. After public hearings the ICJ concluded the oral proceedings on the application of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (Georgia v. Russian Federation) and in the water border dispute between Nicaragua and Colombia. In July the ICJ published a much noted Advisory Opinion stating that Kosovo’s unilateral declaration of independence complied with international law.

VII. UN Specialized Agencies and Associated Organisations

1. UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO)

Issues discussed by the 36th Session of the European Commission on Agriculture (ECA) on 11 and 12 May in Yerevan (Armenia) included the budget proposal for Europe and Central Asia. The multilateral accords for water management and development in the farm animal sector of Central Asia were deemed as positive. The 27th FAO Regional Conference for Europe (13 and 14 May) focused on investment growth in agriculture, promoting regional cooperation and the exchange of experience on agricultural policies and programmes. Between 11 and 16 October the 36th Session of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) convened in Rome. The CFS decided to set up an open working group on the first draft of the “Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land and other Natural Resources” and to commission the recently established expert group to draw up studies on price volatility and the effects of climate change on food security.

The 37th FAO Conference from 25 June to 2 July was prepared in two meetings of the FAO Council in May and November. On 7 December a Round Table on the relevance of the international Treaty on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA) was held in Rome. In addition to paying tribute to the Treaty as a means for preserving biodiversity the Conference also was a positive signal with regard to the 4th ITPGRFA Intergovernmental Conference scheduled to take place in Indonesia in May. The FAO World Nutrition Day on 16 October was dedicated to the motto “United Against Hunger”. The Federal Ministry for Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management together with the Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs and two NGOs on 4 October organised a panel discussion at the Diplomatic Academy chaired by FAO Assistant Director General and Regional Representative for Europe and Central Asia Fernanda Guerrieri.

2. International Labour Organisation (ILO)

Austria’s voting membership of the Governing Body of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) during 2008–2011 allowed it to cooperate more fully in the organisation. The dominating topic in this year’s debate were
measures for combating the crisis and recovery on the labour markets. The ILO was also involved in the G-20 Process, particularly regarding employment issues. ILO Director General Juan Somavia participated in all the G-20 summits. The 99th International Labour Conference (ILC) adopted the ILO Recommendation (NC. 200) on HIV/AIDS at the Workplace. Moreover negotiations were commenced on a new convention on domestic workers to be finalised in 2011. The Federal Government reported to Parliament on the ILO Recommendation (NC. 198) on Employment Relationship and the ILO Convention (NC. 188) on Employment Conditions in Fishing as well as the ILO Recommendation on the same subject (NC. 199).

3. International Telecommunication Union (ITU)

The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) is a UN special agency headquartered in Geneva in which representatives from government and industry jointly coordinate the construction and operation of global telecommunication networks and services, particularly the use of the radio frequency range and of the satellite orbit. Between 4 and 22 October the quarterly Plenary Potentiary Conference, the conference of the ITU’s top governing body, was held in Guadalajara (Mexico), also electing top ITU representatives.

The World Summit of the Information Society (WSIS) in 2005 approved improved cooperation for internet management and established the Internet Governance Forum (IGF). The main task of the IGF is to promote and facilitate dialogue on questions of internet governance. Between 14 and 17 September the fifth IGF was held in Vilnius (Lithuania). On 20 December the UNGA decided to continue the IGF and commissioned the Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD), a sub-organ of ECOSOC, to revise the mandate.

4. International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)

The central task of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) is the fight against poverty in rural areas. IFAD mobilises the necessary resources for granting loans and non-repayable subsidies at very favourable terms. Important elements of this strategy are facilitating access to low-interest loans, adapted technologies, fair markets, basic infrastructure, health services and basic school education. A greater focus on profit orientation aims at better integrating small farmers and small rural enterprises into the existing value creation chains. In the last 33 years IFAD funded approx. 830 projects valuing a total of 12 billion US dollars. IFAD services supplement loans from the World Bank Group and regional development banks. Austria is a founding member of IFAD and to date has contributed approx. 40 million euros to the institution’s capital.
5. International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO)

The task of the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) is the global promotion of the safe and orderly development of international civil aviation in the fields of technology, economy and law.

The 37th ICAO Assembly was held in Montreal between 28 September and 8 October and was attended by 176 states and 40 observer organisations. The 36-member-state ICAO Council was newly appointed. Austria is in the ABIS country group (Austria, Benelux countries, Ireland, Switzerland, Portugal) which over the next three years will be represented on the ICAO Council by Belgium. The Assembly mainly focused on operational safety, safety from external threats and environmental issues. The adoption of a new climate resolution providing for the global goal of an annual two-percent improvement of fuel efficiency from 2020, the introduction of a CO2 standard for engines and the set-up of a global market-based system of measures constitutes an important step in the field of climate protection. Austrian Christian Schleifer was confirmed as member of the ICAO Air Navigation Commission.


In the summer Austria announced its candidature for the Executive Council, the Organisation’s most important governing organ. So far Austria has twice been a member, most recently between 1995 and 1999. The election was held at the General Conference in autumn 2011. The principal priorities for Austria are the promotion of intercultural dialogue and strengthening the role of UNESCO in education and science.

The first year of the term of the new Director General of the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), Irina Bokova, was marked by striving for renovation. UNESCO’s active involvement in joint UN aid operations following natural catastrophes in Haiti and Pakistan greatly contributed to enhancing the organisation’s visibility. The “new humanism” propagated by Director General Bokova was also demonstrated by programmes for promoting literacy and life-long high-quality education. Bokova’s efforts of modernising UNESCO’s administration were also successful. A new management team was created for more flexible and direct action.

During the International Year for the Rapprochement of Cultures 2010 UNESCO was the global lead organisation for coordinating activities aimed at underlining the positive effects of cultural diversity and the central importance of dialogue and exchange between cultures. For this occasion Bokova had set up a high-level panel of political, intellectual, and religious representatives for Peace and Dialogue between cultures.

An important step for the implementation of the Convention for the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions was taken in
December with the adoption of the first 31 projects of the **Fund for Cultural Diversity (IFDC)** created by the Convention for the build-up and promotion of a dynamic cultural sector in the developing countries. In addition to commitments for granting trade preferences the Fund also is another innovative instrument of north-south cooperation in the sphere of culture. UNESCO also assumed a leading role within the UN system with a view to compliance with MDG 2 (achieving universal primary education) and 3 (promoting gender equality and empowering women) and implementation of the UN programme “Education for All” (**EFA**).

7. **World Health Organisation (WHO)**

The 63th Session of the World Health Assembly between 17 and 21 May in Geneva was dominated by reviewing compliance with the health-related Millennium Development Goals. Until 2013 the focus shall rest on maternal and reproductive health and as from 2011 increasingly on measures against HIV/AIDS. Important need for action mainly exists in strengthening national health services in developing countries. An expert committee was set up to review WHO handling of the new influenza epidemic (H1N1). Non-contagious illnesses and the fight against them were identified as important problems on a global level. The adoption of the global code of conduct on cross-border recruitment of health workers was a success for southern countries.

The meeting of the WHO Regional Committee for Europe in Moscow between 13 and 16 September was dedicated to structural reform efforts with a view to strengthening the position of Europe in relation to other WHO regions. The new Director of the Regional Office for Europe, Zsuzsanna Jakab, stressed the priorities of a new European framework concept for health policy to be developed jointly with the Member States and other partners.

8. **International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)**

The International Atomic Energy Agency (**IAEA**), founded in 1957 and based in Vienna, is an autonomous organisation in the UN system. Its main task is the global promotion of the peaceful use of nuclear energy and the verification of compliance with the NPT. IAEA safeguards of Iran’s nuclear programme continued. Iran’s lack of willingness to respond to concerns by the international community regarding the nuclear programme finally led to the adoption of SC Resolution 1929 (2010) expanding existing sanctions. The new Director General of the IAEA, Yukiya Amano, defined medical uses as a focus of civil nuclear energy use. The IAEA participates in a global campaign for fighting the cancer epidemic in the developing countries. In the area of IAEA safeguards tasks the ground-breaking ceremony for extensions of the Safeguards Analytical Laboratory in Seibersdorf in March was an important step for modernising and extending safeguards capacities. In December the
Governing Board approved the establishment of an IAEA fuel bank financed partly from EU funds. The aim is that in the future such multilateral bodies will make it superfluous for single states to run their own systems with highly sensitive technology causing concerns about possible military uses.

9. World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO)

The World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) based in Madrid is the leading international tourism organisation serving as a global forum for tourism policy and a platform for touristic know-how and statistics. It has a total of 154 full members and seven associated members. Since 1975 Austria has been a full member and between 1995–2007 was member of the Programme Committee which it presided over between 1999 and 2007. The 51st Session of the UNWTO Commission for Europe (CEU) was held in Sofia (Bulgaria). Discussions centred on reform plans for the organisation to be approved by the members at the next General Assembly. The XIXth UNWTO General Assembly is scheduled to take place in Gyeongju (Republic of Korea) between 8 and 14 October 2011.

10. Universal Postal Union (UPU)

The Universal Postal Union (UPU) was founded in 1874 and next to ITU is the oldest international organisation. Austria has been a UPU member since it was first established. The Universal Postal Union regulates international postal operations and recommends measures for increasing postal volumes as well as improving the quality of postal services. On 22 and 23 September Nairobi hosted the UPU Strategy Conference held between two World Postal Congresses to evaluate achievements to date and discussions about future focuses. The conference focused on the application of new postal technologies and the importance of postal money orders (postal payment orders) mainly for developing countries. The next World Postal Congress will be held in Doha (Qatar) in 2012.

11. World Meteorological Organisation (WMO)

The World Meteorological Organisation (WMO) founded in 1951 with headquarters in Geneva coordinates and supports the global development of a meteorological and hydrological measuring and observation network. The central topic was the implementation of the results of the Third World Climate Conference 2009 on establishing a Global Framework for Climate Services (GFCS). The respective work shall be completed in 2011. The goal is to enhance the accuracy of forecasts required for exploring climate change and catastrophe control.
12. International Maritime Organisation (IMO)

The International Maritime Organisation (IMO) domiciled in London has 169 Member States. Austria joined the IMO in 1975. In 2010 no General Assembly was held.
D. The Legal and Consular Dimension of Austrian Foreign Policy

I. General Legal and Consular Issues

The main tasks of the Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs include services for Austrians abroad as well as for those Austrians who travel abroad for private or professional reasons and find themselves in an emergency. This not only applies to consular assistance in individual cases, but also measures to protect Austrians in crisis and disaster situations. Assistance is usually provided by the Austrian Embassy or Consulate with the respective country’s authorities involved if needed. In countries without an Austrian representation the local representation of another EU Member State is addressed in emergencies (EU consular cooperation and obligation to protection for EU citizens pursuant to Art. 23 TFEU).

An amendment to the Consular Fee Act clarified that as of 1 January 2011 expenses incurred by representation authorities in connection with an official action must be reimbursed by the party even if the action fails to materialise for reasons attributable to the party. The increased costs incurred by the collection of biometric data at the Austrian Honorary Consulates in connection with the application for a D visa were amended. Fees now also apply to the procurement of certifications from the local authorities by the embassies and consulates. In adjustment to the EU visa code rules on fee exemptions for visa applications have also undergone substantial changes.

1. Citizens’ Help Desk

The Citizens’ Help Desk at the Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs offers consular help for Austrian citizens in emergency situations abroad in cooperation with the Austrian embassies and consulates. Under the telephone number 0 50 11 50–4411 Ministry staff are available around the clock for consular emergencies. On average the number is dialled roughly more than 1,200 times each month. Numbers 0 50 11–3775 and 0 50 11–3900 are available for inquiries about travel information and general information on visa issuance, international document procurement, certifications, contacts with authorities, etc. On average these three telephone numbers receive 3,000 calls per month, at peak times roughly more than 4,000.

While in the year 2,000 citizens residing in Austria travelled abroad 7,527,800 times on holiday and business, by the year 2010 the number had already gone up to 10 million. Four million Austrians went on at least one international holiday trip and 588,000 Austrians undertook at least one business trip. (Source: Statistik Austria: Holidays and business trips calendar year 2010).
The increase in the number of international trips by Austrian citizens is also reflected in the use of consular support in the event of illness, accidents and deaths abroad. This also includes the number of assistance to and repatriation of psychologically unstable or mentally ill Austrian citizens as well as Austrian citizens without adequate health insurance coverage abroad. All in all a budget of approx. 240,000 euros was available for assisting Austrian citizens in emergencies abroad.

Thanks to the high level of awareness about the travel information serving international travellers as an objective information source the Ministry’s website (www.aussenministerium.at) at peak times totalled up to 283,000 hits per month. In cooperation with the Austrian embassies and consulates abroad and the EU partners the security situation in the individual countries is continuously updated.

At the Open Day on 26 October the Citizens’ Help Desk explained the security and emergency card, the Ministry’s travel information and the various possibilities of assistance by the Citizens Help Desk and the Austrian embassies and consulates.

2. Crisis Prevention and Crisis Management

2.1. The National Dimension

Natural disasters, terror attacks and civil war show the increasing importance of crisis prevention measures by the Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs and representations abroad. To further improve crisis response consular staff underwent substantial training for work in crisis teams and technical equipment was improved by building up crisis deployment units for mobile use.

2.2. The EU Dimension

Building on national measures cooperation between the affected EU Member States was intensified in crisis situations at the service of the citizens of the Union already in the focus during the Austrian EU Presidency in 2006. Between the crisis centres in the capitals, the representation authorities in the respective countries and the national crisis teams on-site information was continuously exchanged and coordinated, joint information points were set up at airports, in refugee camps, hospitals and hotels, joint search teams were trained to locate EU citizens, joint evacuation measures were prepared, and host country authorities were contacted following consultations.

3. Assistance in Civil Law and Penal Proceedings

A total of 1,471 times assistance was provided in legal aid cases with representations, however, neither being allowed to interfere directly in on-going
proceedings nor to represent Austrian citizens with party status in cases under civil law.

4. New Treaties

The Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Austria and the Government of the Kingdom of Morocco on cooperation in the field of civil protection was approved by the National Council on 16 June. Further steps were commenced for putting it into force.

The Agreement between the Republic of Austria and the Republic of Albania on mutual assistance in the event of disasters or severe accidents was signed on 27 January and approved by the National Council on 18 November. Further steps were introduced for putting it into force.

The Agreement between the Federal Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Austria and the Ministry of the Interior of Georgia regarding police cooperation was signed on 22 February and entered into force on 1 January 2011.


The Agreement between the Government of the Republic Austria and the Government of the United States of America on the distribution of seized criminal proceeds was signed in Vienna on 29 June.

The Protocol between the Austrian Federal Government and the Government of the Republic of Serbia on the implementation of the Agreement between the European Community and the Republic of Serbia on the readmission of persons residing without authorisation was signed in Belgrade on 25 June.

Expert talks in preparation of the conclusion of a Protocol between the Austrian Federal Government and the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina on the implementation of the Agreement between the European Community and Bosnia and Herzegovina on the readmission of persons residing without authorisation (implementation protocol) took place in Sarajevo in July.

The Agreement between the Austrian Federal Government and the Government of the Republic of Moldova on cooperation in fighting crime was signed in Chisinau on 25 September.

The Protocol between the Austrian Federal Government and the Government of the Republic of Moldova on the implementation of the Agreement between the European Community and the Republic of Moldova on the re-
admission of persons residing without authorisation was signed in Chisinau on 25 September.

The Agreement between the Austrian Federal Government and the Government of the Republic of Kosovo on the readmission and transit of persons (readmission agreement) and the implementation protocol were signed in Vienna on 30 September.

Negotiations on a Protocol between the Austrian Federal Government and the Council of Ministers of Ukraine on the implementation of an Agreement between the European Community and Ukraine on the re-admission of persons was signed in Kiev in October.

Negotiations on a bilateral extradition agreement between the Republic of Austria and the Federal Republic of Brazil were continued in November.

The Implementation Protocol between the Austrian Federal Government and the Government of the Russian Federation on the implementation of the Agreement between the Russian Federation and the European Community on re-admission of 25 May 2006 was signed on 16 December in Moscow.

The Austrian projects regarding accession to the Police Cooperation Convention for Southeastern Europe were submitted to the National Council for adoption.

II. Tourist and Cross-Border Traffic

1. Visas

By 31 December 2010 Austrian citizens were able to enter 107 (2009: 105) states without a visa including all neighbouring countries, Japan, Canada, the USA and many other countries in Africa, Asia and South America, with regular passports, including 40 countries with identity cards and 18 with passports expired for no longer than five years. Citizens of 126 (2008: 129) countries require visas for entering Austria. Entry visas to Austria were issued at 95 Austrian embassies and consulates. At another 89 places Schengen visas for entry into Austria were issued by our partners. In return Austria in its capacity as representative under the Schengen agreement issued visas at 37 posts.

Following extensive preliminary work as of 15 December visa requirements were lifted for nationals of Bosnia and Herzegovina as well as Albania traveling to Schengen countries. An EU-visa facilitation agreement with Georgia was signed in June. In December the EU decided to re-introduce visa exemption status for citizens of Taiwan as of 11 January 2011. Furthermore the European Commission also negotiated with Cape Verde on visa facilitations and readmissions.

Austrian embassies and consulates issued 292,700 visas, a further drop by approx. 8% over the previous year. This decline was mainly due to the end
of visa requirements for citizens from Serbia, Montenegro and Macedonia. Most other representations saw partly significant growth as a consequence of the recovery following the economic crisis in 2009. The rise would have been even sharper had it not been for the increased issuance of multi-annual visa under visa facilitation agreements particularly with Russia and Ukraine, but also with other European countries, which further reduced the total number of visas issued.

On 5 April the new EU Visa Code for Member States entered into force assembling and replacing the various EU legislative instruments to date and unifying visa legislation. This produces changes in the administration of visa operations including the necessity to completely revise visa agreements with the Schengen partners.

2010 saw another improvement in visa management including security, efficiency and service orientation continuing the implementation of the recommendations by the visa commission.

Just like in previous years in June the Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs and the Federal Ministry of the Interior organised a joint visa workshop offering consular staff an opportunity for a “best practice” exchange of experience and increasing security against abuse in visa administration.

A specific working device for reviewing visa administration and stepping up security against abuse was introduced at a visa workshop for heads of mission in September. The joint training and examination teams of the Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs and the Federal Ministry of the Interior further intensified their activities at the Austrian representations abroad and at headquarters. Inspection activities continued with verifications at offices in countries with high migration being managed in cooperation with the Federal Ministry of the Interior.

Close cooperation with the Federal Ministry of the Interior was also continued on the analysis of visa number development, current joint training in the consular field, and the evaluation of visa administration at the representations including implementation of measures.

Austrian visa practice at the Austrian embassies in London and Tunis was evaluated by the Schengen partners who in either case testified full and flawless compliance with the current acquis.

Close and successful cooperation with the Austrian Chamber of Commerce and the Federation of Austrian Industry at a Round Table for the Tourism Industry and a Dialogue Forum on visas for business travellers were continued. Last but not least thanks to this cooperation the tourism industry enjoyed a year of considerable growth in tourist numbers particularly from countries requiring visas.
At the initiative of the Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs the Austrian University Conference also organised a Round Table on visa and residence issues for students.

Finally an EU visa vignette now used by all embassies and consulates was also introduced in 2010. As part of this change the Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs and the Federal Ministry of the Interior also signed a respective contract with the Österreichische Staatsdruckerei (Austrian State Printing House).

2. Border Treaties

The Treaty between the Republic of Austria and the Republic of Slovenia on the borderline in border sections VIII to XV and XXII to XXVII was signed on 21 July and submitted to the National Council for approval.

III. Austrians abroad

The provision of support and services to Austrians abroad is among the core tasks of Austrian embassies and consulates (-general) abroad. Just like the dedicated website of the Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs for Austrians abroad (www.auslandsoesterreicherInnen.at), the Austrian embassies and consulates are an important link between Austrians abroad and their present or former home country. They are the first points of contact and service with regard to passport, citizenship and voting matters, further contact with authorities and consular protection, information about Austria, effective crisis preparedness and coordination, or with respect to facilitating and organising Austria-related events.

As there is no obligation for citizens to officially register permanent residence abroad, figures on Austrian citizens living abroad are often based on estimates. Verifiable figures do not reflect the actual number of Austrians residing abroad.

Currently an estimated 470,000 Austrians reside abroad. Approximately 328,000 are registered with the authorities of whom about 250,600 are entitled to vote. A modern registration system is designed to increase the number of registered citizens and data quality. Most live in Germany (242,700), Switzerland (36,600), the USA (26,900), the United Kingdom (22,200), Australia (15,000) and the Republic of South Africa (13,400).

To facilitate the official registration of Austrians living abroad with Austrian embassies and consulates an electronic online data submission and change facility has been available on the websites of the Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs and the representations since February 2008 allowing for an easier and faster first registration of Austrians abroad and later change of their contact data.
The number of “Austrians at heart” (persons not holding Austrian citizenship but feeling a particular attachment to Austria because of their former Austrian citizenship, family connections or other reasons) can only be estimated and probably comprises several hundred thousand individuals.

1. Organisations Representing Austrians Abroad

Links between Austrians living abroad and their home country are maintained particularly through **associations of Austrians abroad** and other societies in foreign countries. Worldwide there are more than 400 such associations and societies in almost 60 countries, a list of which can be found on the dedicated website of the Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs – www.auslandsoesterreicher.at under “Kontakte” / “Vereinigungen”. Anyone interested can register with the “**Austrians abroad network**” on the dedicated website under “Austrians abroad”.

The Vienna-based **Austrosösterreichischer 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 Chlestit has been the President of the AÖWB, while Irmgard Helperstorfer holds the office of Secretary-General. The AÖWB has its own website – www.weltbund.at – and publishes the “**ROT-WEISS-ROT**” magazine. It organises the annual meeting of Austrians abroad, which was held this year in Eisenstadt from 20 to 25 September. In 2010 funds for AÖWB from the Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs totalled 200,000 euros.

**Burgenländische Gemeinschaft** is the umbrella organisation of all natives of Burgenland living abroad. Its aim is to maintain and deepen the ties of all natives of Burgenland worldwide with their home province. This goal is also pursued by its periodical magazine, “The Burgenländische Gemeinschaft”. Walter Dujmovits is President of the Burgenländische Gemeinschaft.

Apart from the traditional associations, there is also an increasing number of **Internet Fora**, like “Austrians Abroad” (see website http://groups.yahoo.com/group/austriansabroad).

2. Support for Austrian Citizens Abroad

The **Fund for the Support of Austrian Citizens Abroad**, established in 1967, aims at assisting Austrians living abroad who find themselves in serious difficulties. The Federal Act on the Fund for Austrians Abroad, Federal Law Gazette I No. 67/2006, which came into force on 1 January 2007, widened the group of potential recipients of support. In 2010 the Fund, whose budget is financed by the Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs and the nine Federal Provinces at 50% each, provided assistance to more
than 1,172 Austrians in need in 71 countries. The Chairman of the Board of Trustees appointed by the Federal Government is Ambassador Georg Hohenberg, while Josef Knapp is Managing Director. In 2009 the Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs contributed a total of 342,000 euros to the Fund.

The FMEIA’s annual Christmas Campaign in support of needy Austrians abroad provided donations in cash and in kind totalling 67,400 euros to 634 needy Austrians in 61 countries worldwide.

For Austrians living abroad who are elderly or severely ill and no longer able to care for themselves, the FMEIA can arrange for repatriation including accommodation in a suitable institution in Austria. Prerequisites for such a return to Austria are that help by relatives or local relief organisations is impossible, the individual’s state of health allows them to travel and he/she agrees to repatriation for medical reasons. In 2010, nine Austrians and four family members from seven countries – the United Kingdom, Indonesia, Italy, the Philippines, Switzerland, Spain and Thailand were repatriated to Austria.

3. Participation by Austrians Abroad in Elections in Austria and of the European Union

Since 1990, Austrians residing in other countries or temporarily staying abroad on election days have had the right to vote in Austrian parliamentary and presidential elections and to participate in nationwide referenda. Austrians abroad – as well as non-Austrian citizens of the European Union having their main residence in Austria – can also vote in elections for Austrian Members of the European Parliament.

As of 1 July 2007, voting rights of Austrians abroad have been simplified substantially reducing active voting age to 16 whereas 18 is the passive voting age for both the National Council and the European Parliament. Postal voting is possible in Austria and abroad for anyone unable to cast their vote in a polling station on election day. A signed affidavit now suffices for casting one’s vote by postal voting. The Republic of Austria assumes the postal charges due for sending absentee ballots by normal mail from all parts of the world back to Austria. Moreover, Austrians abroad can order absentee ballots in advance for a period of ten years (“absentee ballot subscription”) and will automatically receive their absentee ballots for all nationwide elections during this period. Municipalities inform their registered voters abroad about upcoming elections and ex-officio deletions from the electoral roll.

Furthermore, under Federal Constitutional Law the Austrian Federal Provinces also have the right to give Austrians living abroad the opportunity to vote in elections to the regional parliaments of their former Federal Province.
of residence. So far, only the Federal Provinces of Lower Austria, Tyrol and Vorarlberg provide this type of voting right for Austrians abroad.

At the elections to the regional parliaments in Vienna, Burgenland, and Styria in 2010 the embassies and consulates provided support and coordination for serving and returning voting cards of Austrians residing or travelling abroad.

The range of services for Austrians residing abroad is continuously extended. The latest improvements concerned election law, online registration, and information on the internet adjusting provisions to current needs.

This mainly regarded simplifications in voting abroad introduced by virtue of the Voting Rights Amendment Act in 2009 and extended in 2010 by simplifying postal voting. At the federal presidential elections on 25 April, just as earlier at the EP elections in 2009, witnesses hence were no longer required, nor was it any longer necessary to mention the place and time of the affidavit on the voting card. Confidentiality of personal data was guaranteed through the new design of the voting card.

An “election office” and a permanent hotline for questions regarding voting rights for Austrians residing abroad were established at the Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs for the federal presidential elections on 25 April.

279,255 Austrians residing abroad and entitled to vote were sent individual written information on voting modalities and invited to participate in the federal presidential elections. Cards were duly returned routinely by post so that only 1,360 voting cards of Austrians residing abroad were returned through the representations.

Austrians residing abroad generally receive information and counselling on election results via a telephone information line and a separate website. Further details and counselling on election matters for Austrians residing abroad as well as all the forms can be found on the election information website of the Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs www.wahlinfo.aussenministerium.at.


Responding to demands from Austrians residing abroad for increased use of modern information and communication technologies (ICT) by the FMEIA, the Ministry established a dedicated website for Austrians abroad (www.aus-landsoesterreicherinnen.at) as early as 2002. Since 2005, electronic participation projects have been repeatedly conducted (www.aoe-umfrage.at) and since the summer of 2007 the Internet Guide for Austrians Abroad (www. aoe-ratgeber.at) has been available.
Together with Austrian authorities, ministries, competence centres and researchers, the FMEIA analyses and supports the development of additional ICT applications with a view to using them in communicating with Austrians abroad, in particular in the fields of eGovernment and involvement of citizens.
E. Austrian Development Cooperation

I. Introduction

Combating poverty in developing countries, securing peace and human security as well as preserving the environment and protecting natural resources are the key objectives of Austrian Development Cooperation (ADC). The basic principles applied in this context are the partner countries’ right to choose their own development agenda, consideration for cultural and social conditions, equality between men and women as well as respecting the needs of children and people with disabilities.

1. International Background

As a member of the EU, OECD, UN and the World Bank Group Austria proactively contributes to international development policy. Following the track-setting “Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness” from 2005 a first stocktaking took place in Accra (Ghana) in 2008 with results included in an Action Plan with clear recommendations for further action. Preparations for the 4th OECD High Level Forum on the effectiveness of development cooperation to take place in Busan (South Korea) already are under way.

2. Legal Basis

The Federal Development Cooperation Act (DCA) forms the legal basis for a coherent Austrian development policy. Its specific catalogue of objectives defines the development policy criteria to be pursued by the entire Austrian federal administration. All relevant activities are coordinated by the Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs which is also competent for the strategic orientation of ADC adopted by the Council of Ministers in the annually extended three-year programme and submitted to Parliament for its information. The Austrian Development Agency (ADA) is the ADC agency implementing bilateral programmes and projects in the partner countries.

3. Budget for Development Cooperation

According to preliminary data reported to the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC), Austrian ODA amounted to 905.2 million euros in 2010, equalling 0.32% of GNI.

This is an increase of 85 million euros compared with the previous year.

4. Sustainable Development

Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of today’s generation without compromising the ability of future generations to sat-
isfy their needs and choose their own lifestyle. Injustice, a growing divide between rich and poor, increasing environmental destruction (also caused by climate change), disrespect for human rights and war contradict the principles of sustainability. ADC strives to contribute to sustainable development in the partner countries subjecting all projects to environmental impact studies.

5. Policy Coherence in the Interest of Development

The importance of policy coherence for promoting development in developing countries is increasingly acknowledged. In Austria, the principle of policy coherence is enshrined in Article 1 paragraph 5 of the Federal Development Cooperation Act. ADC has launched systematic procedures including the interministerial working group on coherence or the Dialogue with Civil Society (“Structured Dialogue”). Austria regularly participates in the EU and OECD networks on policy coherence. Pursuing development policy objectives is a nationwide task.

The “3C approach “ has been defined in the field of Security and Development in line with policy coherence, i.e. all Austrian actors make their best efforts towards coordinated, complementary and coherent action in fragile situations. Special attention was given to involve civil society (“Viennese 3C Appeal”). A corresponding international conference was held from 5 to 7 May in Vienna. Conference results were published in a book for introduction to the OECD, EU and UN. Developing the strategic guidelines on security and development was a second task to increase policy coherence as a joint basis for conflict prevention, crisis control, peace consolidation and establishing state structures. Discussions on the guideline took place both between ministries as well as with civil society. The draft will be submitted to the Council of Ministers following the adoption of the Austrian security doctrine and possible adaptations. The Austrian initiative for optimising the socio-economic effects of peacekeeping operations on the local population was also advanced. The initiative promotes local allocation and recruitment by the missions and the systematic boosting of the local private sector. On 1 October Austria organised a high-level seminar in New York and presented concrete examples.

The working field of environment and development focused on first steps for the implementation of the strategic guideline on environment and development worked out in 2009 – in line with all-Austrian coherence – jointly with the Federal Minstry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management, ADA and other Austrian actors and acknowledged by the Council of Ministers. Integration of environmental issues into the programmes and projects focused on adaptation to the effects of climate change. The committed fight against desertification was particularly continued on EU and UN
level. Biodiversity was another focus in the international Year of Biodiversity.

II. Bilateral Development Cooperation

1. Bilateral Development Cooperation – South

1.1. Key Region Central America

The “Regional Strategy Central America 2009–2013” is the basis for further development cooperation with the region.

ADC supports the process of economic and social integration in Central America, mainly through measures aimed at increased participation of disadvantaged population groups. This includes programmes for improving the framework for small commercial and farming enterprises and enabling marginalised populations to call for and claim respect of their human rights.

Under the Energy and Environment Partnership with Central America, ADC, together with Finland, promotes the use of renewable energy.

In the priority country of Nicaragua, ADC’s activities focus on programmes relating to rural development, the promotion of small enterprise and healthcare. Together with Finland, the Netherlands, Sweden and the World Bank, ADC provided Sector Budget Support (funds earmarked for priority areas) to promote the implementation of the country’s national health strategy. At the end of 2010 it was decided to discontinue the bilateral cooperation with Nicaragua and the regional programme with SICA no later than by 2013; Plans exist to close down the coordination office in Managua by mid-2012.

