



PROFILE OF INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT : MACEDONIA

Compilation of the information available in the Global IDP
Database of the Norwegian Refugee Council

(as of 26 February, 2004)

Also available at <http://www.idpproject.org>

Users of this document are welcome to credit the Global IDP Database for the collection of information.

The opinions expressed here are those of the sources and are not necessarily shared by the Global IDP
Project or NRC

Norwegian Refugee Council/Global IDP Project
Chemin Moïse Duboule, 59
1209 Geneva - Switzerland
Tel: + 41 22 799 07 00
Fax: + 41 22 799 07 01
E-mail : idpsurvey@nrc.ch

CONTENTS

CONTENTS	1
-----------------	----------

PROFILE SUMMARY	7
------------------------	----------

MACEDONIA: FEAR PREVENTS REMAINING IDPs FROM RETURNING HOME	7
---	---

CAUSES AND BACKGROUND	10
------------------------------	-----------

BACKGROUND	10
-------------------	-----------

THE ETHNIC ALBANIAN MINORITY DEMANDED EQUALITY WITH THE ETHNIC MACEDONIAN MAJORITY (JUNE 2001)	10
--	----

POLITICAL BREAKTHROUGH WITH SIGNING OF INDEPENDENT CEASE-FIRES WITH NATO (JULY 2001)	12
--	----

OHRID PEACE AGREEMENT PAVED WAY FOR CONFLICT RESOLUTION (AUGUST 2001)	12
---	----

ETHNIC ALBANIAN SEPARATISTS WARNED OF FURTHER CONFLICT (JANUARY 2002)	13
---	----

LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT LAW IMPROVED RIGHTS OF ETHNIC ALBANIANS (JANUARY 2002)	14
--	----

POLITICAL AND HUMANITARIAN STATUS QUO AS OF MARCH 2002	15
--	----

POLICE FORCE ENTERED LAST EX-REBEL STRONGHOLD, PROMPTING RETURN OF DISPLACED (JULY 2002)	15
--	----

NEW LEGISLATION WAS ADOPTED ON USE OF ALBANIAN LANGUAGE, BUT OBSTACLES REMAIN (JUNE 2003)	16
---	----

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL EXPRESSES CONCERNS ABOUT CONTINUED ENVIRONMENT OF IMPUNITY (2002-2003)	16
--	----

GENERAL ELECTIONS ARE LARGELY IN LINE WITH INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS (AUGUST – SEPTEMBER 2002)	18
--	----

MACEDONIAN GOVERNMENT ADOPTS AMNESTY LAW (MARCH 2002 AND JUNE 2003)	19
---	----

GENERAL SECURITY IMPROVED DESPITE CONTINUING THREATS POSED BY MILITANTS (2003)	20
--	----

POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS AND PROGRESS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE OHRID FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT (2003)	21
---	----

CAUSES OF DISPLACEMENT	23
-------------------------------	-----------

SUMMARY OF PHASES OF CONFLICT (FEBRUARY-AUGUST 2001)	23
--	----

FIGHTING IN THE TETOVO REGION CAUSED DISPLACEMENT, AND TRAPPED THOUSANDS OF CIVILIANS INSIDE TOWNS (FEBRUARY-MARCH 2001)	24
--	----

CONCERN FOR FAMILY WAS FOR SOME A REASON NOT TO FLEE, AFTER ALLEGED PROVOCATIONS BY SECURITY FORCES AND POLICE (MARCH-APRIL 2001)	24
---	----

RENEWED FIGHTING IN KUMANOVO REGION DISPLACED CIVILIANS, WHILE HUNDREDS WERE EVACUATED (APRIL-MAY 2001)	25
---	----

THOUSANDS OF IDPs AND LOCAL VILLAGERS REFUSED TO LEAVE LIPKOVO DURING CEASE-FIRE (MAY 2001)	26
---	----

HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN VILLAGES AROUND KUMANOVO WERE A CAUSE OF DISPLACEMENT (MAY 2001)	27
FIGHTING IN ARACINOVO LEAD TO DISPLACEMENT OF THOUSANDS, DESPITE THE CONCLUSION OF A CEASE-FIRE (JUNE 2001)	28
RENEWED VIOLENCE NEAR TETOVO RESULTED IN DISPLACEMENT OF HUNDREDS (NOVEMBER 2001)	28

