



KOSOVO HUMANITARIAN UPDATE

OFFICE OF THE DSRSG FOR HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS

ISSUE No. 20 Friday, 28 January 2000

1. GENERAL DEVELOPMENTS

1.1: UNHCR mourns death of David Riley:

The head of UNCHR, Kosovo, David Riley, died in his sleep on 20 January, shocking UNHCR, the international community and Kosovars. David Riley was instrumental in establishing the complex UNHCR emergency operation in Kosovo since re-entry in mid-June. He was a successful and dedicated professional with a warm sense of humour. David will be greatly missed in the Balkans.

A book of condolences is available at the HCIC for people to sign. It will be sent to David's wife and son. In addition, a David Riley Memorial Fund in Kosovo has been established. Money collected will be used to support some of the most needy families in Kosovo, and will be guided by the same professionalism and humanity around which David wove his life.

1.2: Positive developments within the IAC:

The Interim Administrative Council was established under regulation 2000/1 (15 January 2000) which outlines joint administration by UNMIK and the main political players in Kosovo. The IAC is chaired by Dr. Bernard Kouchner and comprises of Hashim Thaci, Ibrahim Rugova, Rexhep Qosja, each of the four Deputy SRSGs, Dennis McNamara (in observer capacity), Tom Keonnigs, Daan Everts and Joly Dixon.

Recent talks with the Serb community have been positive and it is hoped that a representative of the Serb community will join the IAC shortly. As yet, the Serbian seat in the IAC has remained vacant.

The IAC defines policy and governs the 19 administrative departments that have been agreed. (For details of the 19 departments see Update No.

19) Each department is co-chaired by UNMIK and Kosovars. To date, heads have been appointed to 15 of the 19 departments.

The Council members have been meeting regularly since mid-January. As of 31 January the Council and the Administrative Departments will officially become operational and all current parallel structures will cease to exist. For the humanitarian community this is likely to mean closer contacts with local administrations, particularly at the municipal level.

1.3: Kosovo Protection Corps sworn in:

During a ceremony attended by Dr. Kouchner, General Klaus Reinhardt, Commander of KFOR and Mr. Javier Solana, European High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy, 44 top leaders of the KPC (TMK in Albanian) were sworn in on 21 January. The KPC consists of 3,000 active members and 2,000 reservists. One of their tasks is the reconstruction of Kosovo and to this end they are available to assist NGOs and other agencies by providing additional human resources.

Agencies who wish to utilise KPC personnel should contact Colonel Peter Moitzi at the HCIC.

Tel 038-549-168/9

1.4 Second round of financial social welfare payments:

UNMIK will begin distributing the second round of payments under the Emergency Financial Assistance Programme in February. The same categories are eligible for assistance and payment will cover a four-month period, January – April 2000. People who did not receive assistance in 1999 but fit into the categories can apply for assistance through their local Centre for Social Work.

This is the final payment envisaged as this emergency programme is replaced by more

permanent social welfare structures established by UNMIK. (For further information about social welfare and the Centres for Social Work, please see the focus section on page 7)

1.5 First commercial bank opens: The Micro Enterprise Bank, the first licensed bank in Kosovo, opened in Pristina on 24 January. The bank, a branch of which will soon be opening in Prizren, offers a range of services including domestic and international money transfers. (MEB, Rr. Nena Tereze, Pristina. Tel 549-624 and 549-637)

1.6 NGOs urged to register: To date, 80 international NGOs and 80 national NGOs have applied for registration with UNMIK. Some 50 international NGOs have received certification. Almost all of applied for and have received public benefit status. Two national NGOs have so far been recognised.

As noted in Update No. 19, UNMIK customs have announced that they will begin to levy customs duties on NGOs and other agencies that do not have public benefit status in mid-February. According to current NGO lists at the Humanitarian Community Information Centre (HCIC) there are approximately 300 NGOs operating in Kosovo. Therefore, those NGOs who have not registered are encouraged to do so in order that they can operate as legal entities in Kosovo and avoid any unnecessary customs duties.

Forms and guidelines for registration are available from the UNMIK NGO Liaison Unit (Room N408 at the UNMIK Government Building; tel: 500-223 ext. 5540) and from the Humanitarian Community Information Centre in Pristina. NGOs based outside of Pristina can obtain forms and information at UNMIK regional centers located in Mitrovica, Pec, Djakovica, and Prizren.

2. SECURITY

2.1 Level of violence unacceptable: Dr. Kouchner told the Interim Administrative Council, 18 January, that the level of violence in Kosovo continues to be ‘unacceptable.’ During recent weeks there have been a number of violent incidents in the Province particularly targeting minorities in Kosovo. On 16 January, three Serbs were killed

near the village of Pasjane, Gnjilan as they returned from Serbia. In the current climate of violence, harassment and discrimination, UNHCR does not encourage the large-scale return of non-Albanian refugees. Any return has to be an individual decision.

