



# Foreword

This year, the HCNA turns 25. What have we accomplished during the last quarter of a century? And what are our priorities and goals today? This photo book includes previously unpublished archive pictures and will guide you through the HCNA's impressive legacy and diverse activities. Our ultimate goal is to ensure that people and communities live together in harmony, mutual respect and peace.

Robert Danner

The Hague, 24 October 2018

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# Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe High Commissioner on National Minorities

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The OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities (HCNM) is an autonomous institution of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), a regional security organization which comprises 57 participating States. Established in 1992, the HCNM identifies and addresses tensions around national minority issues which may lead to conflict.





All friends together: Osh (Kyrgyzstan) celebrates the many colours of diversity at the award ceremony of the “Colours of Friendship” drawing competition, held by the HCNM-supported Centre for Multilingual and Multicultural Education, June 2008. (OSCE/Dildora Khamidova)

# The High Commissioners

- 6 The High Commissioner must be an “eminent international personality with long-standing relevant experience from whom an impartial performance of the function may be expected”. This exacting standard requires a unanimous decision by all 57 participating States.

**Max van der Stoel** was appointed as the first High Commissioner in 1992.

A prominent Dutch statesman and former Minister of Foreign Affairs, he held the mandate until 2001. His pioneering work shaped the character of the institution and remains an important reference point in the area of conflict prevention.



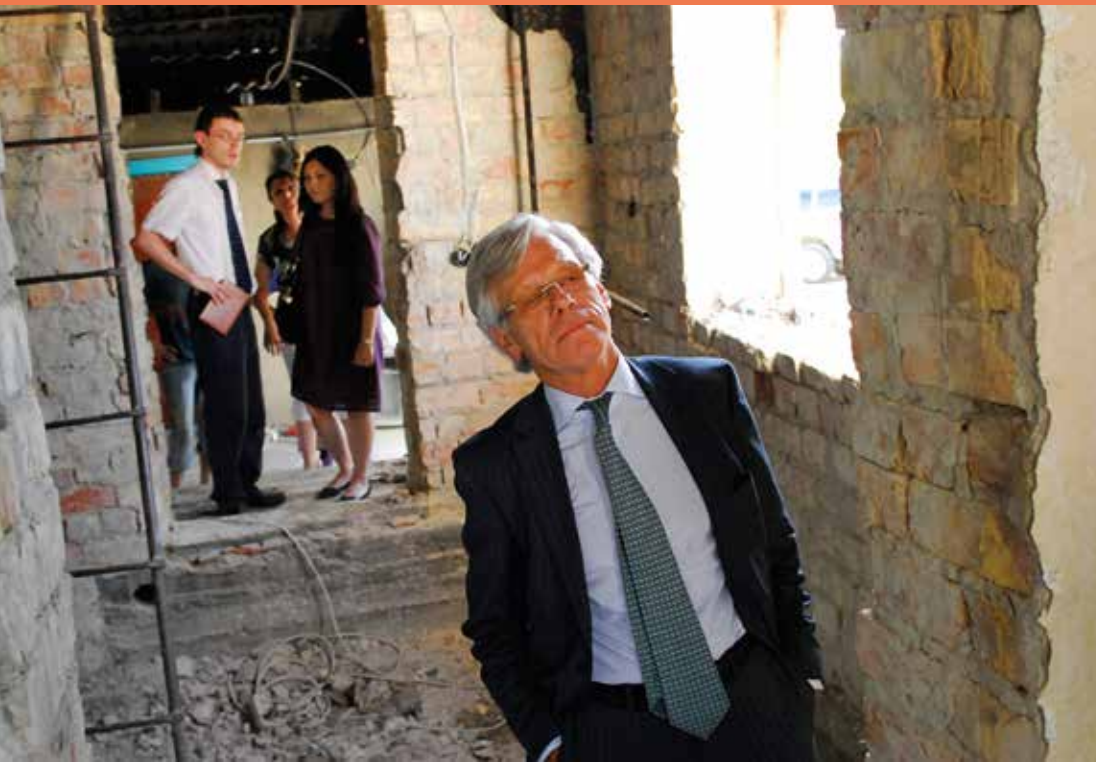
**Max van der Stoep,**  
first OSCE High Commissioner  
on National Minorities.