POPULATION FIGURES AND PROFILE **30**

GLOBAL FIGURES **30**

THE DISPLACED POPULATION IS GREATLY REDUCED BETWEEN 2001 AND 2003 (JANUARY 2004)	30
TOTAL IDP POPULATION IS 9,500 PEOPLE (1 APRIL 2003)	30
TOTAL IDP ESTIMATES FROM MAY 2001 TILL JULY 2002	31
THE CRISIS SHOWED A PEAK OF 84,669 IDPs IN AUGUST 2001; TABLE WITH TOTAL IDP NUMBERS BY MONTH (MARCH-NOVEMBER 2001)	33
IDP FIGURE IS HARD TO ESTIMATE AND VARIES GREATLY THROUGH TIME (SEPTEMBER 2001)	33

GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION **34**

NUMBER AND GEOGRAPHICAL ORIGIN OF IDPs (2004)	34
NUMBER AND LOCATIONS OF IDPs (AUGUST 2002)	34
AREAS OF ORIGIN OF REMAINING IDPs (AUGUST 2002)	36
NUMBER AND LOCATIONS OF IDPs (MAY-JULY 2002)	36
A DE-REGISTRATION EXERCISE FOR IDPs WAS CARRIED OUT (MAY 2002)	37
NUMBER AND LOCATIONS OF IDPs (JANUARY 2002)	37
MOST OF THE IDPs ARE HOUSED WITH HOST FAMILIES, WHILE A MINORITY IS SHELTERED IN COLLECTIVE CENTERS (OCTOBER 2001)	39
DISPLACED FLEEING VIOLENCE IN TETOVO FLED MAINLY TO LOCAL VILLAGES OR TO SKOPJE (JULY 2001)	40
FIGHTING AROUND ARACINOVO DISPLACED THOUSANDS (JUNE 2001)	40
ETHNIC VIOLENCE AROUND THE CITY OF TETOVO CREATED SOME 20,000 IDPs (MARCH 2001)	40

DISAGGREGATED DATA **41**

IN JANUARY 2004, 42% OF THE DISPLACED POPULATION WAS ETHNIC ALBANIAN AND 37% MACEDONIAN (2004)	41
SOME 30 PERCENT OF THE IDP POPULATION WAS ETHNIC MACEDONIAN (MARCH 2002)	41
MAJORITY OF DISPLACED ARE WOMEN, CHILDREN AND ELDERLY PEOPLE, WHILE OVER HALF OF THE DISPLACED WERE ETHNIC MACEDONIAN (MARCH-SEPTEMBER 2001)	41

PATTERNS OF DISPLACEMENT **42**

GENERAL **42**

DISPLACED MAINLY FLED TO HOST FAMILIES (MOSTLY RELATIVES), BUT ARE ALSO SHELTERED IN COLLECTIVE CENTERS (MARCH-SEPTEMBER 2001)	42
DISPLACEMENT OCCURRED ACCORDING TO ETHNIC PATTERNS (JULY 2001)	42
CEASE-FIRES WERE SECURED TO EVACUATE TRAPPED VILLAGERS (MAY 2001)	43

PHYSICAL SECURITY & FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT **44**

GENERAL **44**

UNDERLYING TENSIONS BETWEEN ETHNIC COMMUNITIES RESULT IN VIOLENT INCIDENTS (2002 – 2004)	44
UXO/LANDMINE THREAT TO RETURN OF IDPs (2002-2003)	47
AI REPORTED ON HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES PERPETRATED BY BOTH SIDES OF THE CONFLICT (AUGUST 2002)	47
HRW REPORTED SEPARATION AND TORTURE OF IDPs BY MACEDONIAN POLICE FORCES (MAY 2001)	48
SOME 22,000 PEOPLE WERE TRAPPED IN VILLAGES DURING FIGHTING (JULY-AUGUST 2001)	49