- ◆ **KFOR conducts Vehicle Checkpoints (VCPs) throughout Kosovo. The use of VCPs is random in order to disrupt illegal activity and control the flow of traffic in a specific area. You are advised to cooperate fully with the VCP by identifying yourself and explaining the nature of your business in the area.**
- ◆ **When travelling within the region, it is advisable to coordinate with local CIMIC centres concerning road conditions and the locations of landmines/UXO. Always report mine/UXO sightings to local CIMIC centers.**

3. REPATRIATION

3.1 Repatriation continues despite cold weather: Over 4,000 refugees have returned in the last two weeks despite heavy snowfall and cold weather throughout Kosovo. IOM flights resumed on 18 January and can fly directly into Kosovo since the reopening of Slatina airport in Pristina. However, few flights have been able to land at Slatina due to the poor visibility and snow and were diverted to Skopje airport, FYRoM.

Organised Returns as of 27 January	
From	Total organised return
Albania	12,932
FYRoM	5,528
Montenegro	3,311
Third countries*	107,809
TOTAL	1295580

*The number includes non-HEP.
Source: UNHCR

3.2 Overnight transit centre established in Urosevac: Not all IOM flights are scheduled to land in Pristina, many continue to arrive in Skopje and refugees travel by bus to Pristina. In response to the bad weather and security incidents that have resulted in the road from Skopje to Pristina being closed a couple of times, UNHCR has converted a temporary community shelter in Urosevac into a transit centre. Returnees can now be safely, and

warmly, accommodated overnight in Kosovo, just 30 km from the border before travel to their final destination with IOM the following morning.

4. PROTECTION

4.1 MINORITY ISSUES

4.1.1 Roma relocated in Mitrovica: The majority of Roma residing in Zitkovac camp were relocated to a new site in Mitrovica, 17/18 January. UNHCR buses, in co-ordination with KFOR, moved 201 Roma. There are now 235 people in the site and 55 people remaining in Zitkovac.

4.2 GENDER ISSUES

4.2.1 Domestic violence: awaiting input from the working group

HCIC Kosovo Database CD now available

The HCIC Kosovo Database CD, Version 1 is now available. The CD includes the Rapid Village Assessment database and a data viewer. This package allows the user to create customized reports using data collected in Kosovo from June through September of 1999. Additionally, the CD includes a number of reports and data sets.

The HCIC and UNHCR GIS units worked together to produce an Atlas of Kosovo that is included on the CD. The OSCE Human Rights report, Security Resolution 1244 and other 1999 UN reports on Kosovo, the WFP Food Aid Tracking System, UNICEF status of schools and WHO status of health facilities are just a few of the reports available.

If you are interested in learning more about the CD or in obtaining a copy, please stop by the HCIC.

5. SECTORAL ACTIVITIES

5.1 FOOD

5.1.1 Second stage in the phase down of food aid planned: input from WFP on this issue expected

5.2 HEALTH

5.2.1 Intensive care deaths halved: With the help of Mediciens du Monde, France, important improvements have been made in emergency care at Pristina University Hospital that have reduced the death rate of ventilated and non-ventilated patients by half. This is an important development since patients requiring mechanical ventilation make up by far the largest group of admissions to intensive care following multiple trauma.

Further improvements will occur with the opening of a new 14-bed central intensive care unit at the hospital in February. The unit is part of a \$1.6 million project financed by the UK Department for International Development (DFID) that also includes a central microbiology laboratory also scheduled to open in February.

5.2.2 Maternity units still in crisis: As noted in earlier Humanitarian Updates, the heating situation in Kosovo's maternity units is bleak and thus the average length of stay for women after delivery is just three hours because of the cold. A high-level action group comprising of UNICEF, UNIFEM, WHO, KFOR and UNMIK is working to ensure that all units have minimum heating by the end of January. The first generators and electric heaters were delivered to maternity units in Vusitrn, Podujevo, Vitina and Urosevac 25 January.

5.2.3 Family health care: A six-month course in family medicine is planned for June for doctors in Kosovo. Dean of Pristina University Medical Facility, Professor Mazllum Belegu, notes the 'effectiveness of family medicine in meeting 80% of health care needs.'

In Ponsoahec, Djakovica, the first family health care centre opened in January. The centre, which is supported by NGOs CORDAID and Memisa, offers a 24-hour service and is due to begin home visits soon. These two services are the key organisational aspects of family health care.

5.2.4 Health survey results: Results from the first major baseline health survey of Kosovar Albanian health status highlights infant health, immunisation, chronic non-communicable disease and healthcare costs as key areas for attention.