Cooperation in the Caribbean Region, which is particularly prone to natural disasters, focused on strengthening capacities – especially of CARICOM, disaster relief and activities related to climate change (geared towards promoting renewable energy and the environment). In cooperation with the Salzburg Klessheim International Institute of Tourism and Hotel Management (ITH), Austria offered 6 students the possibility to pursue an education as skilled personnel in the tourism industry. Moreover, in May 17 diplomats attended and successfully completed a special course at Vienna’s Diplomatic Academy.

1.2. Key Region West Africa

Energy, conflict prevention and local development models were the thematic priorities in West Africa. Cooperation with ECOWAS was strengthened, particularly through the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (the second since the 2006 MoU on conflict prevention) in support of establishing the Cape Verde-based regional Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency. The cooperation with the OECD’s Sahel and West Africa Club supported by ECOWAS and the West African Economic and Monetary Union
(UEMOA) with particular attention – just like in the past – given to questions of food safety, conflict prevention and cross-border cooperation.

Based on the 2008 six-year bilateral cooperation between Austria and Burkina Faso Austria continued its support for rural development, vocational training, the promotion of crafts, and the build-up of small and micro companies, with special consideration being given to the province of Boucle de Mouhoun in line with a systemic and possibly integrated approach. The dialogue particularly focuses on the development of national sectorial policies which Austria will help to implement.

Bilateral cooperation with Senegal ended in 2010. Adoption of ADC supported projects by other donors was completed. The numerous partnerships established over the years have kept up the use of global ADC instruments (grants, NGO co-financing schemes, economic partnerships etc…) as well as bilateral regional cooperation (e.g. ENDA) in Senegal.

The development cooperation coordination office in Cape Verde was closed on 31 March. In addition to implementing the current project in the field of decentralisation and regional development and supporting the implementation of the national environmental action plan through sectorial budget aid the Federal Ministry of Finance also signed a Memorandum of Understanding on a multi-annual soft loan line of 20 million euros. In 2010 Austria has started to step up its cooperation via the EU’s special partnership with Cape Verde. The value adjustment of global ADC instruments (regional cooperation, NGOs, economic and educational cooperation) does credit to Cape Verde’s classification as a medium income country. In July an ECOWAS regional centre for the promotion of renewable energy and energy efficiency in the region partly funded by Austria was opened.

1.3. Key Region East Africa

On a regional level Austria is mainly committed to cooperation in the fields of economy and development, science and research, and with NGOs including support for an UNCTAD programme building up a regional network of federations for the promotion of ecological agriculture in East Africa.

In the priority country of Ethiopia ADC focused its activities on the fields of rural development, food safety and health. Other interventions were made on renewable energy, gender, as well as research and development. ADC also contributes to fund a national multi-donor-programme targeting the improvial of state services in health, education, agriculture and water supply.

In line with the national poverty reduction programme ADC activities in the priority country of Uganda mainly focused on water supply and settlement hygiene as well as on law and justice. This was supplemented by grants, study and business programmes. ADC particularly focused on reconstruction of those parts of the country’s north that had been destroyed by civil war.
1.4. Key Region Southern Africa

Efforts launched by ADC in the key region of Southern Africa also centred on access to land and land use as issues of special importance for the direct reduction of poverty. In the field of governance special attention is given to the promotion of the civil society, which is also able to express and claim interests of disadvantaged population groups within society and towards politicians. Regarding infrastructure ADC promotes access to affordable high-quality energy services in the Southern African Development Community (SADC).

Austria’s commitment is closely coordinated with the European Commission and the EU Member States. Austria is a recognised international cooperation Partner (ICP) of SADC contributing to the implementation of the Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP) and the Strategic Indicative Plan for the Organ on Peace and Security (SIPO). The new country strategy 2009–2013 for the priority country Mozambique was drafted on the basis of the current Mozambican Government Programme and the Plan for the Reduction of Absolute Poverty, PARPA II. As agreed with the government of Mozambique, the province of Sofala remains an ADC priority region. The relevant activities are directed at promoting national decentralisation efforts with the thematic focus being placed on rural drinking water supply, sanitation and smallholder agriculture. The country strategy is implemented in cooperation with the Mozambican government, and particularly with the subnational authorities of the Sofala province government.

In Mozambique ADC makes available both Sector Budget Support and General Budget Support. Sector Budget Support goes to the budget of Mozambique’s Ministry of Agriculture and its National Development Strategy, with Austria’s contribution being earmarked for the Sofala province.

In the context of drafting integrated development plans, relevant ADC activities in South Africa focused on developing sub-national government administration capacities and empowering the civilian population. The regional focus of ADC was on the poorest provinces of South Africa.

1.5. Key Region Himalaya Hindu Kush

ADC supports common goals of the region such as sustainable management of pasturage, diversification of income, and the protection of natural resources and energy efficiency at the international Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD).

The country strategy for the priority country of Bhutan 2010–2013 is the basis for continued cooperation. In Bhutan ADC concentrates on energy, tourism and governance. In the energy sector technical assistance was provided for the government of Bhutan as principal for the water power plant of Dagachhu as well as rural electrification in Phobjikha. In October a respective financing agreement was signed in Vienna on 5.8 million euros. In tour-
The focus was on completing the training hotel and Royal Institute for Tourism and Hospitality; the inauguration was in October. Syllabus development plus counselling for teaching staff and management were continued. Governance cooperation with other donors, supporting the decentralisation process and strengthening the capacities of the local governments, was continued. Some high-level delegations from Bhutan from the fields of business, finance, and justice paid visits to Austria.

1.6. Palestinian Territories

Criteria for the selection of the programmes and projects are their compliance with the Palestinian Reform and Development Plan 2008–2010 and regard for both parts of the Palestinian Territories, i.e. the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. ADC involvement focused on the areas of health, water/sewage, humanitarian aid and capacity building, particularly in the field of women’s rights. ADC programmes are coordinated with the relevant ministries and other bilateral donors and implemented largely through the European Commission and international organisations as well as Palestinian NGOs. Cooperation with UNRWA was also continued.

2. Bilateral Development Cooperation – East

2.1. Key Region South Eastern Europe

One important aspect of cooperation with the South Eastern European countries continued to be support for approximation to or integration into European structures. Sectorial and thematic priorities were business and development, education, the environment, water and energy as well as strengthening the rule of law, governance and civil society.

Bilateral ADC is withdrawing from South Eastern Europe/Western Balkans except for Kosovo. After the close-down of the ADA coordination offices in Podgorica and Skopje in summer 2010 the offices in Sarajevo, Belgrade and Tirana will also be closed before the end of 2012. Development of adequate exit strategies for Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia and Albania has been started.

ADC supported the priority country of Albania mainly in the fields of water and sanitation, vocational training, regional development and integration of marginalised social groups. Austria is lead donor for water. In the cross-cutting areas of governance and gender equality accents were set on building up the integrated planning system and establishing gender focal points. In the context of delegated cooperation (Indirect Centralised Management, ICM) ADA for the first time also implemented European Commission funds. Bilateral cooperation was based on the country strategy 2007–2009, an exit strategy for 2011–2014 is in the pipeline.
In the **priority country of Bosnia and Herzegovina** the country programme 2005–2007 was continued with a focus on economy and development as well as education. In addition to measures strengthening the national identity and supporting the national criminal court activities were also continued in the areas of mine clearance and land register administration aimed at improving the climate for investments. To improve gender equality ADC promoted the implementation of the national gender action plan. A phasing out strategy was worked out during the period under report.

In the cooperation with the **priority country of Macedonia** the focus continued to be on the sectors of renewable energy/energy efficiency as well as on economy and development. Projects in these sectors combined with activities in the areas of governance and gender aim to provide a visible contribution to sustainable and socially balanced development and thus also a reduction of poverty. Considering the generally positive socio-economic development and progress in the EU rapprochement process the coordination office was closed on 30 June. The country strategy 2010–2012 is the programme basis for the withdrawal of bilateral ADC from Macedonia.

Cooperation with the **priority country of Montenegro** on sustainable regional and tourism development in northeast Montenegro and the Shkutari Lake was continued. Moreover, measures on vocational training and higher education and for strengthening the administrative capacities of the young country were promoted. Due to the positive socio-economic developments and the progress achieved in EU rapprochement an exit strategy was also adopted for Montenegro for 2010–2012 and the activities of the ADA coordination office ended on 30 June.

For the **priority country of Serbia** a phasing out strategy was developed. ADC support focuses on the fields of the economy and employment as well as higher education. Geographic focuses are Vojvodina and Southern Serbia where ambitious regional development programmes are implemented. The coordination office of Belgrade is lead donor for regional development. Consultations were held with the European Commission regarding an ICM project for the promotion of the socio-economic development in the Serbian Danube Region to be implemented jointly with the Portuguese development agency.

Cooperation in the **priority country of Kosovo** was based on the country programme 2008–2011 under which particularly the partnership for higher education initiated by ADC jointly with the Austrian and Kosovar ministries of education was continued. Moreover, measures were financed in the areas of the promotion of small and micro companies, water supply and rural development/regional development mainly in the larger Suhareka area. ADC cross-cutting issues in Kosovo are inter-ethnic cooperation/conflict prevention and gender.
Just like in previous years, the ADC promoted, in the framework of the bilateral programmes under the Regional Strategy for South Eastern Europe cross-regional cooperation mainly on long-term peacekeeping and sustainable socioeconomic development in the region, e.g. through projects on conflict resolution and strengthening of the national administrations. The “Balkan Case Challenge” was once again held in Vienna, a study competition with a vocational fair for students from South Eastern Europe. In cooperation with the Diplomatic Academy the ADC promoted training of public sector employees from the countries of South Eastern Europe.

2.2. Eastern Europe and Central Asia

In Southern Caucasus the focus of ADC remained on conflict prevention and conflict management, strengthening the rule of law and human security as well as promoting civil society. In these focus areas issues of special support included witness protection programmes, confidence building measures in conflict regions and projects for vocational training as well as integration of refugees and mine victims. In Belarus, Ukraine and Central Asia mainly NGO co-financed projects in the social field benefitted from support.

ADC’s principal goal in Moldova is the creation of life perspectives in rural areas, particularly through the improvement of water supply and sewage treatment as well as labour-market-oriented vocational training and promotion of agricultural vocational colleges. Other topics are the support for return and integration for voluntary returnees and the EU-oriented strengthening of public administration. In October an agreement was concluded with the European Commission regarding the joint funding of a water project under the delegated cooperation scheme (Indirect Centralised Management).

The priority country of Moldova also constitutes the interface between the Danube Region and the Black Sea Region with relevance for international and development policies. ADC cooperated on the EU Danube Region strategy, providing an important reference framework for future development cooperation in this EU macro region.

3. Topics and Sectors

The prime goal of ADC is to reduce global poverty in all its dimensions and to enable people to unfold their skills and articulate their political interests, to satisfy basic human needs and guarantee human security while taking into account socio-cultural factors. Support of fragile population groups in the partner countries and promoting disadvantaged regions are in the foreground. This basic objective was pursued in all international donor fora and is clearly anchored in the guidelines.

The majority of the poor population lives in rural areas and often suffers from a lack in infrastructure, difficult access to basic supplies and public services...
as well as insufficient participation in political decisionmaking processes. Interventions in the area of rural development aim to improve the living conditions and opportunities amongst the rural population as well as food supply in the partner countries. These are often affected by the consequences of the various crises in recent years and the results of climate change.

ADC supports decentralisation processes in the partner countries. The focus was on measures for developing capacities in the administration and other parties on the local level, authorising the population to participate in political decisionmaking processes and the best possible use of the existing social capital.

Activities in the area of governance and human rights were particularly dominated by the implementation and systematic integration of these topics into ADC work. The “Human Rights Manual”, used as instruction for implementing the ADC human rights approach, was produced, and training sessions based on the Manual were carried out both in Vienna and Kampala (Uganda). A comparable “Good Governance Manual” to be completed in 2011 was another step towards a comprehensive implementation of governance. Focuses in the area of peacekeeping and conflict prevention included the manual “Peacekeeping and Conflict Prevention, Guidance for Action”. ADC also continued the promotion of the implementation of UN Resolutions 1894 (2009) on the protection of civilians in armed conflict and 1325 (2000) on the role and protection of women in and after conflicts.

Gender equality and the empowerment of disadvantaged women are basic principles of ADC. ADC/ADA organised advanced training for staff in Austria and at the coordination offices abroad on the implementation of gender mainstreaming (integration of a gender perspective into all spheres of development policy). Particular attention is given to the integration of gender equality issues as a cross-cutting issue, e.g. in gender budgeting. On the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the adoption of UN SC Resolution 1325 (2000) an international conference on “Women’s Participation and Leadership in Conflict Situations and Peace Building” was organised in Vienna on 20 October.

In education ADC particularly focuses on vocational training and university education. The new APPEAR university cooperation programme allowing for multi-annual partnerships between university institutions in ADC South priority countries and Austria with the goal of a comprehensive strengthening of capacities was launched. The first call attracted 35 full applications of which five were chosen and will start at the beginning of 2011. This was supplemented by the finalisation of the strategic evaluation of “Higher Education in Nicaragua and South-East Europe 2005–09” with a focus on Serbia, Kosovo and Nicaragua. The countries of South Eastern Europe were supported in their integration into the European Higher Education Area and the reform of vocational training in cooperation with the Federal Ministry for Science and Research.
Strengthening the field of **infrastructure** particularly in the sectors of water and sustainable energy was further pursued.

As member of the Troika Austria continued to be represented in the Africa Working Group (**AWG**) of the **EU Water Initiative (**EUWI**)** and was thus able to expressly contribute to harmonising the interventions of all European actors. Austria also played a substantial role in the evaluation of the African water facility of the African Development Bank. The evaluation confirmed the added value of the African water facility for meeting the MDGs and particularly the facility’s relevance as a source of know-how on policy issues. With 12 million euros spread out over three years the currently highest ADC funding in the water sector was agreed with Uganda. The agreement consists of a mix of sectorial budget support, basket funding and technical assistance. All in all cooperation in the water sector concentrates on the countries Uganda, Mozambique, the Palestinian Territories, Albania and Moldova.

The **sustainable energy** sector comprised poverty and development-relevant activities focusing on the use of locally available renewable energy sources of maximum energy efficiency. On a political level the High Level Meeting of the “EU-Africa Energy Partnership” was held in Vienna in September. On a programme/project level efforts concentrated on the following interventions: launching the “Energy and Environmental Partnership” programme in eight South and East African countries (EEP S&EA) and continuing the same programme in eight Central American countries (EEP CA), supporting “Regional Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency” (ECREEE) in West Africa (ECOWAS Region) and preparing an energy programme in South Caucasus.

In the sphere of **economy and development** the implementation of the three intervention pillars was continued: improvement of the framework conditions for private economic commitment, strengthening the private sector in the partner countries and integrating Austrian and European business into ADC. ADC is a member of the Private Infrastructure Development Group (**PIDG**), a donor group for mobilising private investments into African infrastructure. Through their contributions of a total of 371 million US dollars since 2002 PIDG donors mobilised a volume of 12.1 billion US dollars in private infrastructure investments in poorer developing countries. The “**REPARIS**” Program of Accounting Reform and Institutional Strengthening in South Eastern Europe is implemented by the World Bank’s Vienna office as part of a strategic partnership with ADA. Economic partnerships with Austrian companies were developed further. 81 economic partnerships have been concluded since ADA was first established. With 43 % the larger part of the project is based in South Eastern Europe. Africa accounts for another 25 %, Asia for 18 % and Latin America for 12 %. Economic partnerships have a considerable leverage effect: subsidies totalling 14.4 million euros generated projects worth 41 million euros in total volume.
In **public finance and administration** the ADC budget support review focusing on the four ADC priority countries was completed. A draft manual for the operative handling of basket funding and budget support within ADC was worked out and is to be finalised in 2011. To complement increased use in the partner countries’ implementing organisations support for the audit courts in the partner countries was decided in cooperation with INTOSAI (International Organization of Supreme Audit Institutions).

### 4. Co-financing

**Non-governmental organisations (NGOs)** are important partners of ADC. NGO co-financing includes planned projects based on NGO initiatives and funded both from their own budgets as well as from ADC funds. All work is based on the “Guideline of NGO cooperation in ADC“.

Eleven Austrian NGOs have framework programme contracts with a total contract volume of approx. 20 million euros for three years and carried out important initiatives in the fields of education, training, rural development and health.

Two Austrian NGOs received funding for deploying experts and volunteers under the personnel development cooperation. The funding guideline for personnel development cooperation was completed.

15 projects in developing countries in Southern and South Eastern Europe, Eastern Europe and Central Asia were approved as part of individual NGO projects. Ten micro projects were co-financed by Austrian NGOs. In addition to current EU co-financing projects 16 new subsidy agreements have been concluded for the coming years.

### 5. Evaluation

Under the task-sharing agreement the Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs is responsible for selecting and defining topics for strategic evaluations, while ADA is responsible for their operative control. Strategic evaluations usually regard ADC topics, sectors, instruments or country strategies and not individual projects. Calls for tenders of the strategic evaluations are published under the Austrian Federal Tendering Act and carried out by organisations or companies selected as best bidders on the basis of an expert assessment of their material-methodological concepts and commissioned with the execution of their respective evaluation.

In 2010 strategic evaluations were completed on humanitarian aid, university cooperation and budget support. Studies on Austria and on Uganda were carried out as part of an international evaluation on the implementation of the objectives of the Paris Declaration. The implementation of results and
recommendations of earlier evaluations was continued (e.g. ADA evaluation 2008, Peer Review 2009, Court of Auditors audit 2008).

Internationally both the Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs and ADA were regularly represented in the EU institutions and networks, the OECD Development Assistance Committee, and the group of German speaking evaluation services. One member of the evaluation section at the Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs participated in the New Zealand Peer Review, one ADA representative in the UNIDO Peer Review. The Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs also continued its activities in MOPAN (Multilateral Organisations Performance Assessment Network), an international network evaluating the activities of multilateral development aid organisations.

III. Multilateral Development Cooperation

The international community’s development policy efforts centred on both the implementation of the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) as well as combating and remedying the negative effects of the global financial and economic crisis on the developing countries.

1. The United Nations

The closing document adopted by the UNGA High Level Plenary Meeting on the MDGs (HLPM) in New York at mid-September provides for a detailed action plan to enable compliance with the MDGs by 2015 and serve as a reference framework for UN development policy cooperation. The HLPM also discussed the question of the design of the global development agenda after 2015. All heads of the international UN development organisations and the World Bank group as well as approx. 140 high-level national representatives (heads of state and government, ministers) and the President of the European Commission, José Manuel Barroso, participated in the HLPM. Austria was represented by Federal President Heinz Fischer who in his declaration on ADC priorities particularly pointed out the importance of women for the development process, the concerns of handicapped people in the context of development policy, and the relevance of universal access to energy for the developing countries.

At the HLPM donors issued commitments for additional funds for development cooperation of a total of 40 billion US dollars with the EU’s contribution amounting to 1 billion euros. These funds shall be dedicated to MDGs 4 (reduction of child mortality) and 5 (improving maternal health) both lagging behind.

In the run-up to the HLPM the UN and the World Bank/IMF issued a number of reports on the implementation of the MDGs and the challenges remaining
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until 2015. Accordingly, despite some initial success, a tremendous need to catch up exists in particular in ending poverty and hunger (MDG 1), gender equality and empowerment of women (MDG 3), reduction of child mortality (MDG 4) and improving maternal health (MDG 5). Certain success can be seen in the fight against HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases (MDG 6) as well as the global development partnership (MDG 8). Generally, the successful implementation of all MDGs by 2015 remains doubtful and at risk. Medium income countries generally stand a better chance of reaching the MDGs. The chances of LDCs and LLDCs, however, are very low with Sub-Saharan Africa and Oceania being particularly disadvantaged.

The UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) is tasked with promoting economic and social development. The topic of the high level meeting in New York was to advance gender equality and the empowerment of women. ECOSOC organises the biannual Development Cooperation Forum (DCF) to debate trends in international development cooperation, promote coherence among the different actors of development cooperation and strengthen the UN’s normative and operational activities in this area. In preparation of the DCF in New York at the end of June a high-level forum was held in Bogotá between 24 and 26 March discussing the chances and challenges of South-South cooperation and capacity development.

After years of restructuring the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) is the UN’s most efficient organisation enjoying an excellent reputation under the leadership of Director General Kandeh K. Yumkella. Austria is a member of the organisation’s permanent governing body, the “Programme and Budget Committee” (PBC) and the “Industrial Development Board” (IDB), headed by Austria in 2010 and 2011. In addition to the mandatory contribution of roughly 700,000 euros Austria supported various UNIDO programmes with voluntary contributions of approx. 1.1 million euros (esp. investments for the further improvement of the organisation’s management, investments in Africa, youth employment in West Africa, clean production programmes). A joint presentation by Federal Minister Michael Spindelegger and Director General Kandeh K. Yumkella of the report by the UNSG consultancy group for energy and climate change “Energy for a Sustainable Future” in mid-May at Vienna’s Hofburg stressed the relevance of energy for development policy. At a UNIDO-organised event during the UNGA High Level Plenary Meeting on the MDGs in New York in mid-September also discussed the importance of energy for compliance with the MDGs and for sustainable development.

In 2010 Austria supported the implementation of the objectives of the UN Development Programme (UNDP) – building democratic societies, fighting poverty, energy/environment, preventing crisis/enabling recovery and halting and reversing HIV/AIDS – in line with the organisation’s extended strategic plan for the period 2008–2013 with a total of approx. 6.3 million euros. Contributions to the themed funds of “democracy promotion” and
“energy” are included in this amount. Austria also promoted the UNDP project “Constitutional referendum and elections in Kyrgyzstan” and the UN reform process in Albania to guarantee the objective of a faster and more efficient implementation of UN development cooperation field operations. The UN pilot initiative “United in Action” corresponding to this approach with joint offices targets increased coherence and efficiency in the operative area of UN development architecture. Together with other UN agencies UNDP plays an important role in preparing the IVth Conference on the Least Developed Countries (LDC-IV) from 9 to 13 May 2011 in Istanbul. Austria is also actively involved in this process.

The United National Capital Development Fund (UNDCF) has the mandate for supporting structures and democratic development processes on a local level with a special focus on issues of planning, management and participation of the civil society. UNDCF not only provides support for building up the financial sector through local development programmes and micro financing projects, but also through assistance in building up democratic structures in the least developed countries. Austria has increased its contribution by two thirds to 1 million euros and provided substantial support to the fund by financing projects in Ethiopia and Northern Uganda. At the beginning of March a workshop on “Local Development” organised jointly with the Fund was held in Vienna chaired by the UNDCF Executive Director David Morrison, at the beginning of October the “Global Forum on Local Development” in Kampala discussed the relevance of local developments approaches for meeting the MDGs.

The UN (UNFPA) as a comparatively small, decent rally organised programme support projects for the control of demographic development. The Fund is playing an important role both regarding the central issue of reproductive health in fighting HIV/AIDS as well as for improving the situation of girls and women in combating maternal mortality. Despite budget cuts contributions to the UNFPA core budget were preserved. The support for the thematic fund for promoting maternal health supplement this approach.

The United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) implemented the medium-term strategic plan for 2006–2009 which was extended until 2013. Its defined focuses regard the organisation’s fight against child mortality rates, hunger and malnutrition in children, improving UNICEF efficacy, and meeting the MDGs. Austria provided special support for the work of UNICEF in the fight against polio in general and of HIV/AIDS in Ukraine as well as strengthening the rights of children in Kosovo.

On UNIFEM and UN WOMEN, see Chapter G.VII.3.
2. The European Union

With a share of 55% of total international development aid the EU (Member States and Commission) is the biggest donor worldwide. Austria’s financial contribution to EU development cooperation is amongst the biggest single items of Austrian ODA. In 2010 Austria contributed 245.06 million euros to development cooperation under the EU budget and the European Development Fund (EEF), i.e. 27% of total Austrian ODA.

On EU level the central issue was the implementation of the Lisbon Treaty in the area of development. The establishment of the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and of the European External Action Service (EEAS) also produced major structural changes for EU development cooperation. In the future the EEAS and the Directorate General for Development in the European Commission will cooperate closely on development cooperation issues. The High Representative is directly responsible for foreign policy relations, joint security policy and development cooperation and also has the mandate to secure the coherence of joint external action in the EU. There is a great opportunity that this merging of the EU external relations will strengthen the coherence between ADC and other policy fields such as security and trade. Challenges include a clear splitting of tasks between EEAS and the various EU Directorates General as well as real consideration of development policy interests in all EU external relations. Austria has particularly advocated a clear separation of tasks, a summary of the two development cooperation instruments (EEF and instrument for development cooperation) in one European Commission Directorate General, for preventing duplications and merging DG Development and EUROPEAID.

Discussions centred on the preparation of a joint EU Position for the MDG Summit in mid-September in New York and the discussion on the strategic orientation of the EU development cooperation from 2014. Austria intensively contributed to the discussions. To work out an Austrian position for the EU’s future development policy strategy the Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs started to organise a broad consultation process.

The Council of Ministers for development cooperation adopted in June the joint EU position for the MDG summit in New York in September. There in the EU confirmed its plans to go on advocating compliance with the MDGs by 2015. It also confirms its commitment to increase the ODA percentage in gross national income (GNI) to 0.7% by 2015. At the same time, however, it also admits that the EU will fail its interim ODA target for 2010 (0.56% of GNI). To achieve the MDGs ODA alone is not enough, but additional funding must be mobilised (domestic resources, investments into private sector, etc.), and the ODA funds applied must be increased in efficaciousness and efficiency. In New York the EU announced an MDG initiative particularly for the countries far behind in MDG implementation.
During the first six months under the Spanish EU Presidency, Council conclusions were also adopted on tax and development, cross-country task sharing, food safety and global health. In the fields of tax and development the partner countries on the one hand shall get support for improving their tax systems, while on the other hand donor countries shall help generating higher resources for development in the developing countries themselves through measures preventing capital flight. The Operational Framework on Aid Effectiveness adopted in 2009 was supplemented by the chapters on international task-sharing.

During the second semester budget aid, Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) and innovative financing were at the centre of discussions. The High Representative also focused on discussing geographic issues increasingly from a development cooperation perspective to thus increase external policy coherence. In the field of budget aid the European Commission submitted a Green Paper as a basis for discussions on a joint EU position. Austria actively participated in the expert group for the preparation of the Green Paper. In the run-up to the third Africa-EU Summit (29 and 30 November in Tripoli) EPA topics were again discussed following a lengthy break. Due to the slow progress made in negotiations since the beginning of 2008 debates centred mainly on further EU steps. Partner countries are still highly sceptical about the agreement. Austria’s position was that the EU should show maximum flexibility and not give the impression that the agreements should be forced on ACP countries.

In November the fourth chapter of the Operational Framework on Aid Effectiveness was adopted dealing with transparency and mutual accountability. Austria supports efforts for specific improvements in this field and through its Presidency of the OECD DAC statistics committee and publication of all new bilateral contracts on the development cooperation website also sets concrete steps in this direction. At the same time Austria explicitly warned against a mere increase of the administrative burden through the continuous creation of new data collection systems. From an Austrian view it would be much more productive for the EU to advocate necessary changes and/or amendments to the OECD statistics systems instead of building up its own.

Austria again this year actively contributed to the implementation of the Africa-EU partnership culminating in the organisation of a high-level meeting of the Energy Partnership in Vienna on 14 and 15 September with the participation of numerous African ministers and several EU and AU commissioners. Specific results include the adoption of the second action plan for the implementation of the energy partnership and the definition of objectives including the creation of access to renewable energy for another 100 million Africans by 2020. Federal Minister Michael Spindelegger introduced the results of the conference at the Africa-EU summit in Tripoli as a step towards intensifying cooperation on renewable energy, an important basis for sustainable development.
3. Assignments Completed by Young Austrians

Young Austrian university graduates can gather first development policy experience during work in the UN professional service for a limited period of two years (Junior Professional Officer – JPO). The Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs assumes funding for the costs.

A total of 16 junior graduates worked in UN development policy organisations including UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA, UNIFEM, UNDESA or UNDCF at the respective headquarters in New York, Vienna, Brussels or the external representation network (Moldova, Macedonia, Kosovo, Egypt, Ruanda, Sierra- Leone, Sudan, Laos, Guyana).

The European Commission programme for training “Junior Experts in Delegation” gives young Austrian graduates the opportunity to work for a maximum of one to two years in the European Commission delegations. The Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs and the European Commission share the costs of these assignments. Two Austrians worked at the European Commission Delegations in Burundi and Fidji.

IV. Humanitarian Aid and Disaster Relief, International Humanitarian Organisations

1. Austrian Bilateral Humanitarian Aid

Austrian bilateral humanitarian aid is financed and managed by the Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs, ADA as well as other Federal Ministries including the Federal Ministry of the Interior, the Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management and the Federal Ministry of Defence and Sports, the Federal Provinces and municipalities, and other public institutions.

 Funds from the Foreign Disaster Relief Fund managed by the Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs and whose allocation is in each case subject to approval by the Federal Government are provided for dealing with unexpected disaster. ADA made these funds available both to international humanitarian organisations as well as NGOs. In addition to the humanitarian crises in Haiti and Pakistan for which funds were released from the Foreign Disaster Relief Fund, funds were also used for controlling humanitarian crisis situations in Afghanistan.

ADA bilateral humanitarian aid comprises the areas of humanitarian emergency measures, reconstruction and disaster prevention serving both to support chronic crisis areas as well as response to unexpected disasters, e.g. the strong Haiti earthquake and the devastating floods in Pakistan.
1.1. International Disaster Relief

Austria provided international disaster relief at the request for assistance under the EU mechanism in direct coordination with the European Commission/Monitoring and Information Centre (MIC): following flooding in Albania in January current generators and sewage submersible pumps were provided from funds of the Federal Ministry of the Interior with the logistical support of the Austrian fire brigades. After the devastating earthquake in Haiti Austria supplied the population with help through the Austrian Red Cross providing disaster relief funds as well as family-sized tents and emergency kits for the instant medical treatment of approx. 20,000 people. An Austrian expert and five European Commission experts helped to coordinate international help in the crisis area. Following the quake in Chile in February current generators and large tents were provided using funds from the Federal Ministry of the Interior’s disaster relief. After the tropical storm in Guatemala in June Austria helped the population with water treatment systems for water decontamination in cisterns and water treatment plants.

After the floods in Romania, Moldova and Pakistan in July and August sewage water pumps, current generators, sandbags, plastic blankets, water treatment tablets, all weather tents, water tanks, water canisters, sanitation kits, and emergency aid packages were supplied for the affected families and their children. Moreover, one EU expert from the Federal Province of Tyrol and one UNDAC member of the Federal Ministry of Defence and Sports were sent to the disaster areas in Pakistan. When the dam broke in Hungary in October Austria helped by sending an expert from the Federal Environment Agency as well as five dam construction experts from the Federal Ministry of Defence and Sports to master the catastrophe. During the Haiti cholera epidemic in November Austria sent water treatment tablets from the funds of the Federal Ministry of the Interior’s disaster relief scheme with the logistic support of the Red Cross. After the floods in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro in December the affected families were provided with family-sized tents, blankets, sandbags, and power generators as well as sewage water pumps under the international disaster relief scheme.