*Photo of Max van der Stoep  
(Hollandse Hoogte, Joost van den Broek)*



Rolf Ekéus (R) during  
a visit to Kyrgyzstan,  
March 2005. (OSCE)

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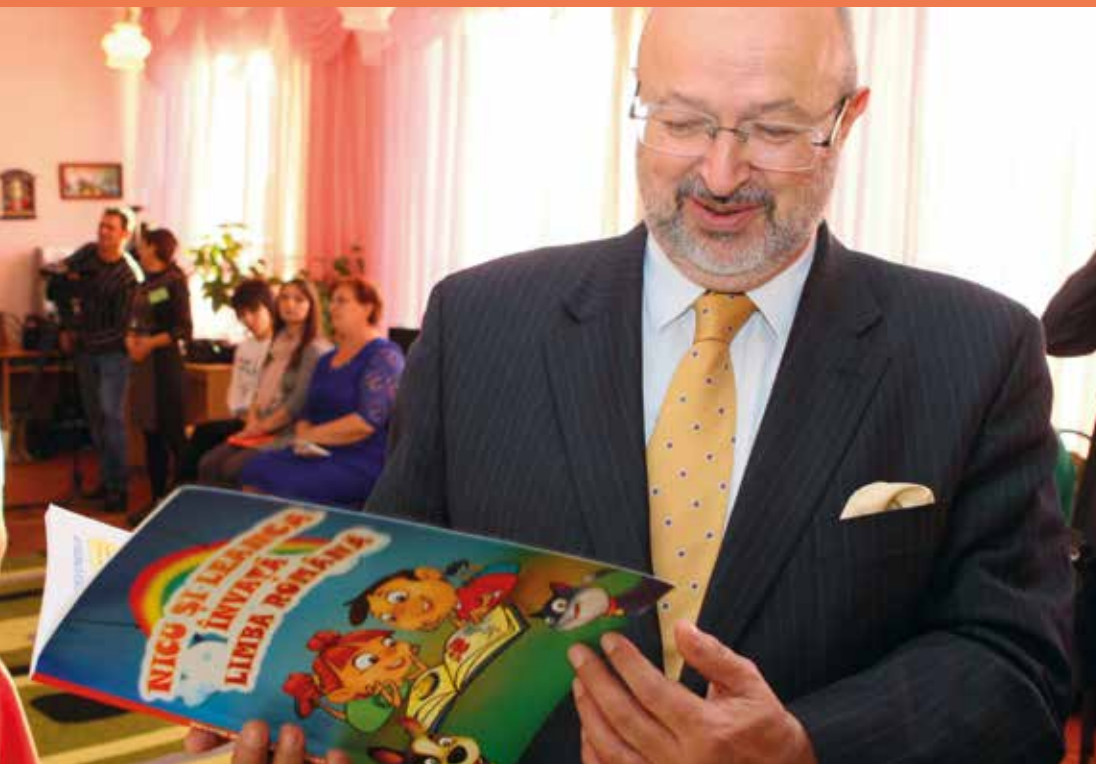
Knut Vollebæk (R)  
visits looted and burned  
houses in Maevka,  
Kyrgyzstan, July 2010.  
(OSCE/Alimjan Jorobaev)





Astrid Thors (R) at the groundbreaking ceremony for the Bujanovac Department of the University of Novi Sad, Serbia, February 2015. (OSCE/Milan Obradovic)

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Lamberto Zannier during a visit to a bilingual kindergarten, Comrat, Moldova, November 2017. (OSCE/Lurie Foca)

# In the field

10 The High Commissioner and HCNM advisers travel regularly throughout the OSCE area, meeting directly with government and national minority representatives, and others. The High Commissioner works independently and impartially and may collect information regarding the situation of national minorities and the role of different parties involved in a dispute from any source.





Voices of the future. High Commissioner Astrid Thors speaks with young people during a visit to Moldova, April 2014. (Liubomir Turcanu)



High Commissioner Knut Vollebæk during a five-day visit to Kosovo\*, January 2008. (OSCE)

\* All references to Kosovo, whether to the territory, institutions or population, in this text should be understood in full compliance with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244.



High Commissioner Lamberto Zannier in Uzbekistan, April 2018. (OSCE)

# Early warning

- 14 The High Commissioner's work is not always visible to the public. Serious disputes which may lead to conflict are often best addressed through "quiet diplomacy". If a dispute rapidly escalates, the High Commissioner can issue a formal "early warning", which triggers an emergency meeting of the OSCE participating States.





The Kyrgyz-Uzbek University of People's Friendship in Jalal-Abad region (Kyrgyzstan) was looted and burned during the events of 2010. (OSCE/Eric Gourlan)

# Participation

16 The High Commissioner supports the OSCE participating States in their work to promote the effective participation of national minorities in public affairs and cultural, social and economic life. The effective participation of all citizens is essential for a peaceful and democratic society.







The High Commissioner promotes the use of ethnically-mixed police teams for patrolling multi-ethnic areas, Osh, Kyrgyzstan, February 2006. (OSCE)



Inside the polling station: local residents vote in Ukraine, March 2006. (OSCE)



A Roma woman voting in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, April 2004. (OSCE/ODIHR)

# Education

20 The manner in which education is provided or regulated by governments can impact the stability of diverse societies. The High Commissioner supports countries with their efforts to develop integrated education policies, balancing the needs of national minorities with measures that foster social cohesion.





