

area (RS) to issue documents to returning minorities; in the Bihac area and in Bosnian Croat-controlled Drvar, the destruction of Serb-owned property; in Stolac, where Bosniaks attempted to return, harassment and physical attacks and the destruction of Bosniak-owned houses; murders following ongoing harassment of Serb returnees and cases of arson; violations of freedom of religion affecting both Muslims and Catholics; and attacks on the personal security of both Serbs and Bosniaks, including beatings and assaults.

General developments in Bosnia and Herzegovina are noted as having included: agreement on a system of common licence plates, noting that the three armies in Bosnia and Herzegovina will have to abide by the agreement or risk having their vehicles seized by the international Stabilization Force (SFOR); the fact that, on the occasion of Bajram festivities, the overall situation was peaceful and traditional visits to cemeteries occurred without trouble; ongoing investigations into places of "hidden detention"; efforts to re-establish Sarajevo as a multi-ethnic, open and tolerant city, related to facilitation of returns by refugees and internally displaced persons and the establishment of the Commission on Returns to Sarajevo; adoption of a series of property laws by the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (B&H) aimed at supporting the return of refugees; establishment of a new bus line between Banja Luka (RS) and Bihac (Fed.); adopting procedures to ensure a unified railway service throughout B&H and an air-link between the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) and the RS; resumption of exhumations across the Inter-Entity Boundary Line (IEBL); and creation of multi-ethnic police forces, noting that serious problems continue in this area.

The activities of the Field Operation are noted as having included: coordinating the work of international organizations on criminal justice reform; continuing efforts to establish a mechanism for inter-entity judicial cooperation and courts in the Herzegovina and Neretva Canton; monitoring of sensitive trials, in particular war-crimes trials in national courts; drafting a report on the procedures for appointment of judges; drafting implementing legislation at both the Entity and State level to ensure enforcement of decisions by the Dayton-created Commission on Human Rights and the Property Commission; efforts to address the question of funding for national human rights institutions, noting that sufficient funding is an absolute prerequisite for the effective functioning of the institutions and there is currently no mechanism to ensure that such funding takes place; interventions in cases before the human rights institutions where there has been no compliance with their decisions and recommendations; preparing a report on non-governmental organizations in the country; and, judicial reform in Republika Srpska.

The work of the Field Operation also concentrated on, *inter alia*: development of gender-specific training for local police forces, especially for cases of violence against women and systematic collection and analysis of information on gender-based violence; initiation of a new pro-

ject aimed at compiling all available information about locations of mass graves and surface remains, and creating a data base to streamline the process of exhumations; preparation of a report on the procedures for the election and appointment of judges; preparation of a formal agreement on Inter-Entity Judicial Cooperation that addresses the most urgent inter-entity issues and, among other provisions, seeks to establish substantive improvement regarding witness protection; participation in two working groups to deal with the problem of discrimination in education and promotion of democratic values in the education system; ongoing efforts to resolve the problem of missing persons; continuing efforts to amend the property laws in the RS and to start implementation of the new property laws in the Federation; participation in an initiative to create a consolidated framework for Returnee Monitoring; preparations for incorporating a gender dimension into the training of both the International Police Task Force and local police; participation in preliminary discussions related to the establishment of a Human Rights Centre in Banja Luka; continuing efforts to address substantively the issue of, and problems arising from, domestic violence against women; participation in discussions on legal strategies to combat corruption; and chairing the expert team to draft a new Criminal Code and Criminal Procedure Code for the RS.



BULGARIA

Date of admission to UN: 14 December 1955.

TREATIES: RATIFICATIONS AND RESERVATIONS

Land and People: Bulgaria has submitted a core document (HRI/CORE/1/Add.81) for use by the treaty bodies. The report prepared by the government contains demographic and statistical data as well as a brief historical overview, and information on the general political structure and the general legal framework for the protection of human rights. There is no separate law or charter of human rights in Bulgaria. Chapter II of the 1991 Constitution follows the logic and methodology of the International Covenants on Human Rights and in many cases quotes their texts verbatim. The human rights provisions of the Constitution are irrevocable, directly enforceable, and may be applied even without the adoption of any particular legislation.

Bulgarian legislation does not provide either for any specialized institution or authority (including a judicial one) to monitor human rights observance, nor for any judicial or administrative procedure for the protection of the rights of citizens. Violations and complaints are handled through general civil, penal and administrative procedures and protection of rights is the constitutional duty of the judicial and other national and local state authori-