1.2. The Austrian Demining Programme

The demining programme represents an important contribution to humanitarian aid and development policy. Measures comprise the demining of affected territories, the socio-economic rehabilitation of mine victims, as well as information and awareness raising on mine risks. ADA concluded new agreements with a focus on Bosnia and Herzegovina, Afghanistan and Laos.

1.3. Austrian Food Aid

The Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management is responsible for the execution of the international food aid agree-
ment dating from 1999. Countries were selected in cooperation with the Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs and ADA. Current focuses were assistance to the UN World Food Programme (WFP) for quake victims in Haiti and flood victims in Pakistan. FAO projects in the Gaza Strip as well as in Madagascar, Kyrgyzstan, Nicaragua and Moldova were also supported.

2. Austrian Multilateral Humanitarian Aid

2.1. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) is responsible for developing UN humanitarian policies, promoting it with other UN agencies and the international coordination of humanitarian aid and disaster relief and in addition to headquarters in Geneva and New York has a network of 30 field and regional offices. Only approx. 11% of OCHA’s funding needs are covered by the regular UN budget, the remainder coming from voluntary contributions of the Member States including Austria. This year Austria’s admission to the OCHA Donor Support Group, the central global control instrument for humanitarian help, was finalised offering Austria an opportunity for greater visibility.

Austria surrendered its Presidency of the Consultative Group on Military and Civil Defence Assets (MDCA) to Switzerland. Five Austrians participated in the training programme for the civilian-military coordination of the UN (UN-McCord). Financial and personnel support was made available to the UN Disaster Assessment and Coordination Programme (UNDAC) by the Federal Ministry of the Interior. Austria supports the International Search and Rescue Advisory Group (INSARAG) mainly by experts and rescue teams. The Federal Ministry of the Interior (Dept. II/4) is the national point of contact in OCHA’s Joint Environment Unit and the UN-SPIDER Programme (United Nations Platform for Space-based Information for Disaster Management and Emergency Response).

2.2. The Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees

The UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) is one of the largest UN aid organisations and as such operates on all continents. The most extensive UNHCR programmes are currently implemented in Africa, the Middle East and in South-West-Asia (Afghanistan, Pakistan). Former Portuguese Prime Minister Antonio Gutierrez as UN High Commissioner for Refugees is head of UNHCR and was re-elected for a second term in 2010.

Austria supported the UNHCR both through its unspecific core contribution as well as by financing specific projects in Ethiopia, Algeria and in Uganda. Austria also for the first time provided first financial help for the UNHCR activities in Afghanistan as well as in Pakistan after the flooding catastrophe.
2.3. **The International Committee of the Red Cross and the International Federation of the Societies of the Red Cross and the Red Crescent**  
The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) operated in more than 80 countries and as such provided an important global contribution together with the international Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and the national societies for mitigating humanitarian suffering. Austria supported the operative work of the ICRC in Haiti and Pakistan and that of the IFRC providing a contribution to the ICRC headquarters budget.

2.4. **The UN World Food Programme**  
The UN World Food Programme (WFP) is the largest humanitarian UN organisation. The Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management supported projects in Haiti, Pakistan and Mozambique financially.

2.5. **United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East**  
Just like in recent years Austria provided a core contribution to the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) for projects on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

2.6. **Other Multilateral Aid**  
Austria contributed a total of 20.72 million euros for worldwide humanitarian aid through the European Community Humanitarian Aid Office (ECHO) with a budget of roughly one billion euros.

2.7. **UN Central Emergency Response Fund**  
The reformed Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), approved by the UNGA in December 2005, started to work in March 2006 and represents a central UN humanitarian reform project and a considerable improvement compared with the “flash appeal” systems funded by the Member States only after a catastrophe or a crisis event. It is a standby fund to provide victims of natural catastrophes and armed conflict with early and reliable humanitarian aid (also see chapter E.II.8.). Austria provided a core contribution to the United Nations Central Emergency Response Fund.
F. Global Disarmament, Arms Control and Non-Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction and their Means of Delivery

The strengthening and further development of the system of global disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery is an explicit goal of Austrian foreign policy. At the Review Conference of the Nuclear Weapons Non-Proliferation Treaty Austria as President of the working group on disarmament continued its intensely committed work. Priorities included the First Conference of State Parties to the Oslo Convention (cluster munitions).

I. Arms Control and Non-Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction

1. Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

The 1970 Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (NPT) is the international legal basis of the nuclear regime for 189 countries and a pillar of nuclear non-proliferation. The Treaty commits its members – except for the five states with nuclear arms recognised in the NPT – to renounce on nuclear weapons while at the same time also stipulating the right to the peaceful use of nuclear energy. The five nuclear powers China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom and the USA commit themselves to nuclear disarmament and the complete elimination of nuclear weapons. India, Israel and Pakistan are the only countries outside the NPT. Even though the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea had declared in 2003 that it was leaving the Treaty, the decision has not been recognised internationally. Member states convene once every five years for review conferences to evaluate the status-quo of NPT implementation.

Following the failure of the 2005 review conference the May conference faced huge expectations. Member countries worked out a substantially demanding consensus result achieving unexpected success: member states first agreed on comprehensive action plans for the three pillars of NPT invigorating the process on a zone free from weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. Austria as chair of action plan negotiations was able to provide a valuable and generally appreciated contribution. At the same time against the background of Austria’s anti-nuclear policy it also managed to prevent aggressive promotion of civilian use of nuclear energy.

2. Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty

The Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) provides for a ban on all nuclear explosions. Since the draft treaty was accepted by the UNGA in
1996 182 states have signed and 153 states have ratified the CTBT, including Austria. Since to date only 35 out of 44 priority countries listed in Annex 2 have ratified the Treaty, it has not yet entered into force. Indonesia and the USA announced in May that it would soon be ratified. At the fifth ministerial meeting in support of the CTBT on 23 September in New York a Joint Declaration was adopted. Federal Minister Michael Spindelegger stressed the vision of a new world free from nuclear weapons and requested an accelerated process for CTBT enforcement whose legally binding character could not be substituted by unilateral test moratoria.

The Provisional Technical Secretariat (PTS) of the Preparatory Commission for the Organisation of the Treaty for the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT PrepCom) has had its headquarters in Vienna since March 2007. Its main task is to build up the International Monitoring System (IMS) provided for in the CTBT with 337 monitoring units worldwide (321 monitoring stations, 16 radionuclide labs) and an international data centre in Vienna. Seismic data gathered via the IMS are regularly also forwarded to a tsunami early warning system giving importance to the work of the CTBT PrepCom also beyond the sphere of nuclear non-proliferation.

3. Geneva Disarmament Conference

The Geneva Disarmament Conference (DC) founded in 1979 has been striving for 13 years to overcome the blockade of substantial results. The discussion of nuclear disarmament issues launched in 2006 by the 65 Member States also including Austria since 1996, the Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT), negative security guarantees, and the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space (PAROS) was intensified. The final implementation of the 2009 working programme, however, failed due to Pakistan’s objection. The UN Secretary General (UNSG) issued invitations for a high-level meeting in New York on 24 September, also attended by Federal Minister Spindelegger. Causes and possible solutions were discussed. In a resolution adopted with important contributions from Austria the UNGA decided to re-evaluate the results of DC activities in autumn 2011 and to decide on possible further measures.

4. Chemical Weapons Convention

The 1997 Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) includes a ban on all chemical weapons requesting their gradual destruction. With now 188 Member States the Convention approaches its goal of universal application, even though the most recent accession (Iraq) dates back to 2009. Important progress was made on the destruction of existing arsenals by seven owner states: 62.83% of declared category 1- and 52.1% of category 2-stocks have already been destroyed. Albania, the Republic of Korea and India have completed
destruction. Other owner states (including Russia and the US) requested that the deadline originally scheduled for 2007 be postponed as much as possible, i.e. 29 April 2012. Subject to progress achieved Libya should be able to meet destruction deadlines. The largest owner states Russia and the US have announced that the prolonged destruction term should be exceeded (currently scheduled US completion 2021). No deadlines have as yet been defined for the youngest owner state, Iraq.

In July Ambassador Ahmet Üzümcü (Turkey) succeeded Ambassador Rogelio Pfirter (Argentina) as Director General of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) in The Hague.

Already back in 2009 the EU adopted what so far is the fourth Joint OPSW Support Action of a total of approx. 2.1 million euros enabling and supporting the organisation’s activities until far into 2011.

Austria until May was a member of the CWC Executive Committee and according to the present rotation regime will return to the Executive Committee for another two years in May 2019.

5. Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention

The Convention from 1972 comprises a Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons (BTWC). To date 163 member states have joined the BTWC and 13 have signed it. The annual meetings of experts and contracting states in Geneva focused on measures for increasing biosecurity and monitoring, training and awareness raising with regard to dual-use goods. Negotiations at the Review Conference in autumn 2011 will particularly focus on the question of the creation of a functioning review system for the BTWC.

6. Ballistic Missiles

The Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation (HCOC) is the only normative instrument for the non-proliferation of ballistic missiles and cruise missiles. Following the accession of Iraq it now has 131 member states. Austria serves as HCOC Immediate Central Contact (Executive Secretariat) thus acting as interface for the exchange of information under this mechanism. Confidence building measures including notifications of upcoming missile launches are at the centre of this politically binding, multilateral agreement. Since the HCOC came into force nine Conferences of Subscribing States have been held in Vienna, most recently under the French Presidency on 31 May and 1 June. Topics included the reliable implementation of confidence-building measures by all Member States and possible activities to render the code universal as well as creating an electronic central contact point the setting up of which started in autumn.
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II. Arms Control and Disarmament in the Field of Conventional Weapons

1. Anti-Personnel Mines

The Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (Ottawa Convention) was adopted in 1997, entered into force in 1999, and currently has 156 members. Austria as one of the leading countries of the Ottawa Process is especially committed to the use, the stockpiling, production, and transmission of anti-personnel mines and their destruction. Support for the international implementation of the Convention was continued as was the implementation of the Austrian Mine Action Programme for which funds have been provided since 1999, totalling 1.2 million euros in 2010. Today the Ottawa Convention is amongst the most successful instruments of humanitarian international law and disarmament. Eleven years after it first came into force the use and production of mines are clearly restricted and trade has almost come to a complete standstill. Considerable stocks have already been destroyed and large territories have been cleared of mines. The number of new victims has thus been clearly reduced from an annual 35,000 to 17,000. Under the Cartagena Action Plan help for mine victims will continue to be an ongoing focus of the Convention. The biggest challenge continues to be the economic and social re-integration of the victims. These objectives are also further pursued at the conference of subscribing states in Geneva at the end of the year.

2. Cluster Munitions

The Convention on Cluster Munitions entered into force at the beginning of August following the 30th ratification. At the end of 2010, of 108 signatory states, 49 countries had ratified the Oslo Convention. The Convention is the most important disarmament treaty since the Ottawa Convention from 1997 and constitutes an important further development in international humanitarian law. It provides for a categorical prohibition of the use, development, production, stockpiling and transfer of cluster munitions causing unacceptable suffering for the civilian population and comprising all weapon types used to date. New track-setting standards are applied for victim assistance, last but not least thanks to Austria’s committed efforts.

The First Meeting of State Parties of the Oslo Convention was held in Vientiane/Laos in November with unexpectedly high participation of Heads of State and representatives of the civil society. The unanimously adopted documents, including the Vientiane Declaration and the operative Action Plan, define very far-reaching provisions for implementation of the commitments. One implementation focus of the Convention is the destruction of cluster munitions stocks, whereas another is on assistance to victims. Austria had supported preparations for the conference by providing a JPO and as “Friend
of the Chair” also played a leading part in the preparation and execution of the conference.

3. Small Arms and Light Weapons

Small arms and light weapons (SALW) each year cause approx. 500,000 victims and as such are often dubbed to be the real weapons of mass destruction. Their destabilising effect is directly related to the rise in internal conflicts and the high levels of crime and violence persisting even after conflicts have ended. In the competent UN and other multilateral fora Austria advocates curbing these catastrophic consequences.

III. Export Control Regimes

1. Multilateral Export Controls

By coordinating national export controls the five existing control regimes pursue the objective of preventing sensitive technology and know-how from ending up in the hands of states possibly intending their use for military purposes. The regime’s principal instruments are lists with relevant goods and substances as well as guidelines regarding export to non-member-states. Austria is a member of all five regimes. Domestically the rules are implemented mainly within the scope of the Export Trade Act 2005.

In the nuclear sphere both the Zangger Committee (ZC – since the accession of Belarus in November with 38 members) and the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG – with 45 members) are based in Vienna. They keep control lists of sensitive nuclear goods and equipment with the aim of preventing uranium enrichment and plutonium processing for non-peaceful purposes. The 41-member Australia Group (AG) tries to assure, through export controls, that certain products do not contribute to the development of chemical and biological weapons. The 34-member Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) controls the proliferation of nuclear weapon missile technology (missiles with control systems and cruise missiles).

The objective of the 1997 Wassenaar Arrangement (WA) whose Secretariat is based in Vienna is to prevent a destabilising accumulation of conventional weapons and dual use goods and technologies through the coordination of national export controls and increased transparency. The 40 participating states particularly stressed the necessity of a substantial and informed exchange of views on region analyses in connection with the verification of a potentially destabilising accumulation of conventional weapons in certain destinations and regions. Next to the analysis of current and future threats to regional or international security and stability the adaptation of the existing control lists and guidelines to technological progress as well as market trends and developments in the international security sector also was another per-
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manent issue. Information events for third countries, international organisations and industry were also organised.

2. Arms Trade Treaty

The negative effects of irresponsible arms trade on stability, security and human rights, but also sustainable economic and development policy, are undisputed. It has therefore for years been a major concern both for Austria as well as for all EU partners to set up internationally coordinated action in the form of a binding Arms Trade Treaty (ATT). A specific schedule for drafting an arms trade treaty was defined upon the announcement of the international conference in July 2012.

Principal elements of a future agreement were discussed at the first ATT preparatory committee between 12 and 23 July. Both in the EU as well as at UN meetings Austria advocated respect for human rights and humanitarian international law as parameters of an Arms Trade Treaty as well as appreciation of the work of the civil society. To promote further discussions in the run-up to the preparatory committee in March 2011 Austria as sponsor supported the organisation of a symposium in Boston/USA discussing possible individual elements of an ATT while also involving the civil society. Austria was one of the chairs of the symposium and as such underlined its continued commitment to producing the ATT.

With EU support the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) held worldwide seminars and workshops with the goal of creating a solid interregional support base for an ATT. In February the regional conference for “Wider Europe” and the closing event of the first seminar series were held in Vienna. In parallel Austria supported the NGO conference on ATT. Another regional conference was held in November in Kathmandu.

3. National Export Controls

In Austria the Foreign Trade Act and the War Material Act constitute the basis for exporting conventional arms. Competences for defining war material requiring approval lie both with the International Trade Regulation and its Annex corresponding to the Wassenaar control list and the EU list of military goods as well as the war material regulation.

Austria is also obliged to comply with the Council Common Position defining common rules governing the control of exports of military technology and equipment of December 2008. This legally binding Common Position completed the reform of the EU Code of Conduct on Arms Exports as a major contribution to further harmonisation of the national export regimes and implementation measures and with a positive effect on the EU’s position in the ATT process.
Export Control Regimes

Under the Council Joint Action on support for EU activities in order to promote the control of arms exports and the principles and criteria of the EU Code of Conduct on Arms Exports among third countries, events were held in Algiers, Sarajevo and Kiev for states in the respective region. Considering its success this structured process of information events is to be continued in future. Beneficiaries include countries in South Eastern Europe, partner countries in North Africa and the Mediterranean, partner countries of European Neighbourhood Policy in Eastern Europe and the Caucasus as well as Ukraine.

The quality and transparency of the consolidated annual report as a source of information on real EU-wide exports could be further improved.
G. International Protection of Human Rights

I. Introduction

The worldwide implementation of international human rights standards is a central Austrian concern. Also during its membership of the UN Security Council (UNSC), Austria was highly committed to the protection of human rights, in particular strengthening the rights of women and children in conflict and post-conflict situations. To continue these efforts Austria will apply for a seat on the UN Human Rights Council (HRC) in 2011. Other priority human rights issues in international or regional organisations and in bilateral contacts are the freedom of religion and the protection of religious minorities, the situation of internally displaced persons, the protection of minorities, education on human rights and the promotion of democratisation as well as strengthening the rule of law. Austria also advocates the abolition of the death penalty and the fight against trafficking in human beings. A special concern is strengthening civil society. The implementation and spread of humanitarian international law is a special focus of Austrian foreign policy.

II. Human Rights in the European Union

1. EU Human Rights Policy

CFSP objectives include the development and consolidation of democracy and rule of law as well as respect of human rights and fundamental freedoms. Questions of EU human rights policy towards third countries are handled by the EU Directors of Human Rights in the Council Working Group Human Rights in EU external relations (COHOM) in cooperation with the Council Working Groups with geographic focus and in the European Commission-chaired Committee for Human Rights and Democratisation. Austria continued its commitment for better integration of human rights in all EU policy spheres and successfully continued its fight for further anchoring human rights in EU crisis management. At the beginning of the year the newly established Council Working Group for Fundamental Rights, Civil Rights, and Freedom of Movement (FREMP) took up its work.

The Lisbon Treaty made the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union binding for the EU and thus made it obligatory to join the European Human Rights Convention (ECHR). Respective European Commission-chaired negotiations with the Council of Europe have already started. In addition, efforts were launched to improve the conformity of European Commission activities with fundamental rights.

Since 2000 the European Commission has been running EU election observer missions. Training events for election observers are offered under the EU “Network for Enhanced Electoral and Democratic Support” (NEEDS) project, also at the Austrian Study Centre for Peace and Conflict Resolution (ASPC).
Human Rights in the European Union

Approx. 30 Austrians participated in the EU election observer missions in Ethiopia, Burundi, Côte d’Ivoire, Guinea, Iraq, Sudan, Tanzania and Togo.

1.1. The Integration of Human Rights Policy into the CSDP

Austria strongly advocates the integration of human rights into all spheres of the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP), particularly consideration for the rights of women and children in EU crisis management. Protection of the civil society constitutes a special focus of Austrian policy. Continuing its commitment on the UNSC, Austria has also worked towards strengthening the protection of the civilian population in the EU military operations and civilian missions and achieved a revision of the respective EU guidelines adopted by the Council in October.

1.2. European Union Guidelines on Human Rights

The EU Guidelines on Human Rights are documents adopted by the Council including a catalogue of measures for the EU’s autonomous commitment towards third countries in individual human rights areas. The specific pilot programmes developed on the Guidelines for the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of the Child for Armenia, Brazil, Ghana, India, Iran, Jamaica, Jordan, Canada, Kenya and Russia adopted in 2009 were continued and shall soon be revised. As member of the EU Task Force for the Guidelines on Children in Armed Conflict adopted in December 2003 with Austrian participation, Austria cooperated on the development of projects and measures for implementing and updating these guidelines in 2010. The EU continues its close cooperation with the UN Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict, Radhika Coomaraswamy. In June the EU adopted Council conclusions on child work providing further steps for abolishing the worst forms of child work by 2016. The aim is to set measures in the areas of political dialogue, development cooperation and trade.

The global abolition of the death penalty is a priority for Austria and the EU pursued on the basis of the Guidelines to EU Policy Towards Third Countries on the Death Penalty. Demarches were carried out, public declarations were issued and the topic was increasingly dealt with in regional and international bodies. As well dialogues on human rights were conducted and consultations held with third countries. In the process the EU concentrated on the countries who on the one hand signalled plans to abolish the death penalty or suspend its execution or on the other discuss its re-introduction and increased use. The Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs on a bilateral level advocates the non-execution of death sentences in numerous countries.

With the Guidelines to EU Policy Towards Third Countries on Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment the EU commits itself to permanent conviction activities towards third countries and
participation in multilateral fora with the goal of abolishing torture world-
wide. In implementing the guidelines the EU concentrated its bilateral com-
mitment in the fight against torture on particularly affected countries. On the
multilateral level the EU is fighting to strengthen the **UN Subcommittee on
Prevention of Torture (SPT)**. The issue is also part of the political dialogue
and human rights dialogue between the EU and third countries. In addi-
tion, it addresses allegations of torture specifically targeting individuals and
in individual cases also intervenes in third countries. Specific problems of
the respective country in dealing with arrested individuals are addressed
directly and case-specific support for finding solutions is offered. Countries
that are not signatories of the UN Convention against Torture are requested
to join; with states already parties to the agreement issues of the effective
implementation of the Convention are discussed.

The focus of the **European Union Guidelines on Human Rights Defenders**
continued to be the development of local strategies for the effective imple-
mentation of these guidelines in cooperation with the local embassies and
the intensification of cooperation with local human rights defenders by
appointing an EU liaison officer in the respective countries. An annual meet-
ing between the EU-Delegations with human rights defenders took place in
more than 70 countries. In more than 200 cases the EU supported threatened
human rights defenders. Austria initiated and is a member of the EU Task
Force for the **EU guidelines on violence against women and girls** adopted
in December 2008. The Task Force monitors the implementation of these
guidelines. The EU Task Force for Women, Peace and Security, also with
Austria’s active participation, pushes for implementation of UNSC Resolu-
tion 1325 (2000) for which specific EU indicators on implementation of prog-
ress were developed.

### 1.3. EU Agency for Fundamental Rights

The set-up phase of the **EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA)** in Vienna
was completed with the appointment of its first Director, Morten Kjaerum, in
March 2008. Austria supports a strong FRA and closely cooperates with it. In
June the headquarters agreement was signed between Austria and the FRA.

The FRA has already provided numerous contributions to improving protec-
tion of fundamental rights in Europe with the **publication of studies** on the
rights of children, unaccompanied refugee minor, homophobia, discrimina-
tion against minorities and the situation of Roma and Muslims in Europe, as
well as consulting activities for EU institutions on draft legislation. Together
with the Belgian EU Council Presidency in Brussels in December the FRA
organised a European Fundamental Rights Conference on the rights of chil-
dren.

Once more the Human Rights Fact Sheets initiated by Austria were revised
by the EU heads of mission in third countries. Some specific human rights
strategies shall replace the Fact Sheets from 2011 onwards. The specific projects and programmes on EU human rights policy are implemented mainly through the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR).

2. Structured Human Rights Dialogues

Since 2001 the EU has applied separate guidelines for dialogue in the sphere of human rights stipulating diverse forms of dialogue, i.e. structured human rights dialogue, ad hoc dialogue, dialogue with groups of states and expert meetings with like-minded states in the run-up to major human rights events.

Since the Structured Human Rights Dialogue EU-China in June China subsequently has not accepted any further dates proposed by the EU which is why no second meeting has come about. The dialogue shall be continued in 2011. In addition to the government-level meetings expert seminars were organised with participants from academia, NGOs and representatives of the EU and China. The issues addressed at the dialogue regarded the Chinese ratification of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, cooperation with the UN human rights mechanisms, reform of the “re-education through labour” system and the judicial system, the developments in Tibet and Xinjiang, the prosecution of supporters of the democracy movements, religious groups and the Falun-Gong movement as well as the death penalty, the ban on torture, freedom of religion, freedom of speech through the internet, the right to a fair trial. The EU also regularly addresses individual human rights cases (see Chapter G.II.1.2.).

The EU-Iran Human Rights Dialogue established at the end of 2002 basically came to a halt after its fourth round in June 2004. In 2006 under the Austrian Presidency of the EU Council efforts were made to resume the dialogue which failed over the worrying human rights situation in Iran. The human rights situation was also criticised in a Resolution of the 65th UNGA co-sponsored by Austria. The numerous infringements of human rights were regularly addressed by Austria in contacts with the Iranian government.

In May and November the eleventh and twelfth round of the EU – Russia Human Rights Consultations were held. Current topics such as the situation in North Caucasus and the persisting violence against human rights activists, issues of impunity, freedom of speech, assembly and the media as well as freedom of religion and women’s rights etc. were on the agenda. Individual cases were also addressed. Regarding questions of cooperation in multilateral fora freedom of religion, racism, human rights and traditional values as well as lesbian- gay- bisexual- transgender rights were also discussed. Either round was preceded by meetings between the EU Delegation and Russian NGOs.

In the implementation of the EU-Central Asia Strategy Human Rights Dialogue rounds were held between the EU and three Central Asian countries:
with Uzbekistan on 5 May, with Turkmenistan on 18 June and with Kazakhstan on 14 December.

The seventh round of the EU-AU Human Rights Dialogue and the second EU-AU civil society seminar were held on 20 October in Addis Ababa addressing issues of freedom of assembly, human rights defenders or impunity. The conclusions of the meeting also addressed the will for increased cooperation in international fora including coordination on either side before meetings of the HRC and the 3rd Committee of the UNGA as well as the readiness for joint initiatives on SC Resolution 1325 (2000) and migration.

III. Human Rights in the United Nations

The UN’s operative human rights capacities were strengthened as a result of the Vienna World Conference on Human Rights in 1993. The basic instruments for the promotion of human rights, but also conflict prevention and peace consolidation are the development and strengthening of rule of law, good governance, an active civil society and local human rights structures as well as extensive measures in human rights education. In preparation of an extensive review under the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) by the Human Rights Council (HRC), which Austria is expected to first undergo in 2011, the country report was drawn up with the involvement of the civil society and approved by the Federal Government on 5 October.

1. The Human Rights Council

Austria continues its traditional commitment to the worldwide protection of human rights also in the prime UN organ in this field, the HRC. This forum brings together the legal, political and structural measures of the international community to further strengthen the international system for the further protection and promotion of human rights; leading both to a better implementation of the legal commitments of UN Member States as well as the political resolutions of the UNGA and the Vienna World Conference on Human Rights in 1993.

The HRC was founded in 2006 as a successor organ to the UN Commission on Human Rights (UNCHR). The year 2010 was hallmarked by a first review of HRC work. This assessment and reform process of all aspects of the HRC working and functioning mode shall be brought to a conclusion in Geneva in 2011 and at the UNGA in New York. During the process Austria and other western countries advocated an increase of efficiency and effectiveness of this central institution for global human rights protection. In particular, proposals were presented to improve the timely and effective handling of specific human rights crises. To further strengthen its involvement in the work of the HRC, Austria has also submitted its application for membership during

The Universal Periodic Review is one of the main novelties as compared with the predecessor model reviewing the HR situation in all countries within a period of four years. The HRC also holds at least three meetings a year; special sessions can be convened at the request of at least 16 of its 47 members.

The following meetings convened in 2010:

The 13th regular meeting in March was traditionally opened by the so-called “High-Level Segment”. Austria was represented by Federal Minister Claudia Bandion-Ornt. The presentation of the thematic reports by the special rapporteurs e.g. on torture, terrorism, minorities, internally displaced persons, freedom of religion and violence against children and human rights defenders were followed by debates on the human rights situation in the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK), Myanmar, Somalia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the occupied Palestinian territories. While the HRC extended the country mandates of the special rapporteurs for Myanmar and DPRK, renewal of the special rapporteur mandate for the DR Congo failed over the persistent opposition by the countries in the region. Hence a group of thematic special rapporteurs shall now report on the HR situation in the DR Congo.

Austria successfully continued its long-standing initiative for the rights of members of national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities. This year’s resolution focused on the topics of right to education and right to political participation; this introduces into the HRC focal points of the work carried out by the Forum for Minority Issues established upon an Austrian initiative in 2007.

Challenging negotiations with respect to subject-matters were held in particular on torture, terrorism and racism, with the corresponding resolutions finally accepted by consensus. Resolutions proposed by Austria included two Middle East resolutions on the right of self-determination of the Palestinian people as well as the condemnation of Israeli settlement activities in the occupied territories. The initiative on the “defamation of religions”, not unproblematic from a human rights perspective, was adopted by a close majority; many countries, however, feared that this might lead to further polarisation on the issue of religious freedom.

The 14th regular meeting in June was dominated by the so-called “Gaza Flotilla” incident. An urgent debate was followed by the adoption of a resolution for the establishment of an international investigation committee for exploring the events. The study on secret detention produced with considerable contributions from the Special Rapporteur on Torture Manfred Nowak jointly with colleagues was received with great interest.
Special panel discussions were held on the following issues: protection of journalists in armed conflict, toxic waste, maternal mortality and trafficking in humans. A photo exhibition was also dedicated to trafficking in human beings organised with Austrian support and in cooperation with the Vienna-based UN Office on Drugs and Crime.

The annual one-day debate on the human rights of women this time was dominated by the right to education. The impediments for women’s access to education for religious reasons were especially criticised.

In the country-specific debates many countries raised the situation in Iran. The HRC adopted various specific country resolutions on the situation in Afghanistan and in Kyrgyzstan. The mandate of the Special Rapporteur on Sudan was extended by another three months for reasons of his prolonged illness-related absence.

Austria successfully continued its initiative on the protection of internally displaced persons. The mandate of a respective special rapporteur was extended by consent and for the first time in cross-regional cooperation with Uganda by another three months. Also at Austrian initiative two “side events” were held as part of the initiative on human rights in the penal system. The Canadian initiative on the “elimination of all forms of violence against women” provides for a thematic approach broken down over three years including components like prevention, protection, and compensation.

The HRC also appointed eight new special rapporteurs and elected the Permanent Representative of Thailand in Geneva as its President. Austria also assumed the coordination of the Western European and Others Group (WEOG) for a year.

The 15th meeting in September was a success and brought the appointment of two new special rapporteurs: the USA, on the Council since 2010 as a member, managed to enforce an initiative for the creation of a special rapporteur on freedom of assembly and association. This is the first new HRC mandate in the area of political and civilian rights since its establishment.

Negotiations on the new creation of a five-person expert group on the “elimination of discrimination against women in law and practice” were also successful. The initiative, mainly instigated by Mexico and Colombia and actively supported by the EU and the USA, also enjoyed support by many states from different regions. The disputed country mandate on the situation in Sudan was also extended despite its opposition.

Two special sessions were also held: on 27 January the Council discussed the serious situation in Haiti following the quake. On 23 December a special session was held on the situation in Ivory Coast after the presidential elections. The High Commissioner for Human Rights was requested to report to the Council about further developments.
2. The General Assembly

The Third Committee of the 65th session of the UNGA negotiated and adopted 56 Resolutions on human rights and social issues. From an EU perspective the adoptions of the cross-regional initiative on the moratorium for the application of the death penalty, the EU initiatives on the human rights situation in Myanmar and the DPRK as well as the EU supported Canadian Resolution on Iran each with better voting results and in a better atmosphere than in the previous years. The resolution on the rights of the child traditionally brought by the EU and the group of Latin American countries was again adopted by consensus and for the first time was co-sponsored by the USA which until 2008 had demanded votes on this resolution. The EU-proposed resolution on religious intolerance was also adopted by consensus, while the initiative by the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC) on the defamation of religions lost further support. The question of handling religion in the UN and, in particular, in the human rights context also was a topic in other negotiations and caused tensions between EU/WEOG and countries in the South/OIC. Partly intentional block formation of “South” against “North” rendered constructive cooperation difficult partly also on other human rights issues including the resolutions on racism and the right to development.