Running late: the Uzbek-Kyrgyz mixed school in Jalal-  
Abad, Kyrgyzstan, 2014. (OSCE/Eric Gurlan)



South Eastern European University, also known as Max van der Stoel university, has promoted integrated education since 2001, Tetovo, former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. (OSCE)



Students from diverse communities meet High Commissioner Knut Vollebæk during his visit to the Bujanovac Department of the Subotica Faculty of Economics, Serbia, March 2012. (OSCE/Milan Obradovic)

# Language

24 Language is a key component of identity. The High Commissioner recommends that national minorities' linguistic rights are respected, while the learning of the state language is also promoted. This balanced approach reduces conflict potential and promotes a genuine sense of belonging for all communities.







ქართლად დასახლებულ  
სომეხთა დასახლება  
სადაც უკეთესი  
სამსახური უნდა



Georgian classes for ethnic Armenians in Georgia's Javakheti region to promote better integration are funded by the High Commissioner, Akhalkalaki, Georgia, December 2006. (OSCE/Gia Chkhatarashvili)



Students participate in the first Olympiad on multilingualism in Central Asia that focuses on mother tongues as well as State, official and foreign languages, Kazakhstan, May 2017. (OSCE/Igor Khlebnikov)



High Commissioner Astrid Thors (L) attends a State-language training course in Gagauzia, Moldova, November 2013. (OSCE/Igor Schimbator)

# Media

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The media can play a positive role in both promoting the participation of national minorities in the life of society and by shaping the perception of national minorities by the majority. The High Commissioner encourages governments to foster such conditions.





The High Commissioner helps provide the ethnic Armenian population of Georgia's Javakheti region with information in Armenian in order to increase the participation of national minorities in the life of wider society. Akhalkalaki, Georgia, December 2006. (OSCE/Gia Chkhatarashvili)





At the epicentre of Georgian TV. Members of different ethnic groups discuss their issues on national TV with political leaders, Tbilisi, Georgia, May 2016. (OSCE)

# International co-operation

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As an autonomous institution, the HCNM works in partnership with other OSCE structures, such as the Secretariat, the Parliamentary Assembly, the field operations, the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) and the Representative on Freedom of the Media (RFoM). It co-operates with the United Nations and its agencies, the Council of Europe and its affiliates, and other international and regional organizations.







High Commissioner Knut Vollebæk in a camp for Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) run by the UNHCR near Gori, Georgia, September 2008.  
*(OSCE/Simon Short)*



High Commissioner Lamberto Zannier at the Council of Europe Conference on the 20th Anniversary of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, Strasbourg, France, June 2018. (OSCE)



Presenting the new OSCE-UNHCR Handbook on Statelessness in the OSCE Area: International Standards and Good Practices, Vienna, March 2017. (OSCE/Micky Kroell)

# Bridge builders

The HCNM partners with many committed individuals and institutions working to improve the position of national minorities and promote social cohesion in the OSCE region. The Max van der Stoep award, sponsored by the Government of the Netherlands and named in honour of the first High Commissioner, recognizes outstanding contributions in this area. It is presented jointly by the HCNM and the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands on a biennial basis.





The office of the Association for Historical Dialogue and Research (AHDR) is located in the United Nations Buffer Zone. This Cyprus-based NGO won the 2016 Max van der Stoep Award for its work on history teaching as a tool for reconciliation in Cyprus, September 2016. (*Old Nicosia Revealed*)



High school students from Jajce, who protested against ethnic segregation at schools in Bosnia and Herzegovina, won the 2018 Max van der Stoel Award, July 2018. (OSCE)

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The 2011 Max van der Stoel Award was presented to the Nansen Dialogue Centre Skopje for its work to promote integrated education in an area affected by the 2001 conflict. (Nansen Dialogue Centre Skopje)



Spravedlivost, an NGO based in Jalal-Abad in Kyrgyzstan, was named as the 2014 winner of the Max van der Stoel Award, September 2014. (OSCE/Eric Gurlan)

# Recommendations and guidelines

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The High Commissioner issues thematic recommendations and guidelines, highlighting best practices related to the integration of diverse societies, national minorities in inter-State relations, access to justice, and linguistic and education rights. To address specific issues, the High Commissioner provides confidential recommendations to the OSCE participating States.