The study was carried out in September 1999 by the US Centres for Disease Control and Prevention with financing from the International Rescue Committee and support from the Institute of Public Health and WHO, and covered 25 of the 29 municipalities. A separate Serb survey was also carried out and will be reported soon.

The survey also offers concrete statistics supporting the urgent need to reduce infant mortality. Infant deaths account for up to 40% of deaths in Kosovo, say researchers Dr Paul Spiegel and Dr Peter Salama, despite the fact that infants only represent 2% of the population.

Key recommendations include improved immunisation coverage, particularly of measles (less than 44% for 1-2 years are immunised), reducing smoking, and improving diet and environmental health to reduce the risks in non-communicable diseases.

Copies of the Kosovar Albanian Health Survey Report, September 1999 are available from International Rescue Committee and WHO offices in Kosovo.

5.2.5 IOM medical evacuations: IOM began a programme of medical evacuations for complex medical and surgical cases in September 1999. In the first three months of the programme 63 patients were evacuated for medical treatment in eight European countries. Seventeen of the patients have returned to Kosovo following the completion of treatments. A further 160 patients have been referred by local physicians and approved by the committee for medical evacuation comprising WHO, IOM and representatives of Pristina University Hospital.

5.2.3 Assisting medical needs of returnees: As part of the general return programme of refugees, an IOM Medical Team is present at the airport and bus station providing medical assistance, including medical escorts where necessary, to returning refugees. IOM also provides information on availability of health care facilities in Kosovo to

host countries, assisting refugees in pre-departure counselling.

Please note the following contact information for the Humanitarian Community Information Centre (HCIC) in Pristina:
Telephone/Fax: **501 507 or 549 168/69**
Email: **yughcic@unhcr.ch or hcic@hotmail.com**

5.3 SHELTER

5.3.1 Update on shelter programmes: A large number of agencies have been instrumental in the delivery of shelter programmes throughout Kosovo. The success of these programmes has ensured that only minimal numbers of people are spending the winter in tents (mainly those with Category V houses who wish to remain on their property) or temporary community centres. UNHCR and its implementing partners have capacity to provide shelter to 18,000 individuals in temporary shelters. Only 6,000 spaces are currently being utilised. This reflects positive coping strategies within the community.

Shelter co-ordination and monitoring continues at the regional level, ensuring all pledges of shelter assistance have been met or are being met. USAID has additional stocks of roofing and dry room materials in stock in their Urosevac warehouse.

5.3.2 House reconstruction working group reports: The reconstruction working group, established 14 January, has prepared the first drafts on four key areas: reconstruction standards; implementation strategies; targeting and co-ordination. The draft will now be shared with all key stakeholders among the Kosovar community, donor governments, NGOs and other agencies involved in reconstruction. The aim is to produce a framework for housing reconstruction that is owned by all.

It is important to note that it will not be possible to reconstruct all houses damaged in the recent conflict in Kosovo. Therefore, assistance in the reconstruction of houses will prioritise vulnerable sectors of society, particularly families living in host families, outside of their own home (tents,

temporary shelters) and vulnerable groups such as the elderly or single-headed households.

5.4 WINTERISATION

5.4.1 Update on utilities: The delivery of power in Kosovo improved significantly with the completion of repairs to Unit 1 of Kosovo B power station. Current production and imports from neighbouring countries mean that the situation is relatively stable at present. Nonetheless, cuts can be expected at peak hours and consumers are requested to be judicious in their usage of electricity.

Cleaning up work is going ahead on Unit 2 of Kosovo B, which has not been operational since a serious fire 9-10 January in which some 14 people were injured.

Domestic radio stations continue to broadcast information throughout the day informing the public on the status of the utilities.

5.5 MINE ACTION

5.7.1 Mine awareness education: UNMACC expects the peak time for mine accidents in Kosovo to be the spring, as the snows melt and people begin to resume 'normal' agricultural activities that will take them further afield from their homes. Therefore, mines awareness education will continue throughout the winter although many mine clearance programmes have been suspended until spring.

There has recently been a significant changeover of UN, NGO and other agency staff in Kosovo who operate in dangerous conditions often without any mine/UXO awareness education. UNMACC wishes to remind the international community that there are regular mines awareness training sessions throughout Kosovo.

Where to get Mines Awareness Education

MNB Central – UNMIK MACC

(contact UNMIK MACC).

MNB West – Mines Awareness Trust

(contact Norwegian Peoples Aid Offices, Pec)

MNB East – Mine-Tech

(contact CIMIC Centre Urosevac)

MNB South – DSL

(contact DSL offices or CIMIC Centre Prizren)

MNB North – Mines Advisory Group (MAG).

(contact CIMIC Centre Maison de France Mitrovica).