SUBSISTENCE NEEDS **51**

GENERAL	51
OMBUDSMAN OF THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA REPORTS THAT LIVING CONDITIONS FOR MANY IDPs ARE UNSATISFACTORY (2003)	51
IDPs IDENTIFIED AS VULNERABLE GROUP IN 2003 UN HUMANITARIAN STRATEGY (2003)	54
UNEMPLOYMENT AND POVERTY IDENTIFIED AS KEY ISSUES IN THE POST-CRISIS PERIOD (2003)	54
HUMANITARIAN NEEDS OF THE IDPs AND RETURNEES (JULY-AUGUST 2002)	55
FOOD	56
MACEDONIA’S AGRICULTURAL SECTOR SERIOUSLY WEAKENED BY CONFLICT (NOVEMBER 2001)	56
HEALTH	56
HEALTH AND PSYCHOSOCIAL NEEDS OF IDPs (2001-2002)	56
SHELTER AND NON-FOOD ITEMS	58
MOST IDPs SHELTERED WITH HOST FAMILIES WITH SMALL NUMBERS STILL LIVING IN COLLECTIVE CENTERS (JUNE 2003)	58

ACCESS TO EDUCATION **59**

GENERAL	59
DISPLACED HAVE ACCESS TO (DISRUPTED) EDUCATION SYSTEM (DECEMBER 2001)	59

ISSUES OF SELF-RELIANCE AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION **60**

SELF-RELIANCE	60
FLOODS DISPLACE SOME 4,000 ROMA (JANUARY 2003)	60
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION	60
SPECIAL VOTING PROCEDURE FOR IDPs TO PARTICIPATE IN 2002 ELECTIONS (2002)	61
LOBBY GROUPS FOR THE DISPLACED (2001-2003)	63

PROPERTY ISSUES **64**

LAW AND POLICY	64
SUMMARY OF PROPERTY LAW (2001-2003)	64
RESTITUTION	64
OVERVIEW OF REHABILITATION AND RECONSTRUCTION EFFORTS (DECEMBER 2003)	64
INTERNATIONAL DONORS SUPPORT RECONSTRUCTION OF THE REMAINING DESTROYED HOUSES IN MATEJCE (2003)	66