High Commissioner Lamberto Zannier presents the Graz Recommendations on Access to Justice and National Minorities, Graz, Austria, November 2017. (OSCE/Foto Fischer)

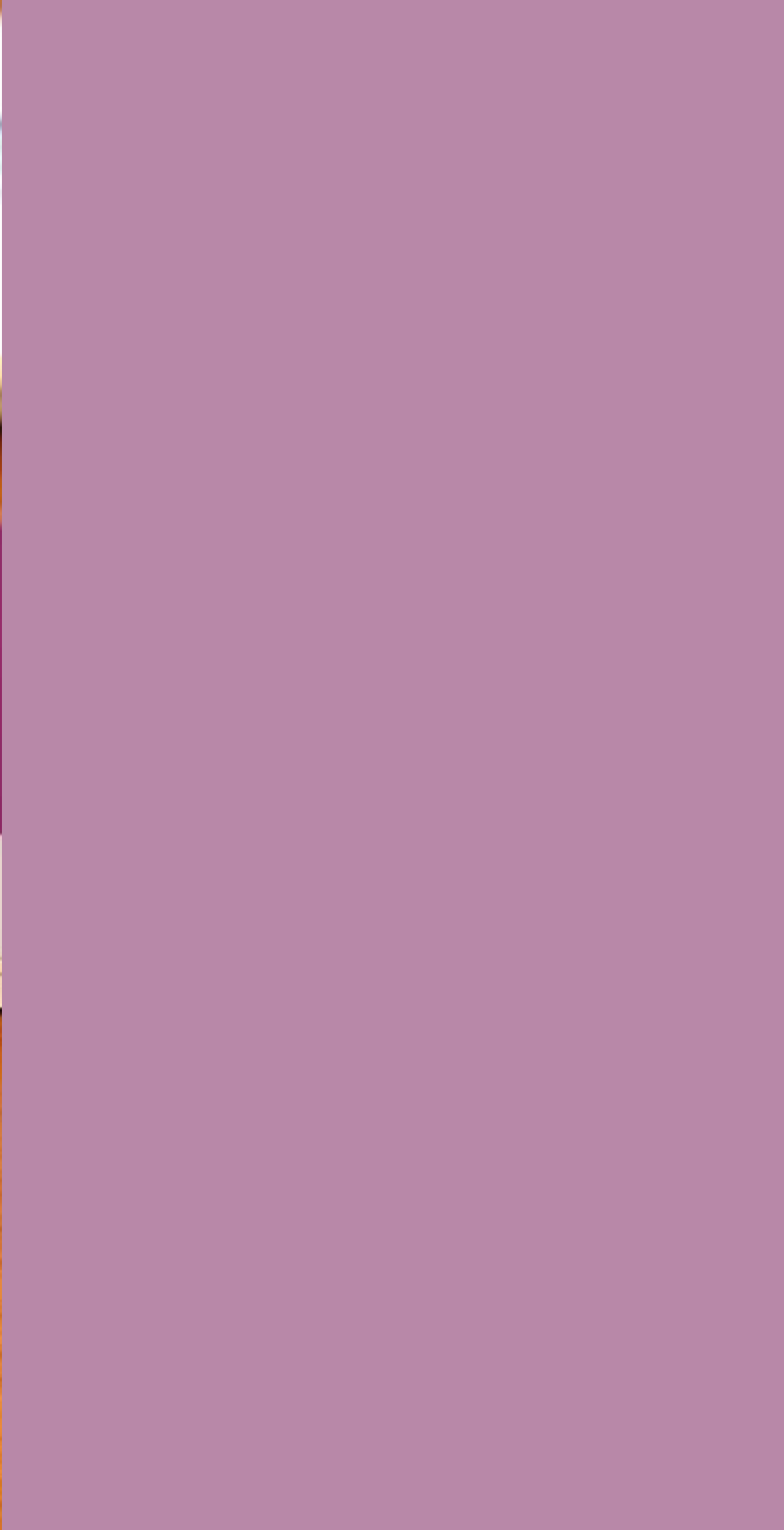


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# Thematic Recommendations and Guidelines



The Hague  
Recommendations  
regarding the Education  
Rights of National  
Minorities (1996)



Guidelines on the Use of  
Minority Languages in the  
Broadcast Media (2003)



The Ljubljana Guidelines  
on Integration of Diverse  
Societies (2012)



The Oslo  
Recommendations  
regarding the Linguistic  
Rights of National  
Minorities (1998)



Recommendations on  
Policing in Multi-Ethnic  
Societies (2006)



The Graz  
Recommendations on  
Access to Justice and  
National Minorities  
(2017)



The Lund  
Recommendations on  
the Effective Participation  
of National Minorities in  
Public Life (1999)



The Bolzano/Bozen  
Recommendations on  
National Minorities in  
Inter-State Relations  
(2008)

Visit [www.osce.org/hcnm/thematic-recommendations-and-guidelines](http://www.osce.org/hcnm/thematic-recommendations-and-guidelines) to download PDFs or order print copies of the above Recommendations and Guidelines.

All publications by the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities can be accessed at [www.osce.org/hcnm/publications](http://www.osce.org/hcnm/publications)



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