

Article Summaries

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The High Commissioner on National Minorities after 15 years: Achievements, challenges and promises, Victor-Yves Ghebali

The paper was written upon the request of the Office of the High Commissioner on National Minorities for an in-house seminar on the past achievements and future challenges of the HCNM in October last year. The seminar was organized on the occasion of the 15-year anniversary of the HCNM.

The ethical challenges of implementing counterterrorism measures and the role of the OSCE, Bibi van Ginkel and Steven Westervelt

The United Nations established a counterterrorism mechanism in the form of the Counterterrorism Committee when it adopted Security Council Resolution 1373 (2001). The Committee has so far worked with regional organizations and individual states in capacity building efforts to augment local counterterrorism abilities. However, ethical bottlenecks remain. The problem of ethics arises when laws lack legitimacy regarding criminality and state power and when they diverge from the rule of law and good governance. Regional organizations are keenly placed to ensure that states adopt legitimate counterterrorism measures, thus avoiding ethical bottlenecks. By working with states to maintain the moral high ground, regional organizations such as the OSCE can prevent unnecessary compromises between human rights and security.

Statelessness: A 21st century challenge for Europe, Laura van Waas

Over the past decade, a deepening understanding of the gravity of the problem of statelessness, as well as the growing realisation that the international legal framework relating to statelessness exhibits numerous shortcomings, has made it clear that this issue warrants further engagement by the international community. This article looks more closely at statelessness as a fundamental challenge for Europe in the twenty-first century. The piece discusses why finding an appropriate response to statelessness can be deemed imperative, taking into account both human rights and human security considerations. To provide an impression of current opportunities for addressing statelessness, some of the strengths and limitations of the existing international legal framework relating to statelessness are presented. Finally, the article discusses a number of recent developments, in particular in Europe, which may open new avenues for meeting the challenge of statelessness in the future.

Is this any way to run an organization? Reflection on OSCE employment policies, Vladimir D. Shkolnikov

This article examines a number of consequences of OSCE's employment policies. The article seeks to describe the challenges posed by the non-career nature of service in the OSCE and how these employment policies contribute to the overall decline of the organization's reputation and capacity. It takes a managerial rather than political perspective in analyzing some negative consequences of the non-career employment rules. In particular, it looks at detrimental effects of the current policy on the OSCE's reputation, staff motivation, institutional memory, and dealing with problem staff. The article notes technical measures that could be taken to address the shortcomings of the existing policy, while at the same time recognizing the political realities of limited prospects for a consensus emerging on this issue. The result is the decline in the OSCE's reputation and capacity.

Conferring human rights awards and prizes: Feeding the PR machine or a launching pad for change?, Jim Loughran

Almost every day there is media coverage of an international prize or award. The issues highlighted range from the advancement of science to excellence in artistic endeavour to human rights. This article looks at the proliferation of human rights prizes and asks searching questions about who really benefits from this huge investment of time and money. The article explores the delicate balance between the needs of international organisations to build their media profile and attract funders and the needs of the organisation or individual on the ground for whom the winning of an international award can be a ground breaking opportunity.

The European Commission and post-conflict rehabilitation in Georgia —lessons learned, Maria van Ruiten

The article gives an overview of the European Commission's post-conflict economic rehabilitation programmes in Georgia. It describes the different economic reconstruction projects in Abkhazia and South Ossetia and their successes and setbacks in the period of 1998 to 2008 and analyses lessons learned of the EC's post-conflict assistance programmes from the perspective of conflict transformation in Georgia.








































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Security and Human Rights (formerly Helsinki Monitor) is a journal devoted to issues inspired by the work and principles of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). It looks at the challenge of building security through cooperation across the northern hemisphere, from Vancouver to Vladivostok, as well as how this experience can be applied to other parts of the world. It aims to stimulate thinking on the question of protecting and promoting human rights in a world faced with serious threats to security.

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