GENERAL	66
OUTBREAKS OF LOOTING AND ATTACKS AGAINST HOMES OF DISPLACED MACEDONIANS AND SERBS (2003)	67
DISPLACED PEOPLE CONTEST MEASURES REQUIRED TO OBTAIN PROPERTY (2003)	69
MANY DISPLACED LOST THEIR HOMES AND ALL OF THEIR POSSESSIONS, INCLUDING LIVESTOCK AND CROPS (JULY-DECEMBER 2001)	70
<u>PATTERNS OF RETURN AND RESETTLEMENT</u>	72
GENERAL	72
EXPECTED TRENDS IN IDP RETURNS (2003 – 2004)	72
HUMANITARIAN AND REHABILITATION ASSISTANCE CONTINUED TO BE ESSENTIAL FOR RETURN (MAY 2002)	72
DISPLACED ETHNIC MACEDONIANS RETURNING TO LIPKOVO ASKED FOR TEMPORARY COLONIES (APRIL 2002)	73
ALTHOUGH NEARLY HALF RETURNED TO THE TETOVO REGION, MANY ETHNIC MACEDONIANS REFUSED TO RETURN WITHOUT AN ESCORT OF MACEDONIAN TROOPS (OCTOBER 2001)	73
RETURN PATTERN WAS DICTATED BY THE SECURITY SITUATION IN THE REGION (SEPTEMBER 2001)	74
MORE THAN HALF OF THE DISPLACED FLEEING FIGHTING AT ARACINOVO RETURNED HOME BY AUGUST 2001	74
MAJORITY OF DISPLACED FLEEING VIOLENCE IN TETOVO REGION RETURNED BY THE BEGINNING OF APRIL 2001	75
RETURN PROSPECTS	75
NATIONAL AUTHORITIES DECLARE CONDITIONS ARE IN PLACE FOR DISPLACED PERSONS TO RETURN TO TETOVO VILLAGES (2003)	75
OBSTACLES TO RETURN AND RESETTLEMENT	76
SECURITY PROBLEMS CONSTITUTE MAIN OBSTACLE TO RETURN OF THE DISPLACED (2003 – 2004)	76
HIGH RATE OF RETURN OBSCURES SUBTLE BUT ONGOING PRESSURE ON MINORITIES TO LEAVE MAJORITY AREAS (2003)	77
VANDALISM OF HOUSES AND IDPs RE-SELLING THEIR PROPERTY CONSTITUTE OBSTACLES TO RETURN (2003)	78
INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY IN MACEDONIA CONDEMNS DESTRUCTION OF HOUSES IN JELOSNIK AND OPAE VILLAGES BUT REITERATES SUPPORT TO THE RETURN PROCESS (JUNE 2003)	79
OBSTACLES TO RETURN WERE DIFFERENT ACCORDING TO ETHNICITY OF DISPLACED PERSONS (AUGUST 2002)	79
POLICY	80
MACEDONIAN GOVERNMENT IMPOSES DEADLINE FOR DISPLACED TO RETURN HOME (2003)	80
HUMAN RIGHTS ORGANISATION CRITICISES NATIONAL AUTHORITIES FOR FORCING THE RETURN OF IDPs (MARCH 2003)	81
ORGANISED BY THE GOVERNMENT, ETHNIC MACEDONIANS RETURNED TO THE ETHNIC ALBANIAN ARACINOVO REGION (SEPTEMBER 2001)	83
<u>HUMANITARIAN ACCESS</u>	84
GENERAL	84
HUMAN RIGHTS ORGANISATIONS WERE TARGETS OF GOVERNMENTAL INTIMIDATION (2002-2003)	84

NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL RESPONSES **85**

NATIONAL RESPONSE	85
GOVERNMENT ADOPTS NATIONAL PLAN TO FULLY IMPLEMENT OHRID AGREEMENT THAT INCLUDES CONFIDENCE-BUILDING MEASURES AND THE SAFE RETURN OF DISPLACED PERSONS (2003-2004)	85
SELECTED UN ACTIVITIES	86
IDP-RELATED ACTIVITIES OF UNICEF (MAY 2002)	86
UN COUNTRY TEAM STRATEGY PROGRAMMES INCLUDE SUSTAINABLE RETURN, INTEGRATION, AND ACCESS TO BASIC SERVICES FOR IDPs (2003)	87
UNHCR TAKES LEAD ROLE IN THE RETURN PROCESS (JANUARY 2001-2004)	88
UNHCR FACILITATED THE RETURN OF DISPLACED (AUGUST 2001-APRIL 2002)	90
THE UNITED NATIONS-PLANS FOR 2002, GENERAL	91
THE UNITED NATIONS-PLANS FOR 2002, SPECIFIED BY SECTOR	92
INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE	95
NATO SCALES DOWN PRESENCE IN FYR MACEDONIA (2004)	95
EU LAUNCHES NEW POLICE MISSION TO ENSURE STABILITY IN THE REGION (2003-2004)	96
OSCE PRESENCE CONTRIBUTES TO STABILITY AND SECURITY IN THE COUNTRY (1992 - 2004)	98
USAID/IOM COMMUNITY CONFIDENCE BUILDING INITIATIVE CONTRIBUTES TO PEACE AND DEMOCRACY (2001-2003)	99
EU SUPPORTS FAMILIES PROVIDING TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION TO IDPs (2001-2003)	100
EU SHIFTS FROM PROVIDING EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE TO SUPPORT FOR EUROPEAN INTEGRATION (2002-2004)	101
EUROPEAN COMMISSION HUMANITARIAN AID OFFICE WINDS DOWN AFTER TEN YEARS (1993-2003)	104
EUROPEAN DONORS PLEDGED FUNDS FOR DE-MINING AND RECONSTRUCTION ACTIVITIES TO ENABLE THE RETURN OF DISPLACED (JULY 2002)	105
HUMANITARIAN AGENCIES DREW UP A FRAMEWORK FOR THE TRANSITION FROM RELIEF TO RECOVERY (MARCH 2002)	106
WFP HIGHLIGHTED MAIN PROBLEMS OF FOOD DISTRIBUTION TO IDPs (JANUARY 2002)	107
SELECTED ACTIVITIES OF THE RED CROSS MOVEMENT	108
ICRC INCOME-GENERATING PROJECTS HELP VULNERABLE DISPLACED CIVILIANS TO BECOME MORE SELF-RELIANT (2004)	108
IFRC SUPPORT TO IDPs: HEALTH AND DISASTER MANAGEMENT (2003)	109
AMERICAN RED CROSS (ARC) DISTRIBUTED HYGIENE AND BABY PARCELS TO IDPs AND FAMILIES (2001-2003)	111
OVERVIEW OF ICRC ACTIVITIES (2001-2003)	113
ICRC IS KEY HUMANITARIAN ACTOR- ACTIVITIES ON BEHALF OF IDPs IN 2001	115
ICRC CONDUCTED MINE/UXO AWARENESS PROGRAMME BENEFITING DISPLACED WANTING TO RETURN (DECEMBER 2001)	117
NGO RESPONSE	119
INTERNATIONAL RESCUE COMMITTEE (IRC) PROVIDES SOCIAL, LEGAL AND HEALTH ASSISTANCE TO IDPs (2002 – 2003)	119
MCIC IMPLEMENTED REHABILITATION PROGRAM FOR DISPLACED AND OTHER VULNERABLE GROUPS (JULY 2002)	120
REFERENCES TO THE GUIDING PRINCIPLES ON INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT	123
KNOWN REFERENCE TO THE GUIDING PRINCIPLES (AS OF FEBRUARY 2004)	123
LIST OF SOURCES USED	124

PROFILE SUMMARY

Macedonia: fear prevents remaining IDPs from returning home

Macedonia has been regarded as a “success story” for having achieved the fastest returns of people displaced by conflict in the Balkans. Over 95 per cent of the people uprooted during the brief but intense conflict between ethnic Albanian armed groups and Macedonian security forces in 2001 have been able to return. But the achievement of large-scale return conceals the persistent division between the ethnic communities and the failure of returnees to reintegrate socially and economically. And while incidents of serious violence remain isolated, returnees continue to face underlying pressure to leave areas where they are a minority. In total the conflict, which ended with the signing of the Ohrid Peace Agreement in August 2001, displaced over 170,000 people, of which 74,000 were internally displaced. For the majority of the nearly 2,700 who remain internally displaced the fear of security threats is preventing them from going home. However, with the completion of the reconstruction of their homes, a number of internally displaced people (IDPs) are expected to return in 2004. To ensure the success of returns in the country, it is necessary that the national authorities and the international community continue to monitor the needs of the remaining displaced population, support their right to return or provide alternative durable solutions.

Background and main causes of displacement

Inter-ethnic tensions between ethnic Macedonians and ethnic Albanians in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (hereinafter Macedonia) culminated in violent conflict in 2001. Amongst the Macedonian population, some 25 per cent are ethnic Albanian, while some 64 per cent are ethnic Macedonian (IFRC 5 February 2004). Relations between the two groups were marked by geographic, economic and social separation (IHF 8 June 2001). The conflict erupted when an ethnic Albanian armed opposition group, the National Albanian Liberation Army (NLA), took control of the village of Tanusevci on the Kosovo border. The NLA shared with ethnic Albanian political parties the goal of achieving equal political, social, economic and cultural rights for ethnic Albanians, including the recognition of Albanian as an official language and the revision of the Constitution which referred to Macedonia as the state of the Macedonian people (AI 30 May 2002).