Agencies are strongly advised to review their safety procedures and ensure all staff have received mines awareness education. Training is also available in Albanian on request through UNMACC

Six mines clearance organisations remain in Kosovo and maintain a rapid response element. Once the weather permits work to assist the power companies and clearance of transmission lines will continue.

Winter conditions present new mine/UXO related challenges

As we are in the winter period, it is important to understand the effect snow and ice has on mines/UXO. Although mine clearance organisations are working to strengthen the minefield marking systems for the winter, one should be aware that snow can obstruct or hide marking tape and fencing. It is therefore even more important to be aware of dangerous areas. UNMACC also stresses that mines and UXO will still explode when covered by snow or ice. Moreover, heavy snowfall can have an effect on trip-wire operated mines.

Please note that the latest mine maps and information on mines/UXO is available from local CIMIC centers.

5.6 EDUCATION

5.6.1 Mines awareness education on the curriculum: UNICEF and a number of NGOs will hold a workshop in February for teachers selected from throughout the Province by the Joint Civil Commission for Education as a basic introduction to mines awareness education. The workshop will be followed by the development of a curriculum to be incorporated into the schools system.

For comments and further information, please contact:
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This report is also available from the Humanitarian Community Information Center (HCIC) in Pristina and through the Internet at:
<http://www.reliefweb.int>

6. FOCUS: Social Welfare

In this focus, UNMIK outlines their policy on Centres for Social Work.

Social welfare is an integral part of any society. In Kosovo, since mid June 1999, the area of social welfare has been covered under emergency humanitarian relief programmes. Social welfare payments and much of the social welfare infrastructure collapsed during the conflict in Kosovo and various UN agencies and NGOs stepped in to provide care and assistance, mainly in the form of food and non-food in-kind support.

Some financial payments have been made. Some members of the Serbian community are able to access benefits from Belgrade but the number is low as are the benefits. UNMIK established an emergency financial assistance programme for Kosovo in 1999. In co-ordination with the Mother Theresa Society, three categories of vulnerable people were identified to receive financial assistance under the programme: the elderly, single parents and

disabled persons. In the course of 1999 a total of DEM 9 million was distributed for a two-month period to over 60,000 applicants. The second round of payments will cover a four-month period, January – April 2000. In May, the emergency financial assistance programme will be replaced with a new social welfare system.

The year 2000 will see the establishment of new social policy in Kosovo, including welfare payments outlined above. UNMIK is working with the World Bank and a UNICEF specialist in social care on this issue. The key mechanism for implementing the major part of current and new policy will be the Centres for Social Work (CSW).

There are 25 CSWs in Kosovo. Members of the Serbian community run three CSWs in northern Kosovo and two unofficial Serbian CSWs have opened in Mitrovica and Kamenica and are running alongside the Albanian CSWs. All CSWs fall under the umbrella of the Institute for Social Policy in Pristina and it is hoped that the two new centers can be incorporated into this structure and be officially recognised.

UNMIK is supporting the CSWs in their two main functions: firstly the implementation of financial assistance to individuals and families in need, and secondly in the protection of special groups (children and youth, elderly, disabled etc) through appropriate social work care.

In 1999, UNMIK paid stipends to all staff for the period October – December. In January 2000, new employment contracts and salaries were set for staff members at public sector rates. Identification of new staffing requirements is ongoing and new staff will be appointed from March.

Two additional areas of UNMIK support to the CSWs are planned for the year 2000. One is the identification of training needs for both existing and new staff and the implementation of that training. The other is the identification of non-staffing needs and the allocation of a budget to each CSW to cover those needs.

One of the key non-staff needs is vehicles. The CSWs are very much hampered in their outreach work to the elderly, the disabled and all those living in remote areas by their lack of transport. Several agencies have recognised this need and a number of

vehicles have been donated, but 20 CSWs are still without transport.

The development of social welfare policy in Kosovo and the development of the CSWs for Social Work reflect the shift from emergency humanitarian programmes to sustainable solutions. It also reflects the shift from the co-ordinating role of Pillar I (humanitarian affairs, UNHCR) to Pillar II (civil administration, UNMIK).

Many international NGOs and agencies are promoting social welfare and are working with the CSWs for Social Work. These inputs are of great value as they bring not only valuable resources, but also ideas and innovations in this field.

In order to guarantee the coherent development of the CSWs for Social Work in Kosovo, it is essential that there is close co-ordination between UNMIK and all agencies working with the CSWs. The Social Welfare Section of UNMIK therefore appeals to all organisations that are working with one or more of the CSWs, or is planning to do so in the future, to make themselves known to the Section and attend the regular co-ordination meetings organised by UNMIK.

For further information, please contact Bridget Dommen, Head of Social Welfare Section, UNMIK Government Building. Tel. 501-399/400 ext. 5568