In the Resolution on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions reference to sexual orientation was deleted through an amendment proposed and enforced by vote by the Arab and African Group. At the initiative of the United States supported by the EU the reference was reinserted when the report by the Third Committee was adopted in the UNGA plenary.

Austria introduced a resolution on human rights in criminal proceedings and criminal justice which was adopted by consensus and co-sponsored by 73 countries from all regions. Austria also actively participated in EU negotiations and in informal consultations directing special attention to both the EU initiatives and country resolutions as well as the resolutions on violence against women, compliance with the Millennium Development Goals for handicapped people, racism as well as drugs and crime prevention. Austria participated in the debates in addition to the EU declarations also with a national declaration by a youth delegate on the debate on social development as well as the interactive dialogues with the Independent Expert on Minority Issues, Gay McDougal, the SRSG for Internally Displaced Persons, Walter Kälin, and the Special Rapporteur on Torture, Manfred Nowak. Austria also provided one of the three Vice-Presidents of the Third Committee.

The EU organised events on the priority issue of the resolution on the rights of the child “early childhood” as well as with a cross-regional group of countries on discrimination of LGBT people. This event was also attended by UNSG Ban Ki-moon.
3. The Commission on the Status of Women

The 54th session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) in New York from 1 to 12 March was dedicated to the implementation of the results of the IVth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995 (“Beijing + 15”). A political declaration was adopted on this issue reconfirming the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, welcoming its progress to date on its full implementation and underlining the necessity of further efforts. It also adopted seven resolutions on the issues of reducing maternal mortality, HIV/AIDS, economic “empowerment” of women, female genital mutilation, the reform of the UN gender architecture, hostage-taking of women and girls, and the situation of Palestinian women. The Austrian Delegation was headed by Federal Minister Gabriele Heinisch-Hosek; the Delegation also included former Federal Minister Maria Rauch-Kallat and former Federal Minister Helga Konrad. Together with Spain, Portugal and UNIFEM Austria organised an event on “Good Governance and the Political Participation of Women” as well as an event for stocktaking on the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform of Action from an Austrian perspective.

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 mainly based on the European Human Rights Convention (EHRC) and the activities of the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR). The growing number of member states in the Council of Europe from 23 in 1989 to a present 47 as well as a broader PR effect of the human rights system produced a clear increase in the number of complaints. Total individual complaints increased from approx. 4,000 in 1989 to approx. 62,500 in 2010, the large majority of which is not admitted. As of 31 December roughly 143,000 complaints were pending before the ECHR. For years efforts have hence been undertaken to counter this development. The Protocol 14 to the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, in particular, reforming the Court’s internal working procedures, entered into force following the last ratification by Russia on 1 June. In order to provide the relaunched reform process with the required political backing the Swiss Presidency organised a ministerial-level conference in Interlaken on 18 and 19 February. The conference adopted a political declaration and a plan for action directed towards long- and short-term reform steps on a national level both in the ministerial committees and the ECHR. In Austria’s view the right of individual complaints given in the Convention must remain fully guaranteed also in the
future. Care must also be taken that the reform efforts do not harm the existing protection system.

Thomas Hammarberg, Commissioner for Human Rights since 2006, visited the Russian Federation, Greece, Kosovo, Georgia, Azerbaijan, Croatia, France, Turkey, Cyprus, the Netherlands, Romania, the Czech Republic and Bosnia and Herzegovina. He is tasked with counselling and awareness-building in the member states.

Frenchman Jean-Paul Costa has been President of the ECHR since 2007; Elisabeth Steiner has been the Austrian judge at the ECHR since 2001; Gerald Schöpf is member of the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI); Julia Kozma is a member of the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT) and Karin Lukas is member of the European Council Committee of Social Rights.

VI. The Human Security Network

The Human Security Network (HSN) is a cross-regional, cross-topic, and action-oriented community of interests of twelve countries (Austria, Chile, Costa Rica, Greece, Ireland, Jordan, Canada, Mali, Norway, Switzerland, Slovenia and Thailand as well as South Africa as observer) created in 1998/1999 as part of the Ottawa Process for establishing the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention. The concept of human security focuses on the security needs of the individual; its main foundations are human rights, international humanitarian law, refugee legislation and development. The HSN concentrates on the following issues: land mines, small arms, children and armed conflict, women, peace and security, human rights education, dialogue of civilisations as well as most recently the effects of climate change in particularly threatened population groups. During its presidency from July 2002 to May 2003 Austria had defined human rights education as well as children and armed conflict as priorities on which an HSN manual on human rights education “Understanding Human Rights” – meanwhile translated into 15 languages – as well as a training curriculum for strengthening the rights of children have been produced.

Costa Rica has chaired the HSN since April 2009 and in September 2010 organised a high-level meeting in New York during the UNGA ministerial week. Costa Rica will remain chair until March 2011, after which chairs will again rotate annually based on the historical rotation system (next chair Switzerland). To support the chair a system of subject-related task-sharing has been developed under which Austria together with Ireland will function as so-called “burdensharer” in the field of “Peace and Security” during the first semester of 2011. In addition to the HSN a looser and more development-oriented Japan-chaired group of “Friends of Human Security” exists at the UN. Japan also initiated the first formal UNGA debate (May 2010) and the
first UNGA Resolution on human security (adopted in 2010, co-sponsored by Austria).

VII. Priorities

1. Freedom of Religion and Protection of Religious Minorities

Austria’s commitment to the **Right to Freedom of Religion** is a priority of Austrian human rights policy. Austria participated in the elaboration of an **EU-Strategy regarding the increased commitment of the EU for freedom of religion** providing for a continuous EU commitment on issues of freedom of religion on a bilateral and multilateral level. A special task force on religious freedom which first convened in July was set up to implement this strategy.

Federal Minister Michael Spindelegger advocated this issue on the level of the EU Foreign Ministers. Further foundations for a joint European initiative for the implementation and development of an effective EU strategy on religious freedom and the protection of religious minorities are to be established and will be included in the Union’s annual human rights report.

Austria together with the EU has established a tradition of proposing **resolutions on religious freedom** in the UNGA and the UN Human Rights Council. The 65th UNGA again adopted the respective EU Resolution by consent. The mandate of the UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief was created in 1986 at EU initiative. The current special rapporteur is German citizen Heiner Bielefeldt who after six years succeeded Asma Jahangir from Pakistan.

2. Human Rights of Children

Austrian priorities on the UNSC included the promotion and protection of the rights of children. Austria participated in the work of the working group on children in armed conflict established by the UNSC. At Austria’s initiative a separate thematic debate on 16 June adopted a Presidential Statement declaring the UNSC’s willingness to impose sanctions against so-called “persistent perpetrators” (i.e. conflict parties infringing the rights of children in conflict situations in continuous or particularly serious manner). This achieved a substantial **strengthening of the protection of children in armed conflict** since the adoption of UNSC Resolution 1882 in 2009.

Austria has for many years been advocating setting up a global ban on drafting or deploying child soldiers. At the Paris “Free Children From War” conference in 2007 Austria committed itself to the Paris Commitments and Principles setting the legal framework for the global alliance against the use of child soldiers.

In the sphere of the HRC Austria participated in the HRC-established working group for working out a protocol on the individual complaints procedure
on the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The second session of the working group took place in December dealing with the first draft of the protocol.

Austria is home to the Austrian Study Centre for Peace and Conflict Resolution (ASPR), a leading training centre on the protection of children offering regular courses for the protection of and dealing with children in armed conflict. In numerous countries Austria supports projects for the reintegration of child soldiers and other affected children through contributions to UN organisations or bilateral development cooperation.

3. Human Rights of Women

Strengthening the rights of women is a central element of Austrian human rights policy. This includes promoting measures for combating violence against women and programmes for the active integration of women into peace processes.

As non-permanent member of the UNSC, Austria advocated greater consideration for the rights of women in the UNSC’s daily work. Agreement on the creation of a special monitoring mechanism prominently advocated by Austria in the negotiations on UNSC Resolution 1960 (2010) on sexual violence in armed conflict considerably strengthened protection against sexual violence.

As a token of the support for the system-wide UNSG campaign for combating violence against women contributions were made to the UN Trust Fund specifically created for that purpose and support was provided for the implementation of the recommendations of the UN anti-violence study co-financed by Austria. Support was also continued for the African Union Gender Directorate. In the EU Austria as a member of the EU Task Force on Violence against Women advocates a comprehensive implementation of the EU guidelines on violence against women adopted in December 2008.

Together with its partners in the EU, Austria advocates the establishment of UN Women becoming operative on 1 January 2011. UN Women merges the existing UN gender units.

In September Michelle Bachelet was appointed Executive Director and Under-Secretary-General of UN Women.

The ten-year anniversary of the adoption of UNSC-Resolution 1325 (2000) on Women, Peace and Security attracted special attention. On this occasion on 26 October a high-level open debate of the UNSC was held in which Federal Minister Michael Spindelegger participated and announced specific Austrian commitments towards the improved implementation of Resolution 1325. Austria provided important contributions to the negotiations on the Presidential Statement adopted on the occasion of the open SC debate advocating an effective implementation of the resolution.
Many initiatives by the Special Envoy on International Women’s Issues at the Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs, former Federal Minister and Member of the National Council Ursula Plassnik, were also dedicated to the implementation of SC Resolution 1325, for instance the participation in the conference of the EU Presidency on the occasion of the anniversary of this milestone resolution in September in Brussels. A separate ADA-financed expert conference on this topic was also organised in Vienna in October.


4. Protection of Minorities

Establishing a body for ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities at the HRC was a major Austrian concern for defining measures for the further implementation of the UNGA Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities adopted in 1992.

The third meeting of the Forum on Minority Issues convened in Geneva on 14 and 15 December and was devoted to the priority of “Minorities and economic participation”. It was again prepared by the independent HRC expert for minority issues Gay McDougall. In addition to representatives of states and international organisations the more than 500 participants also included representatives of NGOs and experts for minority issues. In her annual report to the HRC Gay McDougall will also report on the experiences at the third forum.

5. Human Rights Education

With the “Understanding Human Rights” human rights education manual Austria provides a globally used instrument earning special appreciation in the Report of the Alliance of Civilizations. The manual has already been translated into fifteen languages and is used in the European Regional Master Programme for Democracy and Human Rights in Sarajevo and the European Master Programme for Human Rights and Democracy in Venice. Training materials are publicly available on the website of the European Training and Research Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (ETC) in Graz.

In its 13th session in March the HRC decided to work out a UN Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training.
6. International Humanitarian Law

At the 30th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent in 2007 Austria agreed to organise events on current issues of international humanitarian law and strive for better dissemination. Coordinated by the Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs regular meetings of the national commission for the implementation of international humanitarian law with representatives of the ministries, the Austrian Red Cross (ARC) and members of the academia are held on a regular basis. A special focus is set on a better proliferation of international humanitarian law, particularly by integrating it into school syllabuses and training courses run jointly with the ASPR at Burg Schlaining.

Internationally Austria continued its work for the protection of the civilian population in armed conflict aiming to swiftly implement Resolution 1894 (2009) introduced by Austria during its Presidency of the UNSC.

VIII. The International Criminal Court

The International Criminal Court (ICC) in The Hague is a permanent and independent court created by the Rome Statute in 1998. Its jurisdiction currently covers genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes provided that they were committed after the Rome Statute was enacted on 1 July 2002 on the territory of or by a national of a member state. The UNSC also has the possibility to submit a situation to the ICC even if the country concerned is not a member. The Rome Statute, with at present 114 member states, establishes a so-called complementary jurisdiction of the ICC, i.e. applicable only if the states primarily responsible for judging crimes either are not willing or else are not in a position to investigate and prosecute these crimes.

Currently the following situations are pending before the ICC: Democratic Republic of the Congo, Uganda, Central African Republic, Kenya and – as a consequence of a referral by SC-Resolution 1593 (2005) – Darfur/ Sudan. So far the arrest warrant issued on 4 March 2009 by the ICC against Sudanese President Omar Hassan Ahmed Al Bashir, the first ever against an incumbent Head of State, to date has not been executed. The individual proceedings before the ICC are in different stages with execution of the arrest warrants issued against leaders of the LRA (Uganda situation) still pending.

Half a century after the Nuremberg and Tokyo trials, the first Review Conference of the Rome Statute on activating the jurisdiction on crimes of aggression provided by the Statute was held in May/June in Kampala. This historic resolution which also includes definitions of the act of aggression as well as the crime of aggression was adopted without a vote despite a difficult starting situation. Also adopted by consensus was an amendment proposal by Austria on expanding the catalogue of war crimes in the Rome Statute.
Austria is among the traditional ICC supporters. It was the first member to conclude an agreement on the **execution of prison sentences** with the ICC and in November initiated talks with the ICC on the conclusion of a **witness protection agreement**.
H. The Humanitarian Dimension in International Relations

I. Migration and Refugee Movements

Migration movements to Europe are increasingly gaining higher priority in political discussion. In addition to warlike conflicts, economic, demographic and social imbalances, lately also environmental destruction and climate change as well as easier travel and communication possibilities contribute to enhanced migration movements to Europe. UNHCR, the organisation responsible for refugees, since its establishment in 1950 has provided support for approx. 50 million people in refugee-type situations as well as asylum seekers, returnees, stateless persons and internally displaced persons.

This year’s Global Forum on Migration and Development in Puerto Vallarta/Mexico between 8 and 11 November focused on discussing the influence of climate change on migration movements. A major advantage of the Global Forum as a platform for discussion is that the origin, transit, and target countries can engage in an open exchange of views. The event also discussed other issues including migrant rights and the challenges for societies with a high proportion of migrants. Austria again in 2010 actively participated in the Global Forum.

One important objective of the Stockholm Programme is to build up a joint European asylum system. In 2010 the establishment of the European Asylum Support Office (EASO) in Malta constituted an important measure. Dutchman Robert K. Visser was appointed first Executive Director and the Director of the Austrian Federal Asylum Office, Wolfgang Taucher, was appointed Deputy Director of the authority’s administrative body. The main task of EASO is to coordinate the practical cooperation of EU Member States on asylum issues. EASO also supports the Member States most affected by asylum-seekers.

II. Migration and Refugee Policy in Austria

In its migration and refugee policy Austria pursues a comprehensive approach taking into account political, human rights and development aspects. Austria is mainly affected by East-West migration. On EU level Austria supports the global approach on migration, taking into account both migration flows across the eastern and western Mediterranean as well as those via Eastern and South Eastern Europe.

In Austria in 2010 the number of asylum applications dropped (-30.40%). Top amongst countries of origin was the Russian Federation with 2,322 asylum applications, followed by Afghanistan (1,852), Kosovo (622), Nigeria (573), India (433), Iran (387), Georgia (370), Turkey (369), Serbia (350), and Iraq (336).
III. The International Organisation for Migration (IOM)

The International Organisation for Migration (IOM) was founded in 1951 for the purpose of taking care of refugees and displaced persons during the post-war period. IOM advocates a humane and regulated migration policy regarding it as its main task to support migrants as well as governments in handling migration processes. As an important international organisation on migration issues IOM employs a global total of approx. 6,900 staff and has 127 member states including all 27 EU Member States.

Vienna’s IOM office doubles as “National Contact Point Austria” of the European Migration Network created by the European Commission in 2003. The Office closely cooperates with the respective Austrian institutions. In 2010 the IOM Vienna office was upgraded by a structural reform into one of a total of eight regional offices of the organisation.

IV. Combating Trafficking in Human Beings

The fight against trafficking in human beings continues to be a top priority of Austrian foreign policy. Austria is signatory to all relevant international legal instruments combating trafficking in human beings and strives to implement the respective international obligations through specific measures. The Task Force on Human Trafficking established by the FMEIA continued its activities for implementing the National Action Plan against Human Trafficking 2009–2011 chaired by the National Coordinator for Combating Human Trafficking, Ambassador Elisabeth Tichy-Fisslberger, Head of Section at the FMEIA. Measures centred on prevention, victim protection, criminal prosecution as well as regional, national and international coordination and cooperation. The FMEIA also took preventive actions in more than 100 risk countries. All Austrian representations abroad were requested to take active measures against human trafficking. ADC and ADA provided important contributions to fighting human trafficking in the countries of origin. Some projects were dedicated to strengthening the rights of victims of human trafficking. To increase protection for house workers of diplomats accredited to Austria or of international officials FMEIA in cooperation with the other Ministries and victim protection organisations developed a wide range of control measures to prevent abuse. In this respect Austria is playing a leading international role. In the sphere of prevention the FMEIA on the occasion of the “EU-Anti-Trafficking-Day 2010” organised the annual public event on the topic of “Together against Human Trafficking – the Austrian Activities Combating Human Trafficking” on 15 October at the Diplomatic Academy in Vienna. The exhibition “Human Trafficking – Slavery in the 21st Century” was organised with assistance from the FMEIA and is primarily addressed to Austrian pupils trying to explain the phenomenon of human trafficking and promoting discussions about the backgrounds.
I. **Multilateral Economic Policy**

I. **World Trade Organisation (WTO)**

Prime activities of international trade policy continue to be negotiations under the Doha Development Agenda (DDA). Despite all efforts again in 2010 against the background of the international economic and financial crisis no significant progress was achieved. So far the potential of trade policy for economic growth, wealth and development has not been realised.

Agriculture and industrial goods continued to be the main pillars for a future agreement. It is important to find a balance between a reduction of trade-distorting subsidies and lowering import duties for agricultural goods on the one hand and reducing non-agricultural tariffs on the other side. Because of the difficult general situation recently the primacy of the two spheres has somewhat been abandoned in favour of a more comprehensive view allowing a horizontal approach to all dossiers (next to agriculture and industrial goods also services, trade regulations, trade facilitations, and intellectual property issues).

Political declarations of intent were published by the heads of state and government at the G20 meetings in Toronto in June and Seoul in November with US multilateral commitment towards the end of the year leading to an intensification of negotiations on a technical level in Geneva.

Even though in 2010 no new members joined the organisation with currently 153 members, nevertheless some progress was made. Russia, in particular, returned to the negotiating table after the USA had declared a speedy accession to the WTO a political priority. In autumn it thus was also possible to resolve the open bilateral issues with the USA and later with the EU. Much progress was also achieved in accession talks with Vanuatu, Samoa, Yemen as well as Serbia. The accession of Montenegro which had already been scheduled for the end of 2008 continued to be blocked by further liberalisation claims by Ukraine.

The Aid for Trade (AFT) launched by the WTO Ministerial Conference in Hong Kong in 2005 and disengaged from the Doha Round mainly concentrated on high-level implementation on a regional level (primarily activities of the regional development banks). AFT particularly focused on the “Enhanced Integrated Framework” (EIF) Programme specialising in the special needs of LDC countries and further enhancing its operationality.

II. **The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)**

1. **The OECD at 50**

The OECD Convention was signed in Paris on 14 December 1960. The anniversary of this event was celebrated with an invitation by President Nicolas
Sarkozy to the Elysée Palace on 13 December and also was the first of a series of celebrations at the OECD and in its member states. Austria is also planning a symposium for 2011.

2. Enlargement and Global Relations

The OECD now has 34 members. Chile, Estonia, Israel and Slovenia joined the organisation in 2010. Accession talks with Russia are continued with a new dynamic emerging from the political level in Russia. Secretary General Gurría kept striving to open up the OECD for new countries and regions to strengthen the OECD’s global relevance. The OECD increasingly contributes to the G20 thus providing its experiences and analyses to the political debate, often in cooperation with diverse international organisations (e.g. IMF, ILO, etc.) producing joint studies. A deepened cooperation with Brazil, China, India, Indonesia and South Africa will offer these countries the possibility of participating as non-members in the role of privileged partners participating in committee work, thematic country reviews or other important OECD projects. This deepened cooperation is to be be developed and revised further. Global relations were also extended through the participation of other countries as observers in the committees, through regional programmes, global fora and cooperation and networking with other international organisations.

3. Economic and Financial Policy

This year’s meeting of OECD ministers of economic and financial affairs on 27 and 28 May under Italian presidency was dominated by the currently increasing burden on public finances in most OECD member states with moderate economic outlooks and high unemployment. The ministers assured each other of the necessity of credible sanitation of state finances paired with structural policy measures and stressing more “green growth” and intensified innovation policy. Once more they underlined the urgency of progress in WTO negotiations.

Secretary of State Andreas Schieder and Secretary of State Christine Marek participated in this meeting on behalf of Austria.

The OECD Secretariat meanwhile tried to obtain individual working instructions and requests to the OECD for reports and studies to be supplied to the G20 from the OECD Council of Ministers as well as from the G20. This was particularly achieved in the spheres of growth policy (structural policy, also with a view to undoing imbalances in the balance of payment), labour market policy, trade policy, energy policy (reduction of state subsidies in the energy sector) as well as fiscal policy (in particular progress on the international exchange of fiscal information).
In financial market policy some OECD member states resented active participation of the competent OECD financial market committee in the establishment of a new financial market architecture. The OECD Secretariat, however, succeeded in strengthening arguments for a consistent financial market regulation through adequate publications; the OECD also managed to secure participation in the so-called “Financial Stability Board“.

4. Austria and Banking Secrecy

International fiscal competition and the fight against tax fugitives and tax havens have further intensified since 2009 especially in international fora like the EU, the OECD, the FATF or the G20. France which in mid-November took over the Presidency of the G20 for one year, wants to promote “good governance” in fiscal questions on an international level.

Austria already in 2009 – just like Luxembourg, Switzerland and Liechtenstein – proposed to loosen up its banking secrecy “upon request” by adopting the new OECD standards providing for an exchange of information. Implementation progresses gradually through harmonisation of approx. 80 bilateral double taxation agreements (DTA) and tax information exchange (TIEA). At the end of 2010 Austria had ratified 17 bilateral agreements under the new standard.

The “fiscal package” includes the mutual assistance directive, the interest taxation directive, the mutual assistance for the recovery of claims directive, and fraud combating agreements with third countries has been debated in the ECOFIN since 2009. A political breakthrough regarding the mutual assistance directive was reached on EU level in December. The compromise of 7 December provides for a gradual increase of information exchange from 2014 with a gradual expansion of mutual information exchange in a certain number of income categories. The purpose of the information release must be “substantial”. From 2014 other exchange only applies to certain income categories of which the first three are “mandatory”. The European Commission plans to establish an information exchange in eight types of income from 2018 which at an appropriate time must be unanimously approved. In the course of 2017 the European Commission will submit a report with adequate proposals on this matter.

In the EU internal debate Austria had kept pointing out that transparency in fiscal issues could not be restricted to elimination of banking secrecy alone. The terms of the existing interest directive allow further evasion through certain anonymous constructs (trusts, foundations) in third countries. Member States thus should advocate the future full elimination of anonymous investments both in the EU as well as in third countries and in dependent and associated territories aiming at equal competition for all.
5. Work and Employment

The effects of the crisis on employment and the labour markets continued to be at the centre of the debates. At the G20 Employment Summit in Pittsburgh in April, to which President Obama had also invited the ILO and the OECD, participating countries declared that measures for fighting the crisis should most of all focus on dignified work and employment as well as job creation. They requested an employment-oriented framework for future growth. The OECD particularly pointed to the effects of the crisis for the employment of young people.

The Austrian Federal Government defines full employment as a major goal and therefore Austria also advocates full employment in OECD bodies.

The involvement of the social partners in OECD work is undergoing change and they fully participated in the work of the Ministerial Council Meeting (MCM). The OECD Secretary General would also like to take this as a model for the various other OECD bodies but requires the unanimous decision by the Member States for this purpose. The respective discussions are under way.

6. PISA Publication

On 7 December “PISA 2009”, the OECD’s “Programme for International Student Assessment”, was presented. This study, conducted once every three years since 2000 with intense media response, investigates to what extent pupils shortly before the end of compulsory schooling (at age 15) have acquired the knowledge and skills required for full participation in the knowledge society. It also considers the influence of social origin, gender or migration background on performance. As such PISA tries to provide orientation for achieving equal opportunities in the education system.

7. OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises

The OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises are the only comprehensive code of conduct for multinational enterprises to which participating governments (in addition to OECD members also Egypt, Argentina, Brazil, Lithuania, Morocco, Peru and Romania) have subscribed. They include recommendations for responsible corporate behaviour and are globally applicable; multinational enterprises from the member states are subject independently of where they pursue their economic activities. The guidelines have last been revised in 2000. At present comprehensive work for renewed revision is under way, chaired by the OECD Investment Committee where Austria is the current President. Austria is actively involved. The results shall be submitted for a vote to the OECD Council of Ministers in May 2011.
8. OECD Ministerial Meetings

Together with New Zealand’s Minister of Agriculture Federal Minister Nikolaus Berlakovitch chaired the OECD Meeting of the OECD Committee for Agriculture at Ministerial Level in Paris on 25 and 26 February. The OECD Member States as well as some other partner countries agreed on the strategic direction of future OECD agriculture work and the policy principles for agriculture and food. The work in the Agricultural Committee is based on these resolutions.

On 17 September OECD Secretary General Ángel Gurría came to Vienna for a bilateral visit. He delivered the OECD report on better regulation in Austria to Secretary of State Josef Ostermayer. During his visit to Austria the Secretary-General also had talks with Vice-Chancellor Josef Pröll as well as Federal Minister Michael Spindelegger.

At the meeting of OECD Health Ministers on “Health Priorities in the Aftermath of the Crisis” in Paris on 7 and 8 October chaired by Norway, Austria was represented by Federal Minister Alois Stöger. The event brought together Ministers from OECD Member States as well as high-level representatives of the Council of Europe, the international “Social Security Association” and the WHO. This produced a broad exchange of views on new challenges for the health sector and an interesting discussion on high-performing and efficient health systems.

The meeting of OECD education ministers in Paris on 4 and 5 November, presided over by Federal Minister Claudia Schmied, was dominated by the issue of “Investing in Human and Social Capital – New Challenges” bringing together 38 ministers from OECD and other partner countries and representatives from the EU, the Council of Europe as well as UNESCO to discuss the importance of education for future social development and with regard to economic change. In the run-up the Ministers consulted with the social partners at the OECD and in their exchange benefitted also from ideas for an innovative, global on-line survey. The successful two-day conference again underlined the necessity of continuous and extensive reform efforts to preserve the ability of the educational systems to guarantee an adequate basic and further training of its citizens.

On 15 November the Ministerial Meeting of the OECD “Public Governance Committee” was held in Venice. The meeting under Italian presidency convened a total of 44 delegations and was devoted to the topic of “Towards Recovery and Partnership with Citizens: The Call for Innovative and Open Government”. Austria was represented on high officials level.

9. Green Growth Strategy

The cross-cutting issue of Green Growth was discussed in detail in numerous OECD bodies. The OECD Secretariat’s interim report was presented at the
meeting of Economic and Finance Ministers (MCM) in May. The final report is to be submitted to the MCM in 2011.

10. Reappointment of the Secretary General
Secretary-General Ángel Gurría was reelected in September for another five-year term of office starting on 1 June 2011.

11. International Energy Agency (IEA)
As a consequence of the growing importance of the major emerging economies and energy suppliers for the energy policy of the IEA member states one focus of IEA activities was a further intensification of cooperation with the respective third countries. A high-level “Partnership Meeting” in October focused on security of supply, access to energy sources and sustainable energy and in addition to IEA member states assembled representatives of Algeria, Brazil, Chile, China, India, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Mexico, Russia and South Africa to constitute the basis for stronger IEA “outreach” activities in the future. Building on its recent accession Chile submitted its official IEA membership application in October. Also with strong participation from third countries an international platform for technologies low on CO2 (“international Low-Carbon Energy Technology Platform”) was set up serving as a basis for the further development of IEA work on energy and climate change. IEA commitment in this area is also reflected in its contributions to the G20 meetings (analysis of subsidies for fossil fuels), the Cancún conference in December as well as the central role of CO2 reducing measures in the scenarios of this year’s “World Energy Outlook”, attracting worldwide attention.
J. Global Environmental and Sustainability Policy

The environment and sustainable development are amongst the most dynamic topics in the international context. The great challenges posed by climate change, the loss of biodiversity and the natural resource base as well as food scarcity require globally concerted, decisive action. Since 1992, based on the provisions of the UN Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro, diverse conventions and legal instruments have been created (climate protection, biodiversity, desertification, hazardous chemical substances), important principles of the Rio Declaration were adopted into national and European legislation and the requirement of sustainable development is increasingly heeded in political action. Nevertheless, it is becoming clearer that long-term environmental strategies must be considered more closely in global policy.

I. Follow-up to the 2002 Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development

The 18th session of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD-18) convened in New York between 3 and 14 May. The session centred on stock-taking on development in the fields of the fourth implementation cycle of the Johannesburg Agenda: transport, chemicals, waste management, mining and sustainable consumption and production patterns as a basis for political recommendations in the coming year.

At the same time international preparations started for the UN Conference on Sustainable Development, Rio+20, with the first preparatory meeting in New York which took place from 17 until 19 May.

II. The UN Environmental Programme (UNEP)

The 11th Special Session of the UNEP Governing Council was held simultaneously with the Global Ministerial Environmental Forum (GMEF) and the Simultaneous Extraordinary Meetings of the Conferences of the Parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions (EX-COPs) between 22 and 26 February in Bali. The Nusa Dua Declaration adopted on the occasion generally stresses the importance of an improvement of the relatively fragmented management of the global environment and refers to environmental pollution through hazardous chemicals and toxic waste. This Declaration will be submitted to the UN General Assembly in the run-up to the “Rio+20” session.

III. Global Environmental Protection Agreements

From 29 November to 10 December the 16th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and
the sixth Conference of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol convened in Cancún. The Cancún result also strengthened trust in the problem solving capacity of the multilateral climate process. Austria constructively contributed to the preparatory process and the negotiations, also providing an important contribution as chair of sub-working groups.

The comprehensive package of decisions adopted at the conference (“Cancún Agreements”), in addition to acknowledging limits for global annual temperature rise to a maximum of two degrees Celsius, also includes detailed provisions on including emission reductions in the negotiating process, international reporting (MRV), on measures against deforestation in the tropics (REDD+ – Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries) as well as on adjustment, technology transfer and capacity building. In financing, an agreement was reached on the creation of a new “Green Climate Fund” under the UNFCCC. The decisions also include the commitment to continue working on the modalities of a second commitment period under the Kyoto Protocol. The mandates of the two sub-groups under the UNFCCC (AWG-LCA) and the Kyoto Protocol (AWG-KP) were extended and confirmed. Both groups are to continue work in 2011 and integrate the result of their negotiations in the 17th Conference of the Parties.

Biodiversity attracted major attention through the “International Year of Biodiversity” with worldwide success. At the fifth Conference of the Parties on the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (11–15 October in Nagoya), with the Nagoya-Kuala Lumpur Supplementary Protocol on Liability and Redress, a legally binding international liability regime for the transport of genetically modified organisms was adopted. In the sphere of the core topic of risk assessment, the technical documents for the evaluation of risks of genetically modified organisms, drawn up under the chairmanship of Austria, were welcomed by the plenary and it was agreed that the project should be continued. Also, a strategic plan was adopted defining the focus of work on the Cartagena Protocol until 2020.

The tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties of the Convention on Biological Diversity was also held in Nagoya between 18 and 29 October. Following years of negotiations, the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization (Access and Benefit-Sharing, ABS) was finally adopted. The Strategic Plan for Biodiversity, named after the Japanese province of Aichi and including a long-term vision until 2050, a mission until 2020, as well as 20 concrete goals, was also adopted. It includes a 50 to 100% reduction of the loss of relevant environmental biotope, curbing excessive fishing in the seas, stopping the destruction of the coral reefs, curbing damaging subsidies, expanding protection zones from 13% to 17% of land and 1% to 10% of the seas/coasts. The implementation of the plan shall be reinforced through specific targets for resource mobilisation. As chair in both working groups,
Austria managed to make a constructive contribution to the successful conclusion of the conference.

The 62nd annual meeting of the International Whaling Commission (IWC) was held in Agadir between 21 and 25 June. After the Organisation had for years been restricted in its action by two rivalling camps, negotiations for an amicable solution on the “Future of IWC”, which had been started in 2007, were continued. However, no decisions on disputed issues could be taken as yet. The principal actors are bound to hold bilateral negotiations in the run-up to the annual meeting in 2011.

In the sphere of chemicals, negotiations on establishing a mercury agreement at the first session of the negotiating committee were launched (7–11 June, Stockholm) in addition to the existing agreements (Rotterdam and Stockholm Agreements) and Initiatives (SAICM). The agreement shall provide a comprehensive global instrument for protecting the environment and human health from mercury and – in the event of an extension of the mandate – also further heavy metals. The first negotiating round was characterised by an unusual sequence of the issues to be negotiated; following the topics of goals and structure a compliance mechanism and financing, in particular, by the Global Environment Facility or an MLF-like model were discussed straight from the beginning, modelled on the financing mechanism of the Montreal Protocol.

From 10 until 14 May the seventh session of the “Open-Ended Working Group” (OEWG), a sub-organ of the Basel Convention on the control of transboundary movements of hazardous wastes and their disposal, was held in Geneva. Both regarding technical issues (guidelines on mercury, old tyres) as well as the strategic partnership programmes on specific waste flows (computers), impulses were set to complete work before the 11th Conference of the Parties in October 2011. The EU set its priorities in particular in the area of synergies with the Chemicals Convention (jointly with the budget proposals), the technical guidelines (old tyres) and the wrecking of ships (comparing the requirements of the Hong Kong International Convention for the Safe and Environmentally Sound Recycling of Ships and the Basel Agreement).

The 22nd meeting of the parties on the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer was held in Bangkok between 8 and 12 November. The meeting mainly served to prepare the replenishment of the Multilateral Fund for the triennium 2012–2014 with financial negotiations chaired by Austria. The Fund supports the implementation of conversion projects in developing countries. As a consequence of the decision by the 19th Conference of the Parties to accelerate exit plans for HCFCs and advance it by ten years for developing countries, respective projects will constitute a core point of the Fund’s future activities. Just like in the previous year, possible limits for CFCs were a major negotiating issue. These substances, even though they do not deplete the ozone layer, still have a negative climate effect and are
increasingly used as HCFC substitutes, primarily in developing countries. Even though no agreement has been reached to date, it can be assumed that this topic will remain on the agenda considering the current discussions on climate policy.
K. International Cultural Policy

I. Goals and Priorities

FMEIA international cultural work is an important and irrenouncable factor of Austrian foreign policy. With more than 5,000 projects a year it provided an important contribution to Austria’s position and image abroad. Austria is presented as an innovative and creative country characterised by a promising cultural scene, able to reinterpret tradition and develop novel cultural approaches. The FMEIA supports artists and scientists at international events and through events and projects in Austria and abroad expressly promotes the dialogue of cultures. Austria’s traditional reputation as a “large cultural power” is thus supplemented and expanded by the aspect of an international venue of encounter. The FMEIA’s network of international cultural policy includes a total of 82 embassies, 30 Cultural Fora, 11 consulates general, 59 Austria libraries, 9 Austria Institutes as well as special offices in Lviv, Sarajevo and Washington D.C.

Gustav Mahler as “music year patron 2010” was one of the thematic focuses of FMEIA international cultural activities. The 200th anniversary of the independence of Argentina, Colombia, Chile and Mexico was an opportunity for strengthening Austria’s cultural relations with a socio-economic dynamic world region. The South Eastern European Programme “Culture Matters” was further consolidated by numerous projects, in particular the inauguration of an Austria Library in Iasi/Romania and the Festival of Conversation for Culture and Science “fow” in Chisinau/Moldova. In the Danube and Black Sea Regions international cultural policy was further intensified through the inauguration of Austria Libraries in Baku/Azerbaijan, Samsun/Turkey and Yerevan/Armenia. The Black Sea Creative Writing Workshop (Schreibwerkstatt Schwarzes Meer) brought twelve writers from the region to Vienna for two months each. Austria participated with numerous projects in the programmes of the European Capitals of Culture of Istanbul, Pécs and Essen jointly with the entire Ruhr Region.

The Federal Ministry for Education, Arts and Culture supported the FMEIA’s international cultural policy with funding for cultural projects at Cultural Fora and representations totalling 200,000 euros.

1. Selected International Cultural Policy Projects

1.1. Music

On the occasion of the 150th anniversary of Gustav Mahler’ birth the FMEIA supported numerous key projects around the globe, centred on performances of Mahler music, introductions and presentations on Mahler’s relevance for music history as well as the travelling exhibition “Gustav Mahler and Vienna”. Projects supported included the “Casa da Musica” in Porto staging
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not just Mahler but also contemporary Austrian composers – amongst them Friedrich Cerha, Olga Neuwirth and Johannes Maria Staud – as part of the “Austria 2010” concert cycle. Hugo Wolf’s 150th birthday also was an occasion for several concerts.

Promoting contemporary Austrian music and young musicians is an important task of international cultural work. The action programme “The New Austrian Sound of Music” (NASOM) launched in 2005 therefore supported numerous young artists of all musical genres at international performances. Support for the Vienna Jeunesse Orchestra as well as the European Union Youth Orchestra deserve mention.

In 2009 the “frauen/musik österreich” publication had been an attempt to highlight the role of women in Austrian music. To present the continuously updated full range of female musicians and composers in Austria in 2010 work started on setting up a database in cooperation with the Music Information Center Austria (mica).

1.2. Literature, Dance, Theatre

The key priority of events in the areas of literature and theatre was the introduction of contemporary works and performance of Austrian authors. Austrian writers keep attracting wide interest. Ruth Aspöck, Edith Binderhofer, Karl Markus Gauß, Walter Grond, Norbert Gstrein, Yasmin Hafedh, Werner Kofer, Ulli Lust, Nicolas Mahler, Eva Menasse, Robert Menasse, André Pilz, Doron Rabinovici, Hans Raimund, Angelika Reitzer, Gerhard Roth, Gerhild Steinbach, Linda Stift, Folke Tegethoff, Erwin Uhrmann are just a few. Readings by the author constitute an important part of the activities in the “literature” category in addition to support of publications and literary projects.

The theatre category included international productions of works by Austrian authors such as “Sibirien” by Felix Mitterer, Markus Kupferblum (in Israel), Werner Schwab (in Sweden) or Austrian directors producing plays by other writers. Contributions were made to theatre festivals in different countries. Support was given to both classic author theatre as well as other forms including performances, puppet theatre and theatre for children.

The “Talking about Borders” drama competition initiated by Christian Papke and held in different South Eastern European countries with support from the Austrian P.E.N. Club was continued in Albania.

Jonila Godole was the winner of the Albanian competition with her play “The Sandman” which was staged in scenic reading at Vienna’s Burgtheater in May.

The Austrian dance scene is successfully established internationally. Dancers and dance groups like the Editta Braun Company, Aline Kristin Mohl (Mexico), Chris Haring (Netherlands), Dancescreen (Netherlands), Willi Dorner (Belgium) and “Superamas” (Belgium) were invited to festivals and single performances worldwide. Dance workshops also enjoyed increasing demand giving interesting insights to students and fans.
1.3. Fine Arts

In addition to numerous individual and group exhibitions and presentations at international festivals in the exhibition category events of the Gustav Mahler jubilee and 200 years of Latin American independence (Bicentenario) deserve special mention.

On the occasion of the 150th birthday of Gustav Mahler, several projects were supported to present Austria internationally as a country able to repeatedly reinterpret tradition. The “Gustav Mahler and Vienna” (1897–1907) traveling exhibition, developed in cooperation with the Vienna State Opera (curators: Peter Blaha and Therese Gassner), the Austrian National Library and the Austrian Theatre Museum, the Museum of Art History Vienna was shown at representations worldwide.

As part of the “Europe on Water” event series under the European Capital of Culture Istanbul 2010 the Austrian Cultural Forum organised the “Light Flotilla” project with Waltraut Cooper staging spectacular light installations in front of the large Sülliche Culture and Congress Centre at the Golden Horn, consisting of 25 rafts with light masts. The Styrian Universal Museum Joanneum provided another contribution to the European Capital of Culture Istanbul 2010 Year with an exhibition on Joseph von Hammer-Purgstall (1774–1856).

Since 2009 the FMEIA has been cooperating with MuseumsQuartier Vienna as part of the “freiraum quartier21 INTERNATIONAL” project. This new event series aims at increasingly presenting international exhibitions and projects from the priority areas of fashion, design and digital culture, staging also the “The Art of Design/ak7” exhibition with special designs by artists Erwin Wurm, Lois Weinberger and Esther Stocker etc.

Serbia on the radar of contemporary art was at the centre of an exhibition of the Cultural Forum in New York. The exhibition entitled “FAQ/Serbia – Frequently Asked Questions” was curated by famous Belgrade art historian Branislav Dimitrijević jointly with the Director of the Culture Forum Andreas Stadler and staged works by renowned artists from former Yugoslavia like Anri Sala, Zoran Todorović and Milica Tomić as well as Johanna Kandl, Paul Albert Leitner and Walter Steinacher. “Serbia – Frequently Asked Questions” was co-produced by the “European Union National Institutes of Culture” (EUNIC) European Culture Network and quickly turned into its model project of the year.

The Cultural Forum Moscow participated in the “New Lives – Modernization of public buildings” project in Architecture Biennale Moscow, the largest top-quality presentation of contemporary architecture in Russia. In cooperation with the Stella Art Foundation a first “Hermann Nitsch – Exhibition” was staged at Freud Museum St. Petersburg.

At the Paris Centre Georges Pompidou photographer Reiner Riedler participated in the prestigious large “Dreamlands” exhibition scoring visitor records.
The proven offer of travelling exhibitions was widely used by Cultural Fora and representations; in particular the “Europe – Work in Progress” exhibition by Barbara Zeidler, Institute for culturally resistant goods/Vienna (presentations in Cracow, Bratislava, Vilnius, Astana and Almaty), the “Die unbekannten Europäer“/texts: Karl-Markus Gauß, photographer: Kurt Kaindl (shown in Rostock and at the documentation centre in Luserna/Italy) as well as the exhibition on Austrian architecture and design by Walter Zednicek (staged inter alia in the Czech Republic, in Chile and Georgia).

1.4. Film

In recent years the international reputation of Austrian film mainly benefitted from the success of Michael Haneke and the Oscars won by Stefan Ruzowitzky and Christoph Waltz. Meanwhile Austrian contributions are permanent elements in all film genres with more than 350 participations in international film festivals where eleven Austrian films won a total of 27 prizes. The embassies and Cultural Fora provided financial and logistical support for participation in festivals wherever necessary.

The Austrian film weeks, retrospectives and movie nights enjoyed huge popularity. Austria participated worldwide in the presentation of current Austrian productions at European film festivals and in Tehran organised such a European movie week itself.

In individual cases support was also given for the making of Austrian movies abroad. Out of these projects from previous years the film “Muezzin” by Sebastian Brameshuber was successfully launched and Klaus Schrefer’s 3D animation “Intiñahui – Im Auge der Sonne” was released on international markets on DVD.

1.5. Scientific Events

Almost all scientific disciplines and fields of art boasted presentations and conference participations as well as workshops and seminars by scientists and artists. Political issues, didactical topics, scientific and fine arts theories were treated in almost 500 events as were analysis of art history, legal problems and historical issues with artistic performances often linked to workshops where artists passed on their skills and experience to students and anyone else interested.

2. Austrian International Cultural Policy Initiatives

The celebrations in several Latin American countries of the 200th anniversary of independence (“Bicentenario”) offered a setting for increased cultural presence. The highlights were a retrospective of the Linz ARS Electronica titled “dynamic (in) position” with the artistic duo Christa Sommerer and
Laurent Mignonneau in Mexico in March/April as well as in May/June a temporary exhibition of the Mexican FONCA Art Promotion Fund with Landesgalerie Salzburg with artists Elisabeth Wörndl, Patrick Schaudy, Ursula Hansbauer and Christian Schwarzwald, in Colombia in June/July the Erwin Wurm Exhibition “Memory in an age of Globalization” at the “Museo de Arte Moderno de Bogotá” (MamBo), in Argentina in August the premiere of the commissioned play “LIZ” by Klaus Händl and Bolivian-Argentinian director Percy Jimenez on mentalities in Europe and South America and finally in Chile in September/October the ARS Electronica Installation “Magic Eye – Dissolving Borders” by Christa Sommerer and Laurent Mignonneau at the “Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes” in Santiago de Chile with direct links to ARS Electronica in Linz.

These four countries jointly appeared together with Ecuador and Venezuela (200 years of independence in 2009 and 2011) as “Grupo Bicentenario” in Vienna and presented a rich cultural programme. At the “Free and United. 200 Years Later” seminar as key event on 7 June at the Diplomatic Academy, Federal Minister Michael Spindelegger gave the key lecture.

3. Grants for Cultural Projects

In support of innovative cultural policy projects as well as to disseminate foreign policy and international cultural objectives in public, the FMEIA provides funds in the form of grants for cultural projects at home and abroad. In 2010 a total of 391,900 euros were made available for a total of 57 projects in the artistic, cultural and scientific sphere. Projects for which funds were made available included the following: In music the international tours of the Gustav Mahler Youth Orchestra, the international performances of Klangforum Wien and the Vienna Art Orchestra as well as the 12 concerts of the Austrian-Korean Philharmonic Orchestra. Exhibitions for which funds were made available included the project of a historical analysis of the Jewish “Givat Avoda” refugee camp in Saalfelden by NEXUS Kunsthaus Saalfelden. Just like every year funds were also provided for a series of theatre projects, festivals and events including Austrian Architecture Days held each year throughout Austria and in the neighbouring regions, the Úrban Culture Festival in Linz, the Wiener Volkstheater project “Die Besten aus dem Osten, Folge 6: Serbien” or the Retz Festival “Offene Grenzen“. Films included festivals like the human rights film festival “This Human World” or the EU XXL Film Forum in Vienna and the Crossing Europe Film Festival in Linz.

Conferences and meetings for which funds were made available included the Paneuropa Austria’s Paneuropa Youth Conference in Linz, the meetings of the Institute for the Danube Region and Central Europe, the international symposium “Die Kaiser von Carnuntum” organised by the “Art Carnuntum” association, the “Viel Glück! Migration heute” by Initiative Minderheiten as well as the European Forum Alpbach.
This year again financial support was provided for student delegations of the universities of Vienna and Graz to international competitions on international law. The numerous project-related funds for various cultural associations as well as financial support for German language courses by various cultural institutions at home and abroad also deserve mentioning.

II. Bilateral Agreements in the Fields of Culture and Science


Based on the current cultural agreement, the Mixed Austrian-Montenegrin Commission convened on 22 July in Vienna for its second meeting and on 30 September and 1 October the Mixed Commission for Cooperation in the Areas of Education, Science and Culture with Mexico convened in Vienna for the tenth time. A cultural working programme with Serbia for the coming years was signed on 31 December. Austria evaluated the cultural working programme with Slovenia provided by the Slovenian side.

The ninth meeting of the Austrian-Chinese Mixed Commission for Scientific-technical cooperation was held in Vienna on 12 March. The Austrian-Ukrai-nian Mixed Commission for Scientific-technical Cooperation convened for the fourth time in Kiev on 21 October. The fourth meeting of the Austrian-Slovak Commission for Scientific-technical cooperation was held in Vienna on 24 November. Between 17 and 19 November delegation talks on the conclusion of an Agreement on Scientific-technical cooperation were held in Moscow.

III. Austria Libraries

The Austria Libraries abroad are platforms of intercultural dialogue established through almost twenty years of development providing a special contribution to overcoming the mental East-West divide of Europe since 1989. Most are located in Central, Eastern and South Eastern Europe, also in the Caucasus and in Central Asia. The foundation of the Austria Library at Romania’s oldest university in Iasi expanded the Black Sea Library Cluster as defined by the goals of international cultural policy as well as by the
inauguration of Austria Libraries in Baku/Azerbaijan, Yerevan/Armenia and another library in Samsun/Turkey.

Thanks to the institutional links to universities and national libraries the libraries are highly popular with students and teachers from the field of science as well as with the general public. In addition to their scientific work linked to Austria they increasingly develop into information and cultural centres organising cultural and scientific events in cooperation with embassies and cultural fora. They constitute an indispensable part of international culture policy setting essential and sustainable accents for the breadth and variety of teaching and promoting Austrian cultural and intellectual life not just in Central Europe.

The network of Austria Libraries abroad currently includes 59 libraries in 27 countries. In addition to classic library operations they organise more than 650 events with more than 70,000 visitors. More than 180,000 people visited the Austria Libraries whose collections have grown to approx. 350,000 books, 4,500 sound carriers, 1,600 CD-ROMs, 3,450 videos and 2,780 DVDs. The database of Austrian literature in translations (international austriaca) accessible via the web portal of the Austria Libraries (www.oesterreich-bibliotheken.at) already includes more than 12,000 titles. The translations produced in connection with Austria Libraries often win translations awards and prizes also in the host country.

The Austria Libraries are often also managed by lecturers from the Österreichischer Austauschdienst (OeAD), the Austrian Agency for International Cooperation in Education and Research. As links to Austrian culture, education and scientific work OeAD lecturers are highly esteemed by the directors of the Austria Libraries. Austria Libraries also provide exams and certificates for the Austrian Language Diploma.

In May at the invitation of the Institute for History and the Centre for the History of Science of Karl-Franzens-University Graz a workshop was organised with participants from the scientific setting of Austria Libraries on the importance of university and science history for international cooperation’s and the Paris Suburb Treaties in mirroring the present with a focus on the methodology and problems of a text book analysis also dealing with other joint regional research objectives. In September the scientific staff of the Austria Libraries abroad were invited to a colloquium on Italy in Austrian literature by Udine University. The valuable role of Austria Libraries abroad as mediators in a network of partnerships with different nationalities, languages and religions was also particularly honoured by the official Italian representatives.

The twenty-year anniversary of the Austria Libraries in Brno and Maribor was particularly celebrated with festivities, symposia, lecture series, exhibitions and concerts.
The Austria Library in Opole/Poland received the “Brücken des Dialogs” award 2010 allocated by German and Polish institutions on 8 December in the category of “Institutions” awarded to persons, institutions and NGOs with a long history in care for the multi-cultural heritage of the region, multi-culturality and dialogue and taking measures for regional integration and tolerance.

In addition to the Austria Libraries abroad, book donations to German studies and social sciences institutes at universities all over the world, with a particular focus on Austrian arts, have been granted in Belgium, China, the United Kingdom, Ireland, Japan, Canada, Kenya, Poland, Portugal, Romania, the Slovak Republic, Spain, The Czech Republic, Turkey, South Africa and Hungary.

IV. Science, Education and Language

1. Science and Education

1.1. Austrian Professorships and Centres for Austrian Studies

These university departments, mainly in Europe and North America as well as in Israel, are tasked with initiating, deepening and supporting studies on Austria and Europe specific topics in the host country and inspire scientific work including publications on the respective topics. Regular cooperations between the Chairs and study centres with embassies, consulates and Cultural Fora provide important contributions to the fulfilment of these tasks. Through networking with the local as well as Austrian institutions the Chairs promote the integration of Austria into the international scientific and cultural network.

1.2. Grants and Mobility Programmes in the University Sector

The newly founded OeAD-GmbH, which as of 1 January 2009 had assumed all agendas from former Österreichischer Austauschdienst (OeAD), is responsible for supporting grant students and the administration of various mobility programmes such as Erasmus and bilateral grant schemes, development cooperation programmes as well as the scientific-technical cooperation. OeAD-GmbH also functions as partner of the FMEIA with the Ministry in this sphere assuming the tasks of coordination and information both for the representations abroad as well as for foreign representations in Austria.

2. Language

The Austria-Institute GmbH was founded in 1997 for the provision of German language courses, support and promotion of teaching German abroad and cooperation with national and international organisations, to further
autonomously develop the German language courses offered until that time at the cultural institutes. The headquarters are in Vienna. Austria Institutes exist in Belgrade, Wroclaw, Brno, Budapest, Cracow, Ljubljana, Bratislava, Rome and Warsaw. All Austria Institutes define themselves as centres for promoting the study of and care for the German language in its Austrian variety. The Austrian German Language Diploma (OSD) is an examination system for German as a foreign and second language for adolescents and adult students of the German language at home and abroad. The examination system oriented towards international target guidelines offers the possibility of having German language skills certified on several levels. Lecturers and language assistants since 2009 are chosen and transmitted by OeAD-GmbH which has taken over the tasks from the former “Österreich-Kooperation” in this area. DaF (Deutsch as Fremdsprache/German as a foreign language) interns are chosen and supported by the German as a Foreign Language chair at Vienna University, while OeAD-GmbH takes care of administration. Lecturers are deployed in approx. 120 countries, language assistants in ten countries, DaF internships in approx. 45 states. Numerous cultural events are organised in cooperation with the representations abroad.

V. Multilateral Scientific-Technical Cooperation

Austria continued its particular focus on multilateral scientific-technical cooperation within and outside Europe to consolidate its role as a high-tech venue and participated in programmes such as the European Cooperation in Science and Technology (COST) in Brussels, the European Organisation 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. In these organisations, Austria is represented by the FMEIA jointly with the Federal Ministry for Transport, Innovation and Technology and the Federal Ministry of Science and Research. Moreover, international affairs are represented 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 (the United Kingdom) as well as the European Space Policy Institute (ESPI) in Vienna. Special relevance is given to promoting networking of the activities of the international scientific institutions based in Austria. The 36 COST member states engage in scientific-technical cooperation in the area of pre-competition research. Initiatives in the multi- and interdisciplinary field of chemistry (nano sciences and interdisciplinary research) are given special attention. Austria considers the participation of third countries as particularly important. Involvement of scientists from the Western Balkan countries has also been rendered possible through the financing of a special COST Fund. Austria has been a member of COST since 1971. Austria cooperates in the European Space Agency (ESA)
whose Convention allows for a selective participation in ESA programmes with guaranteed return on investment. These ESA programme participations are a good starting point for application-oriented industrial serial productions. Austria through ESA thus participates in the build-up of the European navigation and positioning system GALILEO and future European satellite-based Global Environment and Security System (GMES).

VI. International Cultural Policy in the European Union

Under the Spanish and Belgian EU Council presidencies, Ministers of Culture convened four times: two informal meetings on 31 March in Barcelona and on 7 and 8 October in Brussels as well as two Council meetings on 10 May and 18 November in Brussels.

The meetings centred on several discussions and decisions on the contribution of culture to the Europe 2020 strategy. These include the European Commission Green Paper on unlocking the potentials of culture and creative industries of 27 April, Council conclusions on the contribution of culture to local and regional development on 10 May and Council conclusions on the role of culture in combating poverty and social exclusion on 18 November. In the context of the lead initiative “A Digital Agenda for Europe”, the Council on 10 May adopted conclusions both on the digitalisation of the cinema as well as on film heritage on 18 November.

The Work Plan for Culture 2011–2014 includes the priorities of cultural diversity “intercultural dialogue and a culture with access for all; cultural and creative industries; skills and mobility; cultural heritage, including mobility of art collections; culture in external relations; culture statistics”. The catalogue of measures includes numerous activities by the Member States and the European Commission. Due to the positive experience with the “open coordination method” during the period 2008–2010 again several topic-related expert groups are deployed. Chairs can convene joint meetings of the directors general at the Ministries of Culture and the Foreign Ministries on special occasions as a new control instrument.

On 9 March the European Commission submitted a proposal for a resolution by the EP and the Council on the European Cultural Heritage Seal to identify important sites of either European history or the EU unification process. The conversion of this intergovernmental initiative into an EU action programme aims to give the seal greater prestige and relevance in the public. The focus shall be on young people. The EP voted on 16 December. Council negotiations shall be concluded in 2011 under the Hungarian presidency.

Riga (Latvia) and Umeå (Sweden) were chosen European Capitals of Culture for 2014 and Mons (Belgium) for 2015.

Under the EU “Culture” (2007–2013) programme 303 cultural institutions from all over Europe were funded with a total of 51.2 million euros. Twelve
Austrian institutions (e.g. MAK, Die Fabrikanten, Ars Electronica, EDUCULT) received funds of roughly four million euros, corresponding to a return of 336%.

Under the EU “Europe for Citizens” programme (2007–2013), 832 projects by civil society organisations, municipalities and cities, think tanks and research institutions were funded with a total of 29.3 million euros. 13 Austrian municipalities and institutions (e.g. Kirchheim im Innkreis, Radio Orange 94.0, Catholic Youth Movement Vienna) received funds totalling approx. 839,000 euros.

The EU “MEDIA 2007” (2007–2013) programme for strengthening audio-visual productions generated returns totalling roughly 2.1 million euros. In addition to the important area of support for film distribution funds were also made available for film festivals (Crossing Europe), video on Demand (fimmit.com), i2i audio-visual (Ulrich Seidl Film Production) and project development (Mischief Films, KGP-Kranzelbinder Gabriele Production, Amour Fou Film).

**VII. Intercultural and Interfaith Dialogue**

1. **The Austrian Contribution to Strengthening Dialogue**

European and global developments of recent years underline the necessity of dialogue between and with the major world religions initiated by Austria already three decades ago. At the same time it became clear that dialogue strategies must go far beyond support for interfaith dialogue, also focusing on migration and integration issues as well as the central political challenges of democracy, rule of law, compliance with fundamental and human rights and the promotion of social and cultural diversity. Dialogue thus is an important instrument for “Diversity Management” and sustainable conflict prevention and solution. Austria is interested in a comprehensive dialogue of cultures and religions, mainly in connection with the development of Islam in Europe and European lifestyle. Dialogue activities with Muslim-majority societies predominantly in Asia, the Arab world and Turkey particularly focus on the increased involvement of women, their societal and political participation and the integration of young people.

Between 21 and 25 February the FMEIA in cooperation with the Turkish Presidency for Religious Affairs (Diyanet) and the ATIB (Turkish Islamic Union for Cultural and Social Cooperation in Austria), the Austrian Integration Fund and the University of Vienna organised the second “Applied Geography and Culture Training for Turkish Religious Representatives”. This training course has the purpose of preparing imams on service at ATIB mosque associations and is organised annually. It comprises lectures, seminars and excursions with the aim of familiarising religious representatives with history, politics, the legal system, society and counselling institutions.
in Austria. Priorities this year have been health, youth and family as well as intercultural dialogue in Austria and Europe.

The bilateral exchange programme for diplomats in the sphere of “Dialogue among Cultures and Religions”, already launched in 2008 with the purpose of strengthening relations on multiple levels – public administration, universities and research, civil society and religious communities – was successfully continued in 2010 with Arab League countries following Indonesia in 2009. Thanks to its model character this programme has meanwhile also been adopted by other countries.

On 16 and 17 April international experts at the “Democracy in a Multi-Ethnic Society: Experiences and Challenges Bosnia and Herzegovina” discussed administrative reform in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The event was organised by the law faculty of Vienna University and the Political Science Faculty of the University of Sarajevo and supported by the FMEIA, the Regional Austrian Cooperation Office on Science, Education and Culture in Sarajevo, the “Living Together in a New Europe” foundation, the Centre for “European Integration Strategies” (CEIS), the Institute for the Danube Region and Central Europe (IDM), the Renner Institute, as well as the Embassy of Bosnia and Herzegovina in Austria.

Issues of religious, cultural and ethnic variety in Austria, particularly also the situation of Islam and Muslims, challenges and positive examples of integration policy in Austria and Europe were discussed at the visit of a seven-person delegation from Singapore headed by Deputy Foreign Minister Abidin Rasheed Zainul from 21 until 25 June in Vienna as were prevention of radicalisation and security.

An international workshop on “Promoting Female Leadership in Intercultural and Interreligious Dialogue” was organised from 24 until 26 June in cooperation with the Catholic-Theological Faculty of Vienna University. Jewish, Christian and Muslim experts and religious representatives from Europe, Turkey, Israel, the Arab world, Iran, as well as the USA and Canada met in Vienna to discuss the participation of and contributions by women in intra- and interreligious dialogue. The aim of this network is to strengthen the positions of women from science and practice in dialogue and contribute to the universal respect for human rights, fundamental freedoms and the international Convention on Women’s Rights.

As a direct recommendation of the 2008 conference “Europe and the Arab World – Connecting Partners in Dialogue” in 2010 the first “Arab-European Young Leaders Forum (AEYLF)” was held in Vienna. It was organised with 57 participants from 21 countries from the EU, Turkey and the Member States of the Arab League (LAS) between 23 and 27 November. The first AEYLF was organised with support from the LAS, the BMW Herbert Quandt Foundation, the OPEC Fund for International Development (OFID), the City of Vienna as well as Departure – wirtschaft kunst and kultur GmbH. The topic of the
Intercultural and Interfaith Dialogue

Forum was “Promoting Responsible Leadership, Innovative Forms of Cross-Cultural Cooperation” and had as a purpose the creation of a lively and sustainable platform for young leaders from politics, civil society and business in the EU, Turkey and the Arab world. The second AEYLF is scheduled to take place in Cairo in 2011.

2. Anna Lindh Foundation (ALF)

The Anna Lindh Foundation for Dialogue between Cultures, whose Secretariat is based in Alexandria/Egypt, is responsible for a “Network of Networks” amongst the 43 member states of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, thus supplementing the political objectives of the Union for the Mediterranean (also cf. Chapter A.VI.7.3) by culture and civil society. The Austrian ALF network for the purpose of the “Dialogue of Cultures” is coordinated by the FMEIA and currently consists of 52 members from different parts of the Austrian civil society.

The highlight of this year’s activities was the first Anna Lindh Foundation Forum between 4 and 7 March in Barcelona with more than 1,000 representatives of the civil society from 43 countries – including several representatives of the Austrian ALF Network. The Forum was organised with the aim of debating key factors of the intercultural relations between people in the region and being the first platform for the various national ALF NGOs to allow new cooperation, exchange ideas and launch both national as well as international projects. Austrian ALF Network members also participated in training seminars in the Slovak Republic and Romania to obtain additional qualifications for successful project submissions.

The “ARTiculating Values – Young People act in Euro-Med” project coordinated by the Intercultural Centre in Vienna and supported by ALF had its highlight on 29 April with 50 young actors from Austria, Denmark, Hungary, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, the Netherlands and Turkey critically debating intense theatre workshops and creative writing seminars thus developing mutual understanding and appreciation.

3. ASEM Interfaith Dialogue

Interfaith dialogue at the Asia-Europe Meetings (ASEM), the only direct communication platform between the European and Asian states, is of special importance. Austria provides both material as well as financial and personnel support for the ASEM Dialogue conference alternating annually between Europe and Asia. In 2010 Austria again was co-sponsor of this dialogue conference held in Madrid between 7 and 9 April. The conference was particularly marked by intense “networking” between religious leaders, government representatives, and experts.
VIII. Prague Holocaust Restitution Process

The establishment of the “European Shoah Legacy Institute” \textit{(ESLI)} \textbf{was an important follow-up to the Holocaust Era Assets Conference (HEAC)}. The ESLI is an international research institution also destined to serve as voluntary forum for states, Holocaust survivor representative organisations and NGOs for promoting different aspects of compensation for NS past, in particular the restitution of Jewish property and support for Holocaust survivors. Austria is on the Advisory Board of ESLI which started its activities on 1 January. Under the mandate of the Theresienstadt Declaration the states adopting it agreed in Prague on 9 June international guidelines for the restitution of and compensation for real estate expropriated by the NS regime. The guidelines were adopted following several months of negotiations with active Austrian participation.

IX. \textbf{International Holocaust-Task Force (ITF) – International Network for Education, Remembrance and Research}

The Task Force for International Cooperation on Holocaust Education, Remembrance and Research (ITF), an international institution with Permanent Secretariat in Berlin, was founded in 1998 at a Swedish initiative. Its aim was to promote Holocaust education and research and as a network instigate remembrance on a national as well as international level. In doing so it can avail itself of the expertise of renowned international scientists. With its committee for combating anti-Semitism and Holocaust denial as well as an additional focus on Roma, the ITF follows current developments. Diplomatic influence against revisionism both by the presidency as well as the members, by now 28, further increases in importance.

In 2001 Austria was admitted into the ITF, was President during the memorial year 2008 and has since been a central actor in the task force. In 2010 Austria took over the annually rotating presidency of the principal working group of Holocaust education and launched initiatives for the benefit of an improved headquarters regulation for the Permanent Secretariat as well as a new reporting system. The reform process launched under the Austrian presidency contributes to consolidating and rendering more transparent ITF reform policy. The Austrian delegation is chaired by the FMEIA and the National Fund of the Republic of Austria. Both the Austrian government representatives as well as experts from the Austrian Academy of Sciences, the National Fund, the Documentation Archive of the Austrian resistance movement as well as the “_erinnern.at_” organisation cooperate. Austrian projects in the fields of Holocaust education, awareness building and research enjoy an excellent standing in the ITF.
L. Media and Information

I. Public Diplomacy

The FMEIA considers it an important task to continuously inform the public – and particularly also pupils and adolescents – about its tasks and activities. During the entire year more than 500 pupils from all over Austria were invited to the Ministry and given detailed information on FMEIA activities.

The FMEIA organised the tenth “Girls’ Day” offering specific information for female pupils in the higher grades regarding job opportunities for women at the FMEIA.

The FMEIA also organised information events for more than 300 international students, junior diplomats and other persons from abroad.

An Open Day again offered thousands of citizens an opportunity to visit the Ministry and obtain first-hand information about FMEIA work and activities.

II. Media Work, Press Conferences and Press Officers

Informing the public via radio, TV, dailies and the new media on international developments and consular services abroad is part of the daily tasks of FMEIA work. This particularly includes the fast and comprehensive information of citizens on international crises and measures for protecting and helping Austrians in emergency situations. At peak times more than 100 media enquiries are answered each day.

Cooperation with media representatives at home and abroad is a particularly important task for the Ministry. The press and information section organises press conferences during high-level visits, background meetings on important issues such as the Austrian membership of the UN Security Council and the World Economic Forum, as well as press support at conferences and other events including the founding conference of the International Anti-Corruption Academy (IACA) in Laxenburg and the presentation of the UN “Energy and a Sustainable Future” report.

III. Dialogue on Europe Tour, Municipal Councillors for European Affairs Initiative

The BMEIA considers itself the central contact point for citizens on European issues and is available to the public for questions and answers.

It has also made it its goal to take an active approach to people thus rendering Project Europe tangible and a direct experience in daily life.

In this context Federal Minister Michael Spindelegger continued his Dialogue on Europe Tour, launched in autumn 2009, through the Federal Provinces in
Innsbruck (18 March) and Eisenstadt (15 April). Federal Minister Spindelegger used this opportunity for discussing Europe, its opportunities and possibilities with citizens and representatives from culture, business and politics. Thanks to its major success as well as much positive feedback the Tour will also be continued in 2011.

One priority amongst these information activities is the Municipal Councillors for European Affairs Initiative aiming to nominate contact persons for European issues in each of the approximately 2,350 municipalities in Austria who are able to provide fast and unbureaucratic answers on issues of European integration. The project is jointly coordinated by the Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs and the representation of the European Commission in Austria. It was launched at the end of February at a workshop on Europe with approximately 60 mayors and municipal representatives from all Federal Provinces and political parties. Federal Minister Michael Spindelegger introduced the initiative to all mayors at the Municipal Day in Graz and the first information trip for municipal representatives to the European institutions in Brussels was organised in December.

The video reports by Federal Minister Michael Spindelegger in which he explains the results of the EU Council meetings in Brussels and the respective Austrian position met with major interest. Federal Minister Spindelegger in the same way also provides information on his Dialogue on Europe Tour through the Federal Provinces.

On the occasion of Europe Day on 9 May the latest version of the “The EU and You” (Die EU und DU) exhibition was launched at the FMEIA, a travelling exhibition staged at Austrian schools and accompanied by FMEIA experts on European issues. It aims to familiarise pupils with Europe and inspire a broad discussion. In 2010 the exhibition was shown at a total of 25 schools and reached 3,450 pupils. At the same time the exhibition was also shown at training events for teachers.

IV. Internet

The FMEIA website offers services and useful information for citizens in emergency situations. The Ministry also provides detailed information on daily news and focuses and priorities of Austrian foreign policy. The homepage also includes various background information including facts related to the recruitment of new employees. Maximum monthly hits totalled up to 283,000. The regularly updated travel information on 193 countries is particularly popular.

After the FMEIA had already adapted its websites to international standards regarding barrier-free access for users with special needs, this aspect of the website was further improved.
V. Publications

In order to pursue its goal of providing the public with the broadest possible information available the FMEIA issues publications on various issues. The Federal Minister’s annual Foreign and European Policy Report, informing about the full range of FMEIA activities, is made available on the FMEIA website and published as a book. Moreover, brochures included publications on Austria’s candidacy for the Human Rights Council, Austrian membership of the UN Security Council, advice for travelling abroad, facts and figures, and information on the 150th anniversary of the birth of Gustav Mahler. Media cooperation was used to inform citizens about the Austrian membership of the United Nations and services provided by the Citizens’ Help Desk.

VI. Press Officers’ Meeting

Priorities at the annual press officers’ meeting in September included the topics of public diplomacy, nation branding and new media, on which the Swiss Federal Department for Foreign Affairs made a presentation. Embassy staff responsible for press and information work also had the chance to discuss their experiences both amongst each other and with headquarters.
M. The Austrian Foreign Service

I. Introduction

In 2010 the FMEIA’s “Administrative Affairs and Infrastructure” section was essentially marked by budget cuts as a consequence of the persistent economic crisis on the one hand and the creation of a new regional diplomatic structure, the so-called “European External Action Service (EEAS)”, on the other.

In order to meet budget targets and the provisions of the new budget regulations, substantial austerity measures had to be taken in 2010, including 30% cuts to travel budgets, massive reductions in construction and maintenance, and dropping long-planned projects such as the construction of the new Austrian Embassy building in Warsaw. The Foreign Ministry must make a substantial part of its payments, more than 100 million euros, in foreign currencies. Fluctuations in the euro exchange rate as in 2010 had additional effects on the budget.

The economic and subsequent budget crisis in 2010 caused the Federal Government to again downsize the budget ceilings until 2014 and proceed to further cuts. These targets can only be met through substantial savings both in FMEIA structural as well as policy spheres. In 2010 sustainable measures were hence enacted in administration: savings potentials were verified with each single embassy, including personnel, reviews of service and maintenance contracts, renegotiations of rents, slimming of administrative processes and merging offices/sharing of premises with Austrian or European partners. Moreover, the network of foreign representations is to be further downsized by 2013.

A special section is dedicated to the “European External Action Service (EEAS)”. Under the present status quo the EEAS will in particular not assume three key areas of the Austrian representations: lobbying for Austrian interests, the comprehensive service for Austrians abroad, and visa issuance for persons planning visits to Austria.

From an administrative perspective, however, it is still necessary to currently review whether the creation of the EEAS permits further optimisation of the limited national resources. Gradual progress on the EEAS over the coming years will render these developments clearer, answers will also have to be found with the European partners.

Also in 2010 the FMEIA further enhanced the existing priorities of security and health for employees at home and abroad. Crisis teams were set up from staff from the FMEIA, the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of Defence jointly reviewing the security situation in several countries and preparing embassies for crisis situations.

In spite of budget austerity the FMEIA tried to also invest in areas promising for the future by rechanneling funds. This includes modernising information
and communication systems (e.g. internet telephony), the opening of the Austrian Embassy in Baku/Azerbaijan, building a “Green Embassy” in Jakarta, boosting the use of solar energy in Africa or implementing administrative pilot projects such as reducing administrative processes by creating regional administrative centres.

II. Working at the Foreign Ministry

Staffing levels at the FMEIA in 2010 by career scheme and 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></td>
<td>At home</td>
<td>Abroad</td>
<td>At home</td>
<td>Abroad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diplomatic staff (A1/v1, A/a)</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consular/ administrative staff (A2/v2, B/b)</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical staff (A3/v3, C/c); Qualified support and secretarial staff (A4/A5/v4, D/d, P2/P3/p2/p3, h2/h3)</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>221</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auxiliary service (A7/v5, E/e, p4/p5, h4/h5) IT specialists</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>658</strong></td>
<td><strong>619</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,277</strong></td>
<td><strong>48.5</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

At 48.5% the share of women amongst all staff exceeded the share of female employees laid down by the Federal Equal Treatment Act of 45%. In the diplomatic service, which had been lagging behind in this respect, the percentage of female staff was 33.3% in 2010.

After successfully completing the selection process 18 individuals were recruited in 2010 (2007: 55, 2008: 102, 2009: 54). Since autumn 2009 seven apprentices have undergone training as “assistant clerks” (3 male/4 female).

The FMEIA offers **trainees** the possibility of a limited training period of a maximum of one year and a start into their career (each as of 31 December 2010):
Staff at international representations is supported by 650 local staff (as of 31 December 2010) employed in accordance with the labour legislation of the respective host country.

In the past ten years the average retirement age of BMEIA officials has always been 60+ and as such has been above the federal average (2010: 60.56).

III. The Foreign Ministry’s Budget at a Glance

The federal budget estimate for 2010 totalled 440.902 million euros, broken down into approx. 72.986 million euros for head office expenses, 161.888 million euros for Austrian representations abroad, 6.637 million euros for cultural projects and activities, 1.713 million euros for international conferences, 98.326 million euros for contributions to international organisations, 98.791 million euros for the Austrian Development Agency GmbH and the Foreign Disaster Relief Fund, and 0.561 million euros for other expenses.
### Budget Overview for 1999–2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>FMEIA budget</th>
<th>Share of FMEIA budget in federal budget in %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>297.232</td>
<td>0.53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>305.662</td>
<td>0.54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>303.409</td>
<td>0.52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>299.775</td>
<td>0.50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>307.000</td>
<td>0.50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>340.928</td>
<td>0.54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>380.000</td>
<td>0.59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>388.000</td>
<td>0.59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>388.109</td>
<td>0.56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>388.087</td>
<td>0.56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>435.675</td>
<td>0.56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>440.902</td>
<td>0.62%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### IV. Global Infrastructure

#### 1. Facility Management, Real Estate and Construction

The FMEIA uses some 340 properties located in more than 80 countries as embassies, consular offices, Cultural Fora, missions to international organisations and for residential and representative purposes. These premises include historic buildings such as those in London, Paris and Rome as well as modern properties such as the premises in Berlin, New York, Tokyo and Brasilia. A team of facility management specialists carries out the necessary acquisitions, sales, leasing, conversion and renovation activities and also evaluates the premises.

All properties are used by the FMEIA to implement the Ministry’s foreign policy, cultural and consular tasks. The most important criteria in assessing and evaluating these facilities are functionality, safety and security as well as cost effectiveness with ecological sustainability also being of increasing importance in this context.

In the sphere of property management the FMEIA also provides a contribution to the considerable saving requirements and hence in addition to selling properties no longer required also continuously optimises the use of existing objects and terminates contracts early.

In addition to accommodating institutions of the Republic of Austria enhanced cooperation with EU and Schengen partners such as the Czech Republic and
Hungary enables the Ministry to benefit from synergy effects. The co-location strategy actively targets the top use of premises in existing properties and the joint occupation and operation of properties with other countries. The facility management group also ensures that activities involving the closing of Austrian representations abroad are implemented as efficiently and smoothly as possible.

With a view to optimising its property management, the FMEIA has started to set up a real estate database (LIDA), thus contributing to the administrative reform efforts launched by the Federal Government.

2. Information Technology

The most important ICT projects in 2010 were:

**ELISA:** This project name stands for the renewal of the ICT infrastructure at properties of the Austrian representations abroad, which was largely completed. The ELISA project involves the replacement of hardware and software, the introduction of state-of-the-art office automation software and the implementation of an information management system (IMS). IMS supports integrated electronic processing (electronic data collection, categorisation, processing, filing and/or archiving), thus gradually phasing out paper files which in the past were predominant at representations abroad.

Voice over Internet Protocol (**VoIP-telephony**): VoIP makes it possible to connect representations to the head office’s telephone system. This award-winning system enables telephone calls between headquarters and representations to be made free of charge worldwide via the Ministry’s own WAN data lines and/or via satellite (**VSAT**), thus contributing to low-cost and simplified communication.

A call for tender was published regarding new server and storage infrastructure for the head office. This was accompanied by investments into new and modern ICT security concepts.

3. Information Management – Knowledge Management

In 2010 the holdings of the Foreign Policy Library were continuously expanded and reached 80 000 volumes by the end of the year.

The Cultural Fora libraries managed by the Foreign Policy Library further integrated their holdings into the general catalogue of scientific libraries in the German-speaking territories (**ALEPH**). The availability of ALEPH via the internet ensures greater availability and efficiency for the libraries.

A new online service was offered in order to be able to faster communicate topical information on events in Austria to the representations: the 1:1 electronic version of the print editions of the dailies (e-paper) “Die Presse” and
“Kurier” are available on the day they are published. The time lag caused by mail delivery thus no longer exists.

In the sphere of archives the first year of the diary of the first Secretary-General of the Foreign Ministry, Heinrich Wildner, was published from the existing archives. The diary is both available in a stenograph as well as in a type-written version. Wildner’s contemporary witness report is a lively contribution on Austrian history.

The logistic preparations for sighting the first year of electronic files (ELAK) has progressed to a point where archiving can be initiated. Since the FMEIA was the first Ministry to use electronic files it is also playing a leading role in ELAK archiving.

V. Austrian Representations Abroad – Honorary Consulates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mission Type</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Diplomatic and other missions of the FMEIA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diplomatic and other missions of the FMEIA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bilateral embassies</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permanent representations at international organisations</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consulates general</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent Cultural f’ora</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Austrian representations abroad</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

With regard to the budget and austerity measures adopted by the Federal Government for the period 2011–2014 the closures of the consulates general in Rio de Janeiro, Hamburg and Cape Town based on the evaluation of the network of Austrian representations according to objective criteria (including the number of consular services for Austrians abroad, the intensity of the exchange of political visits, trade volume, and domestic direct investments) from 2011 to 2013 must be followed by other adjustments in the network of Austrian foreign representations. In addition to the embassies in Harare and Bogotá the consulates general in Zurich, Cracow and Chicago are also to be closed down. The closure of the embassy in Muscat scheduled for 2010 was suspended for the time being, the planned opening of the consulate general in Frankfurt/Main cannot be executed at present.

In addition to the offices abroad that fall directly under the remit of he FMEIA Austria in its worldwide presence can also avail itself of the Austrian Development Agency (ADA), managing Austrian development cooperation activities with twelve coordination offices worldwide. Austria Institutes (AI), have been running German language courses at nine locations outside
The Austrian Foreign Service

Austria since 1997 as well as other representations (e.g. Permanent Representation to the OECD in Paris) that are independent from the FMEIA.

Approx. 280 honorary consulates provide valuable support and additions for the work of the professional Austrian Foreign Service around the world. Honorary Consuls, who are eminent figures with close ties to Austria, work for Austria on an honorary basis and also provide the necessary infrastructure to offer consular services. Thanks to their commitment and dedication, they extend the network of Austria’s international consular presence and contribute to the promotion of economic and cultural relations between Austria and the respective host country.

VI. The European External Action Service (EEAS)

The European External Action Service (EEAS, also see Chapter A) started operations in December 2010 and is presided over by the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy. In addition to the employees of the European Commission and the Secretariat-General of the Council of the EU whose tasks have now been transferred to the EEAS, the EEAS also comprises members of the diplomatic services of the Member States in temporary employment with the EEAS and who will return to their national foreign service following the end of their activities. Joint employment of staff from the European Commission, the Secretariat-General of the Council of the EU, and the diplomatic services of the member states aims to strengthen and improve coherence of international action on Union level. In doing so the EEAS will not replace the diplomatic services of the Member States, whose core competences are not altered by the EEAS, but closely cooperate with them.

On 31 December the EEAS had a total of 1,625 scheduled positions and another 70 full time equivalents for employing ten staff at head office and 60 local staff at the Union’s delegations. By the end of June 2013 according to the report of the High Representative one third of positions in the EEAS staff appointment scheme shall be filled with personnel from the Member States’ diplomatic services.

Immediately after the Lisbon Treaty came into force the organisational and administrative work for building up the EEAS started. Already in March, even before the new service started operations and the EEAS was approved by the Council, the positions of 32 heads of delegation were advertised, for which members of the diplomatic services of EU Member States could also apply. Member State representatives were present in the selection panels and were involved in the selection procedures. High Representative Catherine Ashton was responsible for the final decision. The Austrian Ambassador to the EU, Hans-Dietmar Schweisgut, was subsequently appointed Head of the EU Delegation in Tokyo.
In the autumn numerous other positions were advertised with Union delegations abroad as well as at the EEAS head office in Brussels. In the process the post of the chair of the COHOM Council working group (human rights) was filled with Austrian diplomat Engelbert Theuermann. All in all in 2010 approx. 150 EEAS positions were advertised. One fifth of the advertised positions were based in Brussels, the remainder at Union delegations abroad. Meanwhile 45 advertised positions have been filled, including the top EEAS management level composed of the managing Secretary-General, Pierre Vimont, two deputies, Helga Schmid and Maciej Popowski, as well as one chief operating officer, David O’Sullivan. The selection process for the remaining positions had not yet been completed by the end of the year.
I.5 Organisation of International Conferences and Matters Relating to International Organisations in Austria
Werner DRUML

II.6 Central, Western and Northern Europe
Avru REITA

Il.6 Environmental Protection, Transport, Telecommunications
Aljan KOZUSHNIK
Il.6a Il.6b Andreas SCHMIDTNER

II.6 Central, Western and Northern Europe
Avru REITA

Il.7 OSECE, Council of Europe
Christian KOBIER
Il.7a Il.7b Il.7c

II.6 Environmental Protection, Transport, Telecommunications
Aljan KOZUSHNIK
Il.6a Il.6b Andreas SCHMIDTNER

II.6 Central, Western and Northern Europe
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Il.7 OSECE, Council of Europe
Christian KOBIER
Il.7a Il.7b Il.7c

III.6 Environmental Protection, Transport, Telecommunications
Anton KOZUSNIK

III.6a III.6b Andreas SCHMIDTNER

II.6 Central, Western and Northern Europe
Avru REITA

Il.7 OSECE, Council of Europe
Christian KOBIER
Il.7a Il.7b Il.7c

II.6 Environmental Protection, Transport, Telecommunications
Aljan KOZUSHNIK
Il.6a Il.6b Andreas SCHMIDTNER

II.8 Arms Control and Disarmament, Non-Proliferation, Multilateral Disarmament Fora
Alexander MARQUARDT
Il.8a Il.8b Il.8c

II.8 Arms Control and Disarmament, Non-Proliferation, Multilateral Disarmament Fora
Alexander MARQUARDT
Il.8a Il.8b Il.8c

II.8 Arms Control and Disarmament, Non-Proliferation, Multilateral Disarmament Fora
Alexander MARQUARDT
Il.8a Il.8b Il.8c

II.8 Arms Control and Disarmament, Non-Proliferation, Multilateral Disarmament Fora
Alexander MARQUARDT
Il.8a Il.8b Il.8c

II.10 Asia, Australia, New Zealand, Oceania, ASEM
Bernhard ZIMBURG

II.10a II.10b Herbert PICHLER

II.10 Asia, Australia, New Zealand, Oceania, ASEM
Bernhard ZIMBURG

II.10a II.10b Herbert PICHLER

II.10 Asia, Australia, New Zealand, Oceania, ASEM
Bernhard ZIMBURG

II.10a II.10b Herbert PICHLER

II.10 Asia, Australia, New Zealand, Oceania, ASEM
Bernhard ZIMBURG

II.10a II.10b Herbert PICHLER

II.11 Sub-Saharan Africa, AU
Helmut FREUDENSCHUSS

II.11 a II.11d Mario FREUDENTHAL

II.11 Sub-Saharan Africa, AU
Helmut FREUDENSCHUSS

II.11 a II.11d Mario FREUDENTHAL

II.11 Sub-Saharan Africa, AU
Helmut FREUDENSCHUSS

II.11 a II.11d Mario FREUDENTHAL

* designated
(as of 31 December 2010)
N. Selected Documents

This chapter includes select documents on FMEIA priority issues in 2010.


The following chapter presents a short summary of prime Austrian activities and initiatives during the country’s membership of the Security Council without any claim to completeness. A comprehensive report on Austria’s extensive activities and initiatives is available on the FMEIA website http://www.bmeia.gv.at/.

From 1 January 2009 until 31 December 2010 – after 1973/74 and 1991/92 – Austria for the third time was a member of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). During the 104 weeks of Austria’s membership term on the UNSC, Austrian representatives participated in more than 600 UNSC meetings and during thousands of hours of negotiations participated in the decision-making of more than 250 formal UNSC decisions (resolutions, Presidential Statements, and press statements).

One particular Austrian concern was to make the EU’s voice heard in the UN through close coordination with the European partners. It was also upon Austria’s initiative that the EU High Representative Catherine Ashton in May 2010 was able to speak to the UNSC for the first time. Particular attention was given to cooperation with the civil society.

Building on Austria’s work at the UN to date strengthening international law and the rule of law constituted a central theme of Austrian SC membership. Respect for human rights, compliance with international humanitarian law, the protection of civilians, including women and children, in armed conflict, the fight against impunity, disarmament and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction constituted the priorities of Austria’s membership. On the basis of these objectives and fundamental principles Austria also played an active role in international crisis management, be it in conflicts like in Gaza or in Sri Lanka, the challenges in Eastern Congo, Sudan or Ivory Coast.

Regarding the protection of civilians in armed conflict, the main topic during the Austrian presidency on the UNSC, the SC, chaired by Federal Minister Michael Spindelegger on 11 November 2009, upon an Austrian initiative adopted SC Resolution 1894 with concrete measures for better protection of the civil population in conflict situations. After adoption of Resolution 1894 Austria systematically monitored its implementation, including during UN peacekeeping operations, such as mandate extensions of UN missions in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Chad and Ivory Coast, where protection of civilians became a core task for the blue berets.
Regarding **women, peace and security** Austria advocated a stronger integration of women into peace negotiations and reconstruction, increased appointment of women to high-level UN positions as well as UN peacekeeping operations, protection of women and girls against sexual violence and an end to impunity for perpetrators of sexual violence. Over a period of many months Austria was also highly committed to preparations for the 10th anniversary of the adoption of SC Resolution 1325 (2000) ("Women, Peace and Security") in October 2010. All in all most observers agree that during the last ten years there had never been as many concrete developments as during the last two years; a result that also is the fruit of Austria’s contributions. The provisions on the **protection of children in armed conflict** were also considerably strengthened with persistent Austrian support during the Austrian SC membership.

Issues of **disarmament and nuclear proliferation** were a central – and from an Austrian perspective very important topic treated by the UNSC during the Austrian membership. Austria supported these efforts – aiming at a clear position of principles in this question and as host country of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) – with commitment and conviction. At the historically important SC summit on disarmament and non-proliferation on 24 September 2009 chaired by US President Obama with active Austrian involvement the UNSC for the first time advocated a world without nuclear weapons.

The large majority of topics on the UNSC agenda concerns conflicts in **Africa**. The Austrian SC membership without a doubt clearly increased Austria’s visibility in Africa. One specific result of this commitment was Austria’s admission to the country-specific configuration of the UN Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) for Sierra Leone. Austria also actively contributed to UNSC debates on Sudan. The Austrian offer of providing either side with legal expertise on questions regarding citizenship in the event of a secession of the South met with positive response both in the North and the South. Federal Minister Michael Spindelegger in 2010 alone met his Sudanese counterpart no fewer than seven times and in December visited Khartoum and Juba (South Sudan). Another important issue repeatedly addressed by Austria during its SC membership was the one concerning Western Sahara. Upon an Austrian proposal in April 2009 a first agreement was achieved in difficult negotiations on including at least a general reference to the “human dimension” of the conflict in SC Resolution 1871 (2009).

**Strengthening Vienna as the host city of International Organisations** also remained a central concern of Austrian SC membership. Specific success was achieved during the last two years including, on the one hand, the opening of the International Anti-Corruption Academy (IACA) in Laxenburg, and, on the other, the establishment of two new centres for disarmament in Vienna (one liaison office of the UN Office of Disarmament Affairs as well as a security policy think tank – the Vienna Centre for Disarmament and
Non-Proliferation). The International Peace Institute (IPI) also opened an office in Vienna thus enriching the international range of dialogue. This also sustainably strengthens the Austria-based UN organisations while Austria is positioned as a hub for peace and dialogue. The informal talks on the Western Sahara in Dürnstein in August 2009, the “Afghanistan Implementation Colloquium” at the end of February 2010 in Baden and the meeting of leading representatives of Khartoum and South Sudan in Vienna and Baden in November 2010 are concrete results of these efforts.

Conclusions

The clear focus on topics like human rights, rule of law, protection of the civilian population, particularly of women and children, in armed conflict, as well as questions of the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction benefitted from Austria’s contributions through concrete progress in UNSC work. One important element of successful SC membership is the constructive and persistent cooperation on all of the SC agenda including the principal activities on sanctions committees and other UNSC sub-committees. Austria very pointedly strove for such comprehensive commitment searching active cooperation with all other SC members.

Austria received much recognition for its principled and balanced work on the UNSC; Austria, for instance, advocated protection of the civilian population in Darfur and in East Congo as much as in Gaza or in Sri Lanka. Direct talks with all the parties involved were sought in every conflict situation. Consequently, it often was Austria who made sure that the UNSC found a common language on particularly disputed issues – including the human dimension of the Western Sahara Conflict.

Austria will be able to use expertise and experience gained by the FMEIA from its SC membership in its foreign policy work in the years to come. Austria’s membership of the UN Human Rights Council during the period 2011–2014 hence constitutes the logical continuation of its activities on the Security Council.

II. Statement by Federal President Heinz Fischer at the Summit on “Ensuring the Security Council’s effective role in maintaining international peace and security”, New York, 23 September 2010

Emerging from the biggest catastrophe in the 20th century, a war in which all together 50 million people lost their lives, the United Nations was founded to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war. The Security Council was entrusted with the responsibility to maintain international peace and security. Over the last 65 years the Council has made an enormous contribu-
tion to this noble goal. For those affected by armed conflict this often is a question of life and death, of security and development and of respect for the rule of law and human rights. No continent was spared, and while in the early years the Council had to deal primarily with interstate conflicts, the nature of conflict has changed significantly in recent times. Intra-state conflicts involving non-state actors as well as transnational threats such as terrorism, organised crime, drug trafficking, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction etc. have created new challenges for the United Nations.

Peacekeeping – originally not foreseen in the UN-Charter – has developed into a particularly successful crisis management tool. Over the last decades, the character of peacekeeping has changed: after monitoring of ceasefires and inter-positioning, peacekeepers of today find themselves in the midst of conflicts facing complex tasks and challenges. Recognising the importance of UN peacekeeping, Austria started contributing troops, police and experts to UN operations immediately after joining the United Nations. 90,000 Austrians in the service of peace since 1960 are proof of our unwavering commitment to the maintenance of international peace and security.

Our willingness to assume global responsibility furthermore manifests itself in our third membership in the Security Council. Confronted with today’s threats, we identified the protection of civilians in armed conflict as a key priority. The effective protection of the civilian population is the precondition for sustainable peace, and as long as UN peacekeeping missions are involved, it is also a question of the credibility of the Council.

Resolution 1894 (2009) provides a solid basis for further enhancing the protection of the most vulnerable. Creating a favourable protection environment goes beyond protection from physical violence. It must be complemented by activities in the fields of the rule of law, human rights, security sector reform, disarmament, demobilization and reintegration and the empowerment of local society. The swift implementation of resolution 1894 will therefore make an important contribution to the Council’s effectiveness in this core area.

An equally important topic is the role of women in peace and security. We must seize the unique opportunity of the 10th anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000) this October to renew our commitment and work towards the increased participation, representation and full involvement of women in preventive diplomacy, mediation, peacekeeping and peacebuilding. In this context I would like to commend Secretary General Ban Ki-moon for his strong leadership and encourage him to continue to promote the cause of women.

These efforts must be accompanied by an increased protection of women and girls, especially from sexual violence. The Security Council has several times reaffirmed its role in fighting impunity for such violations. Let me also thank Uganda (as Presidency of the Council for the month of October) for
their commitment to further advance the implementation of this landmark resolution.

The systematic consideration of the “protection of civilians in armed conflict”, “children and armed conflict” and “women, peace and security” demonstrates the ability of the Council to respond effectively to today’s challenges.

In order to sustainably resolve a conflict, the Council should pursue an integrated approach throughout all stages of conflict. Therefore peacekeeping and peacebuilding need to go hand in hand to provide security and development with the clear aim of strengthening national institutions and preventing a relapse into conflict.

Finally, I would like to emphasise that prevention is the most effective and efficient way of managing conflicts. We therefore highly welcome the efforts by the Secretary General to strengthen the UN’s capacity in early warning and conflict prevention and to continue his good offices and mediation activities. As a member of the European Union we strongly believe in the partnership between the United Nations and regional organisations in this regard.

In conclusion, allow me to congratulate you on organising this summit and preparing a Presidential Statement that enjoys our full support. Let me close by reiterating that the Security Council will exercise its role in a most effective and credible manner, when the guiding principle of its actions is the rule of law — clear and foreseeable rules equally applicable to everybody.

III. Statement by Federal Minister Michael Spindelegger at the 65th UN General Assembly, New York, 25 September 2010

Mr. President,
Heads of State,
Heads of Government,
Foreign Ministers,
Distinguished Delegates to the 65th General Assembly of the United Nations,

Introduction / Global Governance and Multilateralism / Rule of Law

The tragic earthquake in Haiti, the devastating floods in Pakistan and the financial crisis reminded us that the global challenges of the 21st century require concerted action. The United Nations needs to be at the center of our activities. It is the forum in today’s multilateral system that enjoys the highest degree of legitimacy. Inclusiveness is its key comparative advantage. However, this moral authority must be matched by mechanisms and resources to ensure its effectiveness.
Adherence to the rule of law is fundamental. All multilateral efforts and activities need to operate on the basis of clear and predictable rules which equally apply to all Member States. Member States, but also men and women around the globe, must be able to trust in the United Nations capacity to turn the promises of the Charter into reality.

Cooperation with other international actors is indispensable for the UN’s efforts to deal with the complex challenges of today. Austria and the European Union stand ready as reliable partners for the United Nations, in areas ranging from development cooperation and humanitarian aid to the maintenance of international peace and security and to promoting the respect for the rule of law and human rights. In this context, we do hope that our initiative to obtain modalities for the EU’s participation in the General Assembly reflecting the changes provided for in the Lisbon Treaty will soon be adopted. This would greatly help to reinforce the productive partnership of the UN with an organisation that is fully committed to the principles and objectives enshrined in the Charter.

Austria is proud to contribute to the work of the United Nations through hosting the UN headquarters in Vienna. We will continue to offer Vienna as a platform for dialogue and cooperation.

In our view, good governance is an inherent element of global governance. The Vienna-based UN Office on Drugs and Crime is central in the UN’s efforts to combat corruption and organized crime by supporting Member States in implementing international standards, including the UN Convention against Corruption. Corruption presents one of the major challenges with dire consequences for the international community’s efforts to reduce poverty. The recent foundation of the International Anti-Corruption Academy in Austria is an important step to address this challenge. This institution aims to provide a tool for research, education and training for professionals from all fields, including law enforcement officials, judges and prosecutors.

The fight against climate change is one of the central issues of the 21st century. Climate change has a far-reaching impact on the economic and social development of the entire international community. We need global consensus now if we want to achieve the goal to limit global warming to 2°C and to reverse the trend of rising greenhouse gas emissions by 2020. Nobody should underestimate the difficulty of this task. However, the fight against climate change is also an opportunity. We have the chance to create a framework for sustainable, qualitative growth at global level. Austria is committed to contribute to this endeavour.

This week, leaders agreed upon concrete actions to get the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) back on track in the fight against world poverty. We now need to mobilize all our efforts to live up to this renewed commitment, particularly in addressing the special needs of Africa in this regard. Governments of developing and developed countries, as well as the private
sector and civil society need to work together to achieve our ambitious goals by 2015.

Mr. President!

Let me now turn to one of the most urgent threats to peace and security. During these days our attention is focused on the recently initiated direct talks between Prime Minister Netanyahu and President Abbas. We welcome the leadership and commitment of President Obama, who made this development possible. These talks offer the first concrete prospects for a sustainable peace in the Middle East in many years. An agreement between Israel and Palestine would not only radically improve the lives of the peoples concerned, it would also provide the key to a more stable region and a more peaceful world. We hope that both sides are aware of their enormous responsibilities.

The process is still fragile. We believe that the extension of the settlement moratorium is fundamental for keeping the talks on track and creating an environment in which the core issues can be tackled successfully. It is equally important that the efforts of the Palestinian authorities to build up functioning institutions for a future Palestinian state will move forward dynamically.

It is ultimately up to the parties to bring the peace process to a positive conclusion. However international actors, in particular the members of the Quartet have an important role to play. As a member of the European Union, Austria is ready to fully play its part.

In order to ensure that the UN continues to play a central role in global governance, we must continue with our efforts towards internal reform of the UN, including a reform of the Security Council. Both, an enlargement of the Security Council that reflects today’s political, economic and social realities and a reform of the Council’s working methods will enhance the Council’s legitimacy and the acceptance of its decisions.

As an elected member of the Security Council we participate in its work with great commitment and are doing our best to promote effectiveness and transparency.

Significant efforts are underway to ensure and sustain UN peacekeeping as an essential tool for achieving the goals of the United Nations. Confronted with limited financial and human resources and the increasing complexity of peacekeeping operations, the UN has started a review of the whole UN peacekeeping system with a view to adjusting it to the needs of the 21st century. It is of vital importance for the Council to effectively monitor and oversee the implementation of peacekeeping mandates in close cooperation with troop- and police-contributors, the Secretariat and UN missions. Austria fully supports the ongoing peacekeeping reform and stands ready to play its part in a renewed global peacekeeping partnership.
We also have to work on making peace consolidation irreversible. The United Nations Peacebuilding Commission together with Integrated Peacebuilding Support Offices have a key role in fostering sustainable peace. By optimally using the peacebuilding architecture lasting peace can be achieved with determination and political will of the country concerned as well as the support of the international community. Since peacekeeping and peacebuilding must be approached in an integrated manner, we strongly support an enhanced interaction of the Security Council with the Peacebuilding Commission throughout the conflict cycle, as was affirmed also by the Security Council Summit this week.

Due to the changing nature of conflict and an increase in the activities of non-state actors, the protection of civilians in armed conflict constitutes a core task of a large number of UN peacekeeping missions. The effective protection of those affected by hostilities and violence has become a yardstick for the success and credibility of UN missions in the field and the UN at large. Security Council resolution 1894, unanimously adopted in November last year, was a major step forward in the Council’s efforts to better protect civilians from physical violence, displacement and violations of their rights.

However, resolution 1894 has not yet had its full impact on the ground. Violations of international humanitarian and human rights law and impunity for such crimes continue to pose a major threat to the rule of law and lasting peace in post-conflict situations. Austria acknowledges the primary responsibility of States to ensure the protection of civilians, including credible prosecution of those responsible for war crimes, genocide, crimes against humanity or other serious violations of international law. We support the use and promotion of mechanisms such as the International Criminal Court, commissions of inquiries or panels of experts. These tools should be seen as a viable complement and reinforcement of steps taken at the national level to ensure accountability. The Security Council has a central role in this endeavour. Ensuring the implementation of Resolution 1894 will be one of the key priorities of Austria during the remainder of its term on the Council.

Equally, Austria attaches utmost importance to enhancing the role of women in conflict and post-conflict situations. Even 10 years after the adoption of Resolution 1325 on women, peace, and security, we can still witness major gaps: Women continue to be largely absent in peace processes and conflict resolution efforts, and crimes against them all too often remain unpunished. The latest shocking mass rapes in Eastern Congo demonstrate more than ever that there is urgent need for action. We cannot afford to ignore these gaps. The occasion of the 10th anniversary of resolution 1325, will, therefore, provide a crucial opportunity to work towards a more consistent implementation in promoting women’s issues in all aspects of international peace efforts. These efforts are fully supported by our development cooperation.

Austria warmly welcomes the milestone decision of the General Assembly to establish “UN Women”, which will make the UN a stronger and more
effective partner in the advancement of women worldwide. We are looking forward to working with Michele Bachelet towards our common goals.

Children in armed conflict deserve special protection. I am very satisfied that the UN system made concrete progress in combating serious child rights violations and in fighting the recruitment and enlisting of child soldiers.

Austria reiterates the pivotal role of the United Nations at the centre of our counter-terrorism efforts. Respect for human rights and the rule of law is a fundamental basis of the fight against terrorism. As chair of the Al-Qaida/Taliban sanctions committee, Austria is committed to enhancing due process in the Council’s sanctions regimes. We therefore welcome the substantial improvements of the listing and delisting procedures, and the recent appointment of Ms. Kimberly Prost as Ombudsperson.

The Austrian candidature for the Human Rights Council for the period 2011-2014 is a logical continuation of our long term work and engagement for the respect for human rights, including in the Security Council. Dialogue and partnerships are crucial for turning the promises of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights into a reality for all people around the globe. Austria has consistently worked with all actors towards narrowing the gap between standards and their implementation at a national and international level.

Finally Mr President, and to end on a positive note: This past year saw the first positive developments towards nuclear disarmament in a decade. Security Council Resolution 1887 adopted just a year ago provided a powerful impetus. Although many issues are still unresolved and require our close attention, the Review Conference in May produced an outcome that restored confidence in the NPT.

For the first time, a comprehensive Action Plan dealing with all three NPT-pillars was agreed; – and let me stress here that Austria is honored to have contributed to that success.

For the first time, a “world without nuclear weapons” was accepted as the goal of all parties, who pledged to ultimately eliminate all types of nuclear weapons.

For the first time, the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of the use of such weapons were recognized – an important step towards the eventual legal ban of nuclear weapons by means of a nuclear weapons convention or framework of legal instruments.

Although the results of the Conference are positive much remains to be done: The Action Plan needs to be implemented. The Nuclear Weapon States – who promised to engage among themselves on a number of vital issues and report by 2014 – must lead by example.

The international disarmament structures must be reformed. I am grateful for Secretary General Ban`s initiative in this respect.
Finally we must learn from successful disarmament initiatives. Let me underline that Austria is delighted that the Convention on Cluster Munitions entered into force last month. This Convention is a positive example how committed Governments, International Organizations and civil society can work together to achieve real progress.

In order to promote interaction in this respect also in the nuclear field, Austria supports the establishment of a Competence Center for Nuclear Disarmament and Non-Proliferation in Vienna early next year. Conceived as a platform for open discussion and independent expertise, monitoring and advocacy, this Center shall facilitate understanding and cooperation among all entities involved. I hope it will contribute to further progress in nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen!

We, the United Nations, have shared responsibility to move forward jointly in order to reach our common goal of international peace, security and development for all.

IV. Statement by Federal Minister Michael Spindelegger at the Open Debate of the UN Security Council on “Women, Peace and Security”, New York, 26 October 2010

Mr. President,

I would like to thank you for the initiative of convening this high-level open debate on Women and Peace and Security, marking the 10 anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000). Your presence here shows the support of Uganda for the issue. Let me further congratulate you on the efforts that resulted in the Presidential Statement before the Council today. I would also like to thank the Secretary General for joining us from far away, which testifies to his personal commitment to this subject.

It is a particular pleasure to welcome Under-Secretary-General Ms. Michelle Bachelet to the Chamber. I would like to congratulate her on her appointment and assure her of Austria’s full support. We are convinced that UN Women will play a central role in further advancing this agenda. We are equally grateful for the valuable input by Ms. Thelma Awori representing the Civil Society Advisory Group on Women, Peace and Security. Civil society has always been a driving force behind this issue and we are looking forward to further advancing this agenda in close partnership.

When adopting this landmark resolution 10 years ago, the Security Council recognized that equal participation, representation and full involvement of women in all aspects of peace-building and security, the protection of
women as a group with specific needs and concerns as well as the prevention of sexual and other violence are not only a security issue but also vital for sustainable peace and stability. With the adoption of the resolutions on “sexual violence” and “women and girls in post-conflict situations” the Council now disposes of a strong and well developed normative framework.

Over the past decade, progress in implementation has been slow and uneven. The resolution’s real impact remains to be felt on the ground in many areas. All too often women do not make it to the tables where decisions in peace processes or post-conflict reconstruction with a direct impact on their lives are taken. There are no issues that are not also women’s issues. Every month hundreds of women and children fall victim to sexual violence under the eyes of their governments and the international community. Women and girls with disabilities remain even more vulnerable. Ten years on, our focus must therefore lie on how we can ensure better and more coherent implementation of the objectives enshrined in these resolutions and make a real difference for women in conflict and post-conflict situations.

The Council has at its disposal a whole range of tools for the implementation of resolution 1325. These include measures such as mandates of peace-keeping and other relevant missions, briefings and reports, inquiry commissions as well as targeted measures and sanctions. We have to be ready to use these tools and to translate words into practice in a consistent manner. We have to ensure that those that disregard the Council’s decisions are being held accountable.

The Arria Meeting of the Security Council on 19 October co-chaired by Austria, Mexico and the United Kingdom has made it clear that we need more information on progress and on what measures have been successful. The comprehensive set of indicators on 1325 which received the Council’s support today, will finally close this important gap and provide us with qualitative and quantitative data on important areas such as the prevalence of sexual violence or the number of women participating in peace-processes. This information will allow us to better guide and target our actions in the future. We hope that the indicators will now become operational as a matter of urgency. We do believe that all Member States should use the indicators relevant for their country’s situation, including in their national action plans in order to receive a truly global picture of the implementation of resolution 1325.

As a next step we request the Secretary-General to include the Information gathered on the basis of the indicators in his country-specific and relevant thematic reports in a systematic and comprehensive manner. Without accurate and timely information, it is difficult for the Council to take appropriate action in areas that need our urgent attention, such as the prevention of sexual violence. We hope the Council will in the future also receive briefings on situations, where data gathered through the indicators suggest an outbreak of
violence against women or a further deterioration of a situation. Early warning and prevention is still by far the best protection.

“Women, Peace and Security” needs to be on the agenda of the Council every time the Council considers a country situation or relevant thematic issues. The establishment of an Informal Expert Group would have further enabled the Council to evaluate information on the Situation of women and girls in conflict situations around the globe. We hope that the Council will revert to this question in the near future, once the indicators are fully operational. The Security Council has to show active leadership and shoulder its responsibility for the implementation of its resolution 1325.

The high-level event on resolution 1325 organized by Canada in the margins of the general debate already provided us with an opportunity to make concrete and measurable commitments to implement resolution 1325. On this occasion I have already announced a few Austrian contributions. Today, I would like to add further contributions.

At the national level:

– The development and implementation of National Action Plans is crucial to improve the implementation of resolution 1325. Austria was one of the first countries to develop a National Action Plan for resolution 1325. We will take the 10th anniversary of resolution 1325 as an opportunity to revise our National Action Plan. Work will start at the beginning of 2011 in close cooperation with the civil society and other line ministries.

– Austria is committed to a continuous enhancement of its rule of law standards. The Rome Statute is the first international treaty to classify crimes against women, like rape or other forms of sexual violence, as crimes against humanity, war crimes or genocide. Austria is currently in the process of incorporating the crimes of the ICC Statute into its criminal code.

– Austria commits to contextualize education, and predeployment training of its armed forces personnel in order to address specific operational realities in regions of deployment, including the impact of conflict on gender relations and the role and participation of women (on the basis of relevant UN guidelines).

At the international level:

Supporting the UN in implementation of 1325

– The newly-established entity “UN Women” has a central role in coordinating the UN’s activities on implementing resolution 1325. Austria is committed to supporting UN Women and its efforts in making the newly developed indicators operational. In this context, Austria will provide UN Women with voluntary financial contributions.

Supporting the implementation of 1325 through Austrian multilateral development cooperation
Through the Austrian Development Agency, Austria supports and implements projects tailored towards the implementation of resolution 1325, in particular in relation to violence against women, DDR, cooperation with the civil society for conflict prevention and peacekeeping. We will continue with these efforts. The Austrian multilateral development cooperation will keep a strong focus on women and children in crisis and post-conflict situations.

With its expertise in the development of a National Action Plan on 1325, Austria stands ready to work together in the context of a “Twinning Project” with partner countries to support the establishment of National Action Plans on 1325.

Supporting the implementation of resolution 1325 through Austria’s engagements in the area of peacekeeping

Austria commits to deploy gender experts (e.g. Military Gender Advisor) to military components of peace operations if designated and posted by the international community.

Furthermore, Austria undertakes to ensure the availability of immediate-response personnel (Gender Field Advisor, Gender Focal Points) within national contingents to address women and girls’ urgent needs, with particular respect to health, security and justice.

Austria will continue to further strengthen its training activities on 1325, in particular in pre-deployment trainings for peace and humanitarian operations that are being provided for civilian and military experts from around the world by the Austrian Study Center for Peace and Conflict Resolution (ASPR), and increase its training efforts in the Austrian Diplomatic Academy in 2011.

Including through its Special Envoy for International Women’s Issues, Ambassador Dr. Ursula Plassnik, Austria will continue to promote the implementation of resolution 1325 including in the UN, the EU, the Council of Europe and the OSCE. Austria is committed to dialogue initiatives promoting in particular gender equality and strengthening women in public life and dialogue activities. For example, Austria has established an international Network on “Promoting Female Leadership in Intercultural and Interreligious Dialogue” first meeting in June 2010. Certainly, I also commit to raise awareness in my bilateral contacts for resolution 1325, where appropriate.

Let me finally reiterate my hope that the commitments to action will not be a one-time effort limited to the 10 year anniversary. We are ready to follow-up on our commitments and to review progress in the implementation annually at the Open Debates on women, peace and security.
V. **Statement by Federal Minister Michael Spindelegger at the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, New York, 3 May 2010**

Mr. President,
Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Lady Ashton has delivered a statement on behalf of the EU. Permit me to add a few points from the perspective of Austria.

Forty years ago, the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons entered into force. The world was in the depths of the Cold War. At times, the threat of nuclear war seemed imminent. The goals of the NPT were clear: prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons, benefit from peaceful uses of nuclear energy and pursue nuclear disarmament.

Forty years later, it is deeply disturbing:

- that the number of nuclear weapons is still so high;
- that North Korea developed nuclear arms; and
- that Iran – requests by the IAEA and UN notwithstanding – is still not able or willing to dispel concerns about its nuclear ambitions.

Forty years of NPT produced resolutions and decisions, high hopes and aspirations – and yet, we are still waiting:

- for progress on the establishment of a nuclear-weapons free zone in the Middle East;
- for the entry-into-force of the Test-Ban-Treaty; and
- for negotiations on a fissile-material ban.

Forty years of NPT witnessed dangerous incidents, a terrible accident in Chernobyl, and growing concerns as regards the misuse of sensitive nuclear technologies, and yet we see:

- no real solutions for addressing environmental and health concerns on many questions, such as nuclear waste;
- no universal commitment to recognize the IAEA Additional Protocol as the verification standard; and
- no real interest in safe and fair multilateral control of the nuclear fuel cycle through the IAEA.

So there we are: Forty years of NPT. Is there something to celebrate? In my view, the inadequacies of the system, grave as they may be, must not be used to distort the overall positive record:

- Since 1970, few new states have acquired nuclear weapons;
• We witnessed states giving up nuclear arsenals, dismantling weapons programmes or reducing their atomic arsenals;
• We saw the IAEA establish a highly efficient system of monitoring and verification and become the accepted authority on nuclear issues.

For me, the most important sign of life of the NPT is this conference – where almost the whole world has gathered to support the NPT as the cornerstone of the international nuclear non-proliferation regime.

Mr. President,

A Review Conference is an occasion to reflect on the past, but it should focus on the future. There is today a new sense of optimism – thanks primarily to US President Obama’s inspirational new approach, which has enabled developments such as the Russia-US agreement signed last month. I hope the improved atmosphere will enable progress at this Conference: real, concrete steps forward — especially as regards reductions in nuclear arsenals, the nuclear test ban, a fissile material ban, the additional protocol, a process towards a nuclear-weapons-free zone in the Middle East and confidence building. Progress will require positive contributions by everyone, not confrontational rhetoric.

Austria will actively contribute to a successful outcome, just as we have done in the past, for example with our proposal on a fair and transparent system to multilaterally control the nuclear fuel cycle. Most important for Austria is that the goal of a nuclear-weapons-free-world becomes the central objective of our endeavours. Forty years ago, such ideas were considered idealist dreams. But last year, the UN Security Council resolved, at the level of Heads of State and Government, to work towards a world without nuclear weapons. In the words attributed to the Brazilian Bishop Hélder Câmara. “When you dream alone, it’s just a dream; but when many have the same dream, it’s the beginning of reality”.

Moving from the dream of a world free of nuclear weapons to actual global zero will take time and much effort. There are several promising ideas, like UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon’s Five-Point-Plan. Austria supports this plan and believes that the most effective way to move towards “global zero” is through a universal legal instrument, a “Nuclear Weapons Convention”, equipped with a strict multilateral verification mechanism.

You are aware how sincerely Austria engages in disarmament issues. We were at the forefront of initiatives resulting in Conventions banning mines and cluster bombs. The Austrian government and the legislature — which recently adopted a formal resolution on a world without nuclear weapons - will examine closely how disarmament is dealt with at this Conference. If there is no clear progress towards “global zero”, we will discuss with partners the feasibility of a global instrument to ban these weapons. The NPT remains
the cornerstone of the international nuclear non-proliferation regime. But a static regime that has lost its vision may benefit from fresh ideas.

Mr. President,

To achieve a meaningful outcome at this Conference, you will require contributions from many sources. We have considered at length how Austria might assist. With no nuclear weapons to disarm, no international treaties left to ratify and no nuclear industry to monitor, we identified the following areas:

1. **Strengthen the multilateral System**

The UN Office of Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) shoulders a large mandate, with limited means. Last year, Under-Secretary-General Duarte stressed the desire to devote more attention to the meetings on nuclear issues in Vienna. Austria has, therefore, put together a proposal that enables UNODA to establish and maintain a permanent liaison office in Vienna; we will provide office space, equipment, a yearly stipend to offset personnel costs for 10 years and financial support for conferences. We hope that a presence close to institutions such as the IAEA and CTBTO will also help UNODA to provide support to the NPT, especially if a support unit for the NPT-review process along the lines of the Canadian proposal is established.

2. **Support civil society**

The contribution of civil society in disarmament matters is vital. Many projects – such as the Mine Ban Treaty or the Convention on Cluster Munitions – would not have turned out as successful had it not been for the work of dedicated NGOs. It is my firm belief that strengthening of the monitoring role of civil society can further our goal of a world free of nuclear weapons. For this reason, and in view of the increasing importance of nuclear issues in Vienna, Austria will assist in establishing an international hub of expertise, a “Competence Centre for Nuclear Disarmament and Non-Proliferation” in Vienna. Over the next months, we will consult with partners in government and civil society on how such a hub could contribute effectively to the global efforts for a world without nuclear weapons.

Mr. President,

Before concluding, let me thank you and your team for the great effort you have put into the preparation of this Conference. I wish you much success and the best of luck.

Thank you.
VI. “The European Union’s Strategy for the Danube Region”, Keynote Speech by Federal Minister Michael Spindelegger, Alpbach, 2 September 2010

Forum Alpbach this year has chosen “Construction and Reality” for its motto. The questions are: what has become of the dreams and visions of 1989? In what direction is the global power game moving today?

Forum Alpbach also focuses on the Strategy for the Danube Region. This is what I would like to thank the organisers for.

”Danube” or “Central Europe“

The Danube, in 1989 still largely a dividing border river, today has become a river that unites and unifies. It is our design that the Danube keeps on increasingly uniting people, ideas, projects.

The chances are good. After all, the European Strategy for the Danube Region today is of much greater importance in the European landscape than we had ever dared hope for even two years ago.

At the beginning of 2009 my then Romanian colleague and I set a first step by proposing to the other EU Member States to develop a European policy for this part of the continent which is dynamic and sensitive at once.

This initiative also has quite a lot to do with the colourful notion of Central Europe, a term that was only again able to adopt a specific shape with and after the year 1989.

I am also stressing the common aspects of this Romanian-Austrian initiative since there had been reservations especially against this renaissance of Central Europe.

Jacques Le Rider frankly expressed what many in Europe had only ever thought: Central Europe “primarily is a concept of Germans and Austrians referring to regions East of Berlin and East of Vienna”. This, according to Le Rider, shows the “great weakness and ambivalence of this claim of belonging“.

This focus on the Danube Region as a European development project, I believe, has led to a shift in focus. From historic reminiscence to a joint design of the future. Not free from history, but less loaded with and burdened by it.

The Danube Region has benefitted enormously from the new Europe: the fall of the Iron Curtain, EU enlargement rounds since 1995 and new forms of cooperation such as the European Neighbourhood Policy have brought the peoples of the Danube Region closer together. And they have opened up new perspectives for coexistence in the Danube Region.
Great Interest in the New Strategy

Very intense work on a substantial EU Strategy for the Danube Region continued throughout this year. Five stakeholder conferences were organised: almost a fun fair – in the best sense – of ideas and proposals. Open and accessible for anyone interested, in line with intense cooperation.

More than 80 organisations used the opportunity for submitting written proposals to the European Commission many of which – including the contributions from the 14 countries of the Danube Region – were integrated into the draft action plan.

Many things have thus happened within a relatively short time span. The step from the design to the successful, reality-prone success hence still needs to be taken.

Financial Crisis

Overcoming the consequences of the international economic and financial crisis facing all countries of the Danube Region certainly is amongst the biggest challenges of all.

In 2009 all economies had to suffer declines of their economic output, some of them substantial. Even today the crisis is far from over. But the veritable macro-economic disaster in Eastern and South Eastern Europe predicted by many remained a mere doomsday speculation by some experts painting black.

We have kept a cool head even in difficult situations. Following the successful crisis management last year the time has now come for tackling the necessary structural reform steps.

The EU Strategy for the Danube Region must also provide a substantial contribution. After all, its so-called third pillar pursues the goal of providing new impetus for socio-economic development and strengthening connections between people and companies.

New Forms of Cooperation in Europe

What is the status quo of work on the EU Strategy for the Danube Region? What have we learnt from the preparatory phase of this strategy?

The work accomplished so far on this strategy has created innovative and original forms of cooperation between institutions and the civil society which in turn has pointed out new possibilities for the new Europe, for Brussels and other areas of the EU.

The Strategy for the Danube Region – and this is what is really interesting – is a novel type of interaction between the Commission and the Member States. By establishing and implementing macro-regional strategies the Commission does not act as a real initiator, but rather as a coordinator and “mediator“.
Selected Documents

Even though such strategies only affect a limited number of EU Member States they still must be approved by all. Finally, an added value must be demonstrable for the entire Union. This new type of interaction offers interesting institutional approaches, maybe also for other policy areas. It was used and, as we can say already, has proved successful.

New opportunities for cooperation are also opened up between the EU and third countries. During the conferences alone so many cooperations were agreed and set on track that it makes us look optimistically into the future.

This is specifically dictated simply by geography. Without Croatia and Serbia – to name just the most salient examples – a Danube Region Strategy could not be called such. The challenge is to integrate all countries into “decision shaping” as early as possible without affecting EU “decision making” processes.

We step into the future ever more united than before.

Too many partners, excessive differences?

This again is a special challenge for work on the Danube Region Strategy: the large number of partners involved – and their different objectives.

The strategy is rightly targeted at the Danube Region and not only the Danube River. Ideally, it should contribute to evenly live up to the needs and ideas of some of the richest and some of the poorest parts of Europe.

Not a simple task and one that needs to avoid extremes: neither must we press in anything that seems desirable in any shape or form, nor must the strategy be restricted to only a few symbolic projects.

And even more than in the past the strategy is also used as a platform for dealing with certain issues requiring political solutions.

Elaborating the Danube Region Strategy will hopefully also kick off solutions for lingering problems, such as borderlines along the Danube. This will be yet another added value of this strategy.

“Added value” generally is a key term of this strategy. It is the additional value created from cooperations between countries, regions, cities, organisations, authorities and people useful for either side. Cooperations that would not have come about without the strategy or at least not on such a scale.

All these premises mentioned are part of the draft action plan. Now we must energetically proceed from word to action.

Or in other words: from draft to project. Also to make an even better and more sustainable use than to date of the opportunities opened up by the historic turn in 1989.

Four Pillars of Cooperation

The Action Plan, the core piece of the strategy, provides for four major pillars.
The first pillar of the Action Plan is the “improvement of the sustainable networking of transport and energy” – consisting mainly of mobility, transport and energy. From an Austrian point-of-view, however, the relevance must first be measured with regard to the Danube itself.

The core issue here is to accommodate contradictory or seemingly contradictory objectives, particularly regarding the protection and use of the Danube as much as possible.

The data regarding the poor use of the Danube for freight transport are known. Further drops in the intensity of freight transport in 2009 make efforts for reversing this trend all the more urgent.

Waterways are more environmentally friendly than roads. The sensitivity of the river ecosystem and its banks are equally well known. The Danube as a “green waterway” – requiring elimination of the bottlenecks, but necessarily considering environmental protection, year-round navigability etc.

Radical interventions – including new dams – will not be the solution. And this is where the Austrian proposal of a sustainable and competitive transport system on the Danube comes in.

Since the beginning we have advocated an approach equally focused on both concerns – protection and use of the Danube. And in the future we must even better coordinate cooperations and investments. Austria can offer considerable know-how and act as a coordinator specifically in this field.

One very specific added value of the Strategy for the Danube Region is the coordination of transnational investments – as it makes little sense if similar investments are made in close proximity and then again none at all over hundreds of kilometres. It makes sense that national parks go beyond borders – fish and other animals after all do not care about national borders. Another big chapter dear to Austria’s heart is the use of renewable energies.

The second pillar, environmental protection, water resources and risk management, comprises the central questions of our lives – including the large fields of flood protection and waste water treatment.

This is the setting within which the countries of the Danube Region will support programmes already on the way – for instance as part of the International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River. It has not yet been long since reports about major flooding in Europe caused major concern.

I have already mentioned the third pillar – reinforcing socio-economic and human development – in a larger context earlier in my presentation. It aims to generally promote the improvement and strengthening of connections: connecting people inhabiting the Region; links between ideas and know-how, business and research – of innovations in all these fields. Supporting corporate competitiveness, information society, and much more.

This also includes an adequate position for intercultural and religious dialogue, for the role of the universities. Austria in its contribution gave special
attention to the areas of education, culture, and sustainable tourism. Much of this is found in the Action Plan.

This work also is unthinkable without the cooperation of the regions, cities and municipalities – “grassroots work” so to speak. The vivid commitment of the Austrian Federal Provinces for the Danube Strategy is exemplary.

The fourth pillar “Governance” has been included in the Action Plan at the solicitation of Austria supported by Germany and some other states. Strengthening the institutional capacity and cooperation between authorities and institutions seems to be essential. This also includes security aspects such as cooperation between customs and police.

Care must be given to avoid double tracking. Quite on the contrary – existing know-how should be used.

The Danube and the Black Sea

This year again Forum Alpbach asks the question, “In what direction will the global power game move today?” – The answer is obvious “Eastwards, towards Asia.“

For me this also means that our interest and commitment must not end at the Danube estuary. Even less so considering a quote by Peter Esterhazy, “In Vienna, the Danube for the first time thinks of the Black Sea“.

When dealing with the Danube area we also have to think of the Black Sea Region. Not in order to directly extend policies into that direction. But rather not to abruptly abort European projections at imaginary borders.

This naturally includes careful Austrian and European interest policies. It is this larger region – right into Central Asia – to which we will dedicate a conference in Vienna.

Ladies and gentlemen,

For today and the coming days I wish all participants that they will be able to take new insights and impressions back home from this glorious mountain scenery and experience new encounters in truly European spirit.

And who knows: maybe even the Alpbach brook, heading down towards the Inn, is already thinking of the Danube.
VII. Speech by Federal Minister Michael Spindelegger on the priorities of Austrian EU Policy, “Austria and Europe: Love at Second Sight?”, Vienna University for Economics and Business, 21 January 2010

Esteemed Rector Badelt,
Dear students,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Austria is in demand. In Europe and far beyond. We have no need to hide, from nobody. Our contribution is appreciated. This is something I can see time and again.

During our term as President of the UN Security Council, Secretary General Ban Ki-moon once addressed me during a meeting mentioning the excellent work of the Austrian commanders of UNDOF.

UNDOF is the blue beret mission on the Golan Heights, i.e. one of the world’s most sensitive regions. Its force totals more than 1,000 troops from seven nations. For two years it was commanded by Austrian Major General Wolfgang Jilke.

Second example is Bosnia. If we want to permanently stabilise the Balkans and guide them into the EU, Bosnia and Herzegovina with its complex structure definitely is a key state. And here again Austrian know-how is in high demand.

The High Representative, i.e. the civilian representative of the international community, is Austrian: Ambassador Valentin Inzko. And for a couple of weeks now the international troops of EUFOR Althea have also been under the command of Austrian Major General Bernhard Bair.

Two examples from two continents. Many others could be added. But these two alone very clearly demonstrate:

Even though the world keeps moving ever closer together and boundary between domestic and international policy are increasingly blurred and larger entities like the European Union are gaining in importance – a clear handwriting, a red-white-red identity is still shining brightly.

And: there is no reason for false modesty. The red-white-red contribution is valued and coveted. We can therefore be fully convinced of the high quality of Austrian European and foreign policy for the 21st century.

Ladies and gentlemen,
Against this background today I want to discuss the following issues:

1. The European Union itself: where do we as Austrians perceive a necessity for adjustment following the coming into force of the Lisbon Treaty, what is our contribution? How do we, in particular, see the relationship between the
European, national, provincial and municipal level? What can the EU contribute to a more humane market economy in spite of the economic crisis?

2. Some specific priorities of Austria’s European and foreign policy: how do we use the opportunities presented by the fall of the Iron Curtain? What is the future of the strategy for the Danube Area first initiated by us? What opportunities do we perceive for us in the Black Sea Region? What will we make from the Regional Partnership? And where do we perceive Austria as a hub for peace and dialogue in the 21st century?

Ladies and Gentlemen,

On 1 December last year the Lisbon Treaty entered into force. We thus completed a negotiating process begun eight years ago – shortly before the attacks of September 11 and on the eve of the major eastward Enlargement of the EU.

The goal of this reform process was clear: making the EU more efficient, modern and democratic. And we have also achieved this in many respects. Albeit via detours forced upon us by the negative referenda in France, the Netherlands and Ireland. The search for ever new compromises certainly cost much valuable time.

Now, however, the Treaty is in force and in Europe we are facing an upcoming change of paradigms: we have new rules, new institutions, and new heads at the top of these institutions. The new structure of Europe is not yet fully complete; the new Commission – in only a few days from now – must be approved by the European Parliament.

And then some odd irregularities, initial problems and friction losses still linger on.

With Herman Van Rompuy the European Council now has a President appointed for two-and-a-half years. It has now also formally become an organ of the EU legislative process.

But is it then compatible if its members, the Heads of State and Government, exactly now attempt to only convene in very small circles? Without any personnel link to its preparatory body, the General Affairs Council? Without the foreign ministers, even though these are responsible for preparing their decisions?

Here the last word certainly has not yet been spoken.

With Catherine Ashton the European Union now has a de facto foreign minister to be backed by a newly created European External Action Service.

But Catherine Ashton is more than just the voice and face of the European Union in the world, she also is Vice-President of the Commission. How is this compatible with her certainly extensive travel agenda? How will cooperation between her and the President of the European Council work out? And will not the other Commissioners jealously watch out so that the new External Action Service will not get excessive competences?
Since the fifties the Foreign Ministers were mainly in charge of the European project. They were the general managers of the unification project and in many respects also provided decisive impulses.

But is not this all over now? Has European policy now become the sole domain of the Heads of Government without any part to play for the foreign ministers and the national diplomatic services?

Many questions are still unanswered. There definitely is some catching up to do. And Austria is determined to also make an important contribution on this point. Just like in the past this will be formulated mainly by the Foreign Ministry. There will be a clear red-white-red foreign policy also in the future.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

For years we have successfully offered the European decision makers fora for informal, often also confidential discussion. Opportunities for concentrating on what is essential and relevant for the future, away from political everyday business.

This offer meets with appreciation: be it at the European Fora in Lech and Göttweig, be it at the Salzburg Trilogue, be it at Forum Alpbach. This year these formats will be of special relevance since a lot of questions are on the table.

Let us rule out all misunderstandings: this is not just about bringing actors together, group dynamic in a sort of European self-experience group.

This is all about an honest debate on the issue of at how many rotations per minute the engine of European Integration is meant to run. Who will drive it in the new European parallelogram of powers.

It is about clarifying whether the coming into force of the Lisbon Treaty is an endpoint. Or whether lots of unfinished business still lingers on in Europe.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

End point or “unfinished business“? This question also addresses very fundamental aspects, e.g. the relationship between the Union and its Member States.

The Lisbon Treaty addresses this very point – especially under the aspect of subsidiarity – in a number of new provisions. But this is not just about a demanding European question, but primarily an eminently political issue. Public discussion in Austria keeps showing this much time and again. And this is also what I experienced during my own Listening and Dialogue Tour.

What then is the EU’s general stance on its Member States and the smaller units in particular? Must its Internal Market, for example, regulate even its smallest angles? Do we need today’s regulation density for everything and everywhere? And: has Europe already learnt to again let go? Return competences back to the Member States?
The discussion on access to universities makes it all too clear that this is not an academic question. Without questioning the principle of the free choice of University it is still true that the run of German students on some study courses creates massive problems for our universities. Must the European Union really force a Member State to adopt access restrictions such as the numerus clausus? The free movement of students must not be used for questioning the principles of the national education system. What is needed here is a political sense of proportion and – especially also on the part of the EU institutions – the readiness to come up with differentiated solutions.

It would be in the new Commission’s own interest to here develop a valuable solution respecting the competences of the nation states. Any failure to do so may force us to draw a clear line and directly secure the Austrian freedom of choice in the EU Treaties.

You know that the discussion of subsidiarity bears an unmistakable red-white-red marking. Last-but-not-least the subsidiarity conference in Sankt Pölten during our EU Presidency in 2006 was an important impetus for many things, e.g. the quick and direct information of national parliaments by the European Commission.

As a federal member state Austria has a huge interest in preventing the subsidiarity debate from turning into a tranquiliser. The EU must consider it its mission to again fill these principles from Christian social ethics with life.

This is why in Austria we have always strived to very clearly define the principle of subsidiarity in treaties and in doing so to also expressly take into account the provincial and municipal level.

And we have succeeded. Now it is especially also the national parliaments who watch over the correct application of the principle of subsidiarity. The Lisbon Treaty for the first time provided them with the opportunity of issuing a subsidiarity complaint or as a last remedy proceed to take action before the European Court of Justice.

I cannot discuss details here, but one issue is of great importance to me: exercising control and participation rights also means assuming responsibility. Assuming co-responsibility for the European project – this increasingly also applies for the regional and the local level.

It is also the political decision makers in the countries and municipalities to whom citizens first turn with worries and concerns about Europe. Europe must not only be a concern for the Ministers of European Affairs alone. We will not succeed in rendering the EU more comprehensible in Austria, if provinces and municipalities systematically shy away from their responsibilities.

This is why I suggested establishing special EU officers on the Austrian municipal councils. They would be available locally as first contacts, pass on first information and refer questions.
I am hence pleased about the positive response to this proposal by many towns and municipalities. Over the next weeks at my Ministry we will first bring together Austrian “European municipal councillors” from the various Federal Provinces. I am grateful to the representation of the European Commission for supporting this initiative.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Lisbon Treaty also provides a catalogue of clear values and objectives. Under Article 3 of the new EU Treaty the EU mainly advocates – and I quote – “a highly competitive social market economy, aiming at full employment and social progress, and a high level of protection and improvement of the quality of the environment“.

A recognition and clear mandate for the social market economy certainly exists.

The EU thus clearly states that in the tightening global competition it will not renounce on specifically European achievements: solidarity, sustainability and the protection of the environment.

As a small continent with few resources Europe can only survive if it uses its specific strengths in an optimum manner – its human capital, the good educational level and creativity of its people.

Sustainable growth can only be achieved through innovation, research, education, training and knowledge. These are the true topics of the future.

Promoting education as a raw material, however, also requires open borders, the possibility of mutual encounters and exchange.

Students here, members of the Erasmus generation, might take this for granted. But it is not, not even in Europe. In the Balkans – most recently in Albania and in Kosovo –, I saw how difficult and expensive, and therefore impossible, exploring Europe can be for young people.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We are currently going through the worst economic crisis since the Second World War. Even though prosperity exists in Europe, it does not spread evenly. The middle class is shrinking. This is where we need to counteract.

This crisis must also be seen as an opportunity for actively changing the system towards a more humane market economy. Here we have an opportunity for actively working towards a more humane system.

We must already start thinking now what such a more humane market economy could look like after the crisis.

In Austria we are seeing a very frank discussion including creative contributions for a time bonus account and increased participation of staff:
– Time bonus accounts are innovative measures. The accumulated time from overtime hours could be used for childcare, further training or extended holidays.

– Not just managers but all staff in successful companies should receive bonuses. Fairness commands shares in profits for all.

The possibility of social advancement through achievements, making the best of one’s skills – this is what Europe has been standing for to date. And this is how it must remain. Possible career advancements through sound education, commitment and creativity and as such becoming successful members of this achievement-based society, are a central component of the European model of life.

A good education for citizens is the key to living in a free and open Europe, a society which also in the future must be characterised by the real chance for social advancement. Education is a necessary precondition for work, but also for life in general. Education is the basis for innovation in the economy and society. Education also is a central instrument for integrating diverse groups into a solidary structure.

I have hence started to launch a broad discussion on education taking into account all fields of education from kindergarten to school and adult education. We must find contemporary answers to the many questions posed by the field of “education”, since basic training and further education, after all, are directly related to employment.

Numerous European tests continuously study our educational system. There is hardly any other industrialised country in Europe where the socio-economic origin of fifteen-year-old students is that closely linked to educational success. In Austria a professor’s child is clearly more likely to obtain A-levels than an equally gifted child of a clerk. Immigrant children in urban conglomerations clearly less often obtain A-levels than children from classic Austrian families.

It suffices to visit secondary modern schools in Austrian urban centres and in almost every case the impression is that these are severely neglected remnants. Here we are wasting precious potential. The loss from wasted educational potentials adds up to billions of euros. Failed educational policy will prove expensive in the future and threaten Austria’s position as an economic and intellectual centre of Central Europe!

This is why last Sunday I said in the “Pressestunde” tv programme that the new middle school (“neue Mittelschule”) basically is an interesting option for upgrading secondary schools into a sort of “five-star-secondary-school”, i.e. this school type should be given certain perspectives. However, it must also be possible to again render secondary schools more attractive through new approaches so that all pupils enjoy best educational opportunities. But we must not spend another 30 years on organisational issues.
It is essential not to “lose” young people during their educational career. The principle of “no graduation without connection” must continue to stretch throughout our entire educational system. This requires creating fluent transition points and interfaces between primary schools and secondary and grammar schools. Complete permeability must be achieved. A strong focus on achievement, just as expected from school leavers in professional life from day one in their professional career, is the basis.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I see it as an essential task of Austrian European and foreign policy to guarantee a stable setting for these development possibilities.

An export-oriented economy like Austria at the heart of Europe depends on a stable, prospering neighbourhood. On open borders. On exchange and friendly relations with all our partners in Central Europe and on the Balkans.

In Austria itself we still have quite a lot to do if we want to fully use our opportunities offered by the new Europe. This mainly applies to relations with our neighbours.

In Europe Austria can only be an important and credible actor if it meets its international commitments.

These commitments include respect for the protection of ethnic minorities without prejudice and reservations. The commitments for the protection of Slovenian and Croatian minorities under international law in Article 7 of the Vienna State Treaty have not been completely fulfilled in one point, the issue of bilingual town signs in Carinthia.

For years the Constitutional Court has been handling complaints by individuals and motions by the Ombudsman, decisions no longer surprise anyone.

The time has long come for finding a constitutional solution to the town sign issue. In 2006 it had been almost achieved through a proposal by the then-Chancellor. This suggestion, based on a proposal by the “Carinthian consent group”, would be a good starting point for a new initiative.

It would be becoming for the Republic of Austria, if on the National Day 2010, 55 years after the State Treaty, the world and the European neighbours could learn that this major task had been fulfilled. This, however, requires the Chancellor, who is responsible, to submit a proposal by the summer. It will not be enough to shift responsibility to Carinthia. In Carinthia, however, those politically responsible are also challenged to finally take courage and dare step into the 21st century.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It was only the fall of the Iron Curtain that made it possible to duly use our economic potential.
Only EU enlargement – first our own accession and then that of our neighbours – gave us the security and foreseeability of equal rules.

And it is only the credible and tangible European perspective of all Balkan countries that creates stability and security last but not least needed by our companies in this neighbourhood region.

Let us not forget that prior to the latest major round of EU enlargement in 2004, Austria in particular harboured numerous concerns: that our economy might be overwhelmed by the accession of twelve new member states. That our labour market would be flooded.

These fears have largely proved unfounded. One thing must be clearly stated even during the current economic crisis, which expressly did not originate in Central and Eastern Europe: Enlargement has been and continues to be a win-win-situation for the old and the new members of the Union.

It is especially for the Austrian economy that the new EU member states have proven a valuable market for the future.

The EU has grown into an economic region of almost half a billion people, thus constituting the world’s biggest integrated economic area. The enlarged EU as an international actor has taken over leadership in many areas of global importance, e.g. the international economic and financial crisis and climate change.

Companies and citizens all throughout the entire EU have benefitted from Enlargement.

Austrian exports into the twelve new member states, for instance, during the five years preceding the economic crisis, i.e. from 2004 to 2008, rose to almost 21 billion euros, corresponding to an increase of roughly 60%.

I should like to particularly stress Austrian success in our neighbouring countries: since 1993, Austrian exports into our neighbouring countries the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary and Slovenia as well as our “cultural” neighbour Poland – i.e. the other countries of the regional partnership – have multiplied five times over.

Austria’s positive trade balance with the 12 new Member States has tripled in total since 2003.

The countries of Central and Eastern Europe are an important pillar of the Austrian export industry and will remain so also in the future: the direct neighbourhood to the new Member States has traditionally been a major competitive advantage for Austrian companies. And we were well advised in not letting ourselves be put off our commitment in the East. Quite the opposite: we will continue striving for further intensification. As an export nation it must be part of our answer during the economic crisis to continue our commitment in the East undeterred and trying to explore new markets.
Let us think of the numerous Austrian small and middle-sized companies significant of the Austrian economy and making the best use of their opportunities in the neighbouring new markets.

But it is not just international trade in the closer sense that has been a source of major benefits for the Austrian economy in recent years. The new Member States of Central and Eastern Europe are also playing a central role for Austrian direct investments.

Thanks to its early presence in the region Austria has established itself as a prime investor in many countries. Austria enjoys a top position and ranks number 1 for direct investments in countries like Slovenia, Bulgaria and Romania.

According to the Austrian National Bank, since 2004 about half of all active direct investments by Austria are made in Central and Eastern Europe where most investments were made in the banking and insurance industries as well as in the construction and energy sectors.

Looking at these numbers it becomes clear that Austrian companies have used the opportunities of their cross-border commitments in the emerging markets of Central and Eastern Europe.

The new Member States still need to invest heavily, particularly into environment, energy and transport infrastructures. For our companies, which in particular in construction and environmental technology are amongst the leaders in Europe, this continues to offer enormous opportunities.

Ladies and Gentleman,

Increasing wealth in our neighbourhood also means additional wealth for us. Stability in our neighbourhood means greater stability for us.

For this reason I particularly advocate EU accession of all Balkan countries. Croatia will hopefully join as early as next year. We then must not fall behind.

The signs are promising that 2010 will become the EU’s “Western Balkan Year”. The coming into force of the Lisbon Treaty and deblocking of negotiations with Croatia frees the way for the EU and puts the rapprochement of the region again back at the top of the EU agenda. Croatia is clearly geared towards EU membership and the door to further rapprochement is also open for the other partners on the Balkans.

Over the coming months I also expect the Stabilisation and Association Agreement with Serbia to be finally released for approval by the Member States. Austria at any rate will continue to sustainably support its partners on the Balkans on their way to Europe.

My vision for Europe: by 2020 we will have integrated all Western Balkan States into the EU.
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Future opportunities for our country – for me as Foreign Minister two regions outside our closest neighbourhood are of special importance in this respect: the Danube Region and the area of the Black Sea.

The Danube is the symbol for our reunited continent. The river links the old member states of the European Union with the new members. Both the springs as well as the mouth of the Danube today are located within the EU. Especially for us as Austrians the Danube Region is of special importance. We have a wealth of political, economic, cultural and, above all, human relations with this region. For us it also is a link with the Black Sea Region which, after overcoming the economic crisis, again is one of the world’s most dynamic growth markets.

Hence since taking office as Federal Minister in December 2008 I have made the Danube and Black Sea Region a particular focus of Austrian foreign policy. Also, together with my Romanian colleague I have strived to turn the particular promotion of the Danube Region into a priority of European policy. And we have succeeded in doing so. At its meeting in June 2009 the European Council mandated the Commission to produce an EU Strategy for the Danube Region before the end of 2010. This provides the basis for a more efficient and better coordinated Danube Region policy. The presently launched process will lead to a Commission proposal towards the end of 2010. Under the Hungarian EU Presidency, a Danube state par excellence, the European Council during the first half of 2011 shall then adopt the new EU Strategy for the Danube Region.

To me it is extremely important that this strategy will have an open design. Not only governmental institutions, but also economic actors, scientists, artists and the civil society shall be able to make a contribution. Their ideas and proposals are welcome.

The Strategy shall also comprise the practical cooperation with those Danube countries that are not or not yet EU members, because we are facing common challenges with regard to economic development, especially in the present crisis, with regard to transport volumes, demographic change, organised crime or environmental pollution, to name just a few examples. Last but not least, this applies also with regard to preserving the unique cultural treasures located along the Danube.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is important to me to also make the perspectives of our businesses in the Black Sea countries a priority of our foreign policy. Since the accession of Romania and Bulgaria in 2007 the EU stretches right to the Black Sea.

This is also why the European Union is challenged to intensely deal with its new neighbourhood on the shores of the Black Sea.
Our companies, however, had realised this economic potential already much earlier and have long started their activities in the Region. Last year the foreign trade volume with the riparian states of the Black Sea totalled 13 billion euros, while Austrian direct investments amounted to 5.2 billion euros despite the crisis.

The Region is also playing an increasingly relevant role in our energy supply. The gas crises of recent years have dramatically underlined the relevance of secure supplies.

Thanks to the sufficient storage facilities which were constructed at an early stage, but also thanks to the strong position of renewable energies like water power, Austria has been less hit than some of our neighbours. However, it is indispensable to closely analyse the issue of energy supply also on a European level.

Especially in the sensitive Black Sea Region our commitment must go far beyond purely economic aspects. The Black Sea Region is of importance for the sustainable stability of our entire continent. It is therefore only logical that Austria will further extend its presence in the Region. Later this year I shall open a new Austrian Embassy in Baku.

Relations around the Black Sea and the Caucasus are characterised by tensions and rivalries. In some cases such as Transnistria, Nagorno Karabakh or South Ossetia also by open conflicts.

We, Austria and the European Union in total, have a massive interest in sorting out these conflict spots. It is in our own interest to make sure that we share our borders with democratic states with stable institutions and structures based on the rule of law.

Trafficking in human beings, smuggling drugs and weapons, organised smuggling of people and corruption must be barred. What we expect from our partners is more than clear acknowledgments, it is real commitment.

Already in the past the European Union showed that with its institutions it can effectively accompany and accelerate reform processes. Efficient and sufficiently funded programmes – such as the European Neighbourhood Instrument – are available which we supplement through our national efforts.

Europe is challenged particularly in the Black Sea countries without any explicit accession perspective to work towards securing stability and prosperity through active neighbourhood policy.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Love at second sight? Let us approach Austria’s European and foreign policy for the 21st century with confidence and courage. As hardly any other country at all Austria has benefitted from European unification – in the economic, political, cultural and human dimensions.
Yes, questions and fears still linger on. My Dialogue Tour through the Austrian Federal Provinces shall offer an opportunity for addressing them openly. This Tour, however, time and again also shows that the situation for Austrians is more than just black and white. During the economic crisis Austrians saw for themselves what the EU has to offer: a protective cloak guarding them from greater harm.

In closing let me come straight to the point: a certain degree of scepticism remains. But maybe what Austrians feel for the EU, after all, is love at second sight.

VIII. Speech by Federal Minister Michael Spindelegger on the occasion of the Conference of European Imams and Religious Advisors in Vienna, 14 May 2010

Mr. Schakfeh,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my great pleasure to cordially welcome you to the opening of the third Conference of European Imams and Religious Advisors in Vienna. I am very pleased that this project, which was started with the support of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 2003, has been continued. Based upon the Graz Declaration of 2003 and the Vienna Declaration of 2006, the agenda of this year’s conference includes many more topics that are of crucial importance to Muslim citizens of Europe: the empowerment of women within Islam, prevention of violence, training of imams and teachers of Islamic Religious Education in public schools, and the interreligious and intercultural dialogue as a challenge as well as an opportunity. The variety of issues shows that all citizens of Europe regardless of their religious affiliations are facing similar challenges and that our opportunity to cope successfully with these challenges and to jointly develop solutions lies within dialogue.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I should like to address three points in relation to the Conference of European Imams in Vienna that appear to me to be of crucial importance:

- first, the role of religious communities in the construction of Europe
- second, the importance of religious freedom in Europe and worldwide
- and third, the importance of integration, democracy and participation as the cornerstones of the future of our societies in Europe.
Ladies and Gentlemen,
For the first time in history a formalised dialogue between the European Union and the churches and religious communities has been established in the Treaty of Lisbon. With the explicit recognition of their specific identities and their positive contribution to the process of European integration a substantial progress has been made. This commitment of the European Union to dialogue encompasses three important challenges:

First, a call to churches and religious communities to promote greater acceptance for the European Union, its goals and values within the population. A Europe of diversity is based on universal human rights and fundamental freedoms as well as on the commitment to the rule of law and democracy – no matter what religion we belong to, or whatever religious and cultural traditions may shape our lives. Thus, “dialogue” implies also to seek dialogue within one’s own religious community and to encourage members to take on a common European identity, based upon Europe’s respective values and principles.

Secondly, the dialogue among churches and religious communities should be strengthened. Without any doubt we need this dialogue with civil society to ensure social peace and a harmonious and constructive cooperation in Austria, in Europe and beyond its borders. When we speak of Islam, we also do have to speak of its diversity in orientation and representation: Especially in Europe, states and society face the challenge to talk to Muslim representatives whose forms of organisation and whose impact differ from each other. This Conference of European Imams and Religious Advisors should increasingly accommodate and embrace the diversity of voices, initiatives and organizations of Islam in Europe.

Thirdly, dialogue also implies the opportunity to learn from each other. There is a promising opportunity, to benefit from the historical, social and political experiences of others and instil those experiences into the development of our own communities and institutions in today’s Europe. The past has impressively shown the fruitful influence of dialogue among Jews, Christians and Muslims on the vast progress of the sciences in Europe, particularly between the 5th and 15th century. As such we are proud of the existing institutions and courses for the training of teachers of Islamic Religious Education in public schools and imams at the University of Vienna. We hope that the Austrian and European universities and educational facilities remain the centres of dialogue and continue to be strengthened in this regard.

Ladies and Gentlemen,
A second point crucial in connection with the Conference of European Imams and Religious Advisors is freedom of religion. The concept of the indivisibility of human rights links religious freedom closely to other fundamental rights and freedoms, such as freedom of expression and equal rights for men and women. The universal right to freely choose one’s faith and religion, to
exercise it undisturbed, to change it or even not to belong to any religion, was a right hard-fought for (even) in Europe.

Austria holds a unique position in Europe concerning the recognition of currently 14 churches and religious societies. Out of this recognition by law, a number of rights and privileges as well obligations emanating from the constitution and other relevant laws arise. Compared to the situation in other European countries, the Islamic Community in Austria has been privileged in particular with regard to Islamic religious instruction in public schools.

Religious freedom, however, I have to underline here, is not only relevant when it comes to rights, privileges and obligations. In many countries of the predominantly Muslim world, there is without any doubt a lively diversity of religions and cultures and a vivid coexistence and co-operation. But in many countries people still struggle for the full respect of human rights. It is a sad fact that the rule of law, pluralism and religious freedom are often entirely missing or disrespected and the situation of religious minorities is indeed very precarious.

Not only on a global level but particularly in Europe we must ask ourselves what we make of the religious freedom we have acquired. Do we use this freedom sufficiently in order to contribute to the further development and stability of Europe and to seek actively and constructively enough dialogue with other churches and communities?

I am convinced that we also need to understand the right to freedom of religion in Europe as an invitation to actively contribute to the shaping of the values and objectives of the European Union. We, therefore, need a clear commitment to democracy and pluralism, to equal rights of women and men, to the right to education and vocational training for all. Freedom of religion in Europe also implies the opportunity to develop theology and practical experience together with others and to further expand them with a view to strengthening the European common welfare.

Ladies and Gentlemen, let me raise a final point.

The challenge for all, be it to the majority society or to minority communities, is not to be found in the differences between Christianity or Islam, but in our dedication to democracy and participation. Driving forces of our societies are well-educated women and men and a committed youth. But the confidence and trust in politics of younger generations is decreasing. This trend makes them susceptible to simplistic answers to complex questions with regard to life and society. Young people, no matter of what religion or ethnic origin, have very similar expectations and objectives – they want education, jobs and a perspective for the future. We therefore must make use of cultural diversity as an economical and social potential.
I therefore hope that the imams and religious advisors in Europe see themselves as promoters and pilots for dialogue and integration, and assume their responsibility for a common European future in peace and prosperity. In this spirit I wish you productive discussions and a successful conference! Thank you!

IX. **Speech by Federal Minister Michael Spindelegger in the Park East Synagogue in New York, 25 September 2010**

Dear Rabbi Schneier,
Dear Congregants,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I very much appreciate the invitation to speak to you today. It gives me the opportunity to get to know this synagogue which is famous for the vital role it plays in the cultural, civic and spiritual life of New York City, and for its spiritual leader, Rabbi Arthur Schneier.

Rabbi Schneier, you have been a globally recognized leader on behalf of Jewish life and of universal values such as religious freedom, human rights and tolerance. You are a great symbol of the dialogue of religions and cultures and of efforts to reduce tensions across cultural divides to which I myself am profoundly committed. It is a great honour, indeed, to be invited to address your congregation.

As most of you are surely aware, Rabbi Schneier was born in Austria and spent part of his childhood there before he was forced into emigration in 1938. At that time, he had to flee from a country which had reached the lowest point of its history. Re-grettably, post-war Austria started to face the full extent of the involvement of Austrians in the Holocaust far too late.

It is true that Austria has a long tradition of providing a safe transit for Jews from the Soviet Union and Iran on their way to freedom. But it is also true that it took until the 1990s for high-ranking members of the Austrian Government to clearly acknowledge that Austrians were not only victims of National Socialism but also perpetrators. Too many people in Austria backed the Nazi-regime and many of the worst henchmen of the regime were Austrians.

As a consequence of this change of paradigm, a series of new programs were introduced to address the remaining open questions related to the Holocaust era.

Much credit must be given to the Washington Agreement of 2001 on restitution and compensation which was signed by the Austrian and United States Governments, in addition to other interested parties. In implementing this Agreement, the General Settlement Fund Law of 2001 created the legal basis
for dealing with the still-open financial claims of Holocaust victims as well as for restitution of state property to the Jewish community.

We are fully aware that no financial measure can ever make up for the terrible loss and the suffering Jews in Austria had to go through. They can never be more than a symbolic gesture, but they are part of our endeavour to reach out to the Jewish communities worldwide.

The Austria will continue to pursue this policy. The current government has adopted several measures, such as a contribution of 20 Million Euros for the restoration and maintenance of Jewish cemeteries in Austria and a social benefits package which, among other things, extended benefits to Austrian Jews living abroad. Furthermore, art restitution legislation was introduced which is exemplary on a world-wide scale. It is with such new initiatives that Austria assumed a leading role among European countries in the field of restitution and compensation.

The Austrian measures on behalf of Holocaust victims have received international recognition, most recently by Ambassador Stuart Eizenstat, who was both the Clinton and the Bush Administrations’ leader on Holocaust-Era restitution issues.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

let me now turn to a topic which both Rabbi Schneier and I consider to be of the utmost importance: the Dialogue of Cultures and Religions. Looking back in history we had to learn important lessons for the future with regard to tolerance, respect, dignity and equal rights of all human beings, regardless of their ethnic or religious backgrounds.

Let me stress two issues here:

First, Austria believes that the Dialogue of Cultures and Religions is an important instrument to face and deal with such challenges as increasing social diversity and integration of all citizens in a stable democratic framework. Today the dialogue between religions and cultures is a regular topic on the international agenda with the Alliance of Civilizations as a central platform. Austria is proud to host the Fifth Annual Forum of the Alliance of Civilisations in Vienna in 2013.

Second, we believe that foreign policy has an important role to play in tackling issues of migration, integration, participation and fostering more inclusive societies. Therefore, Austria seeks an open dialogue and closer co-operation with other countries in this field, in particular with regard to Muslim communities.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

due to our historic experience we are convinced that we have a special obligation to fight against violence, for peace and justice, human rights and the rule of law. These are also priorities of Austria’s action within the European
Union and as a non-permanent member of the Security Council for the years 2009 and 2010.

One of my very first trips as Foreign Minister of Austria took me to Israel in December 2008. I thus had the opportunity to gain a fuller understanding of the Israeli security concerns. Just a few weeks later, during our very first days on the Security Council we were confronted with the conflict in Gaza. Let me stress: We respected the right of the government of Israel to defend its population against rocket attacks from Gaza, but we were shocked and concerned by the plight of so many innocent Palestinian civilians in Gaza, in particular women and children.

Today the direct talks between Israelis and Palestinians offer the first glimmer of hope in years that peace might actually be reached. We therefore strongly support the efforts undertaken by President Obama and encourage all parties to focus on the only viable longer term objective: a two-state solution based on a State of Israel within secure borders, living in peace with a future State of Palestine and the entire Arab world.

Ladies and Gentlemen,
hundred years ago Vienna was a most dynamic cultural and intellectual centre, in particular also because of the contributions of outstanding Jewish writers, artists and intellectuals such as Arthur Schnitzler, Arnold Schönberg, Gustav Mahler, Ludwig Wittgenstein and Sigmund Freud. Thanks to Theodor Herzl, Vienna was even the place where the idea of the new Israel was born. This “laboratory of modernity” was destroyed through the crimes of National Socialism and the Holocaust – and lost forever.

In recent times, we have nonetheless witnessed a remarkable revival of Jewish life in Vienna. The new campus of the Jewish Community in Vienna is now in full operation. Next to the Maimonides Center a nursing home and a home for the elderly, a school including a kindergarten and the Hakoah Sport Center are located on the campus. The opening of the entire campus is an encouraging show of strength by the Jewish Community of Vienna. Let me assure you that my Ministry will continue to cooperate closely with the Jewish Community in helping to strengthen Jewish life in Vienna as well as in all of Austria.

Dear Rabbi Schneier,
you were in Vienna just a few months ago to receive a high award from the hands of the Mayor of Vienna. I am sure I will have the pleasure of seeing you there again in the not too distant future as you were gracious enough to maintain contact with the city of your birth.

Please consider Vienna your second home, and keep in mind that we will gladly cooperate whenever you think Vienna is an appropriate venue for one of your future projects.

May the New Year bring peace, health and prosperity to all of you.
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