Between February and August 2001 fighting between ethnic Albanian armed groups and Macedonian security forces resulted in the displacement of over 170,000 people of which approximately 74,000 were internally displaced (UNHCR 2003). Along with the fighting, widespread human rights abuses were reported (AI 1 September 2001). Peace was established with the Framework Agreement signed in Ohrid on 13 August 2001 which provided for increased rights to ethnic minority groups and set out the framework for the return of the displaced population (OCHA March 2002).

Estimates in early 2004 indicate that there are a total of 2,678 IDPs in the country of which approximately 42% are ethnic Albanian, 37% ethnic Macedonian, 17% Serb, and the remaining Roma and Bosniac (ICRC 11 February 2004; UNHCR 16 February 2004).

Large-scale return

Macedonia has been regarded as a “success story” for having achieved the fastest returns in the Balkans (ICG 23 October 2003; UNHCR 16 February 2004). Over 95 per cent of the people uprooted during the conflict have been able to return (OCHA 31 December 2002).

IDP figures between August 2001 and January 2004

August 2001	74,000
-------------	--------

31 October 2001	50,000
15 January 2002	21,200
1 September 2002	16,351
1 January 2003	9,442
1 April 2003	9,442
1 July 2003	6,060
1 October 2003	3,154
1 December 2003	3,154
1 January 2004	2,678

(Sources: UNHCR/ICRC/IFRC)

A closer analysis of the situation, however, suggests that the achievement of large-scale return conceals the persistent polarisation of ethnic communities and the failure of returnees to reintegrate socially and economically. Although acts of serious violence remain isolated, returnees continue to face underlying pressure to leave areas where they are a minority. Numerous acts of inter-ethnic vandalism, harassment and violence were reported in 2003 (ICG 23 October 2003, EC Delegation FYROM/IMG 7 November 2003). For instance, in Opae, in the Kumanovo area, 46 reconstructed houses had been looted in 2003 (Reality Macedonia 28 May 2003). Unemployment, poverty and an insecure economy, particularly in rural areas, also serve to aggravate inter-ethnic relations as well as constitute barriers to return (OCHA 31 December 2002; ICRC January 2004).

For the small number of remaining IDPs it seems that their most immediate concern, when it comes to return, is personal security. According to ICRC statistics, 66 per cent of IDPs have expressed an inability or unwillingness to return to their homes of origin due to a perceived or real fear for their physical security (ICRC 11 February 2004). There have been cases of displaced people being afraid of staying in their homes overnight and only visiting their homes during the day (ICRC January 2004). The feeling of vulnerability is evident in the common practice amongst minorities of selling their property in former conflict areas rather than returning (ICG 23 October 2003; Southeast European Times 2 June 2003). ICRC statistics also suggest that return for approximately 34 per cent of IDPs has been hampered by high number of destroyed or damaged houses (ICRC 11 February 2004).

The total number of IDPs is expected to decrease in 2004 with the further rehabilitation and reconstruction of damaged or destroyed houses. Based on planned reconstruction, it is anticipated that approximately 300 IDPs from Aracinovo and Skopska Crna Gora region (Brest) and 200 IDPs from central Macedonia will be able to return in 2004. However, there are indications that between 1,400-1,700 IDPs from the villages of Aracinovo, Matejce and Opae (Skopje and Kumanovo region) and Radusha and Tetovo town may continue to refuse to return to their villages for reasons which include physical security and inadequate socio-economic infrastructure (ICRC 11 February 2004).

Of the total number of registered IDPs, 1640 are being sheltered by host families, and 1038 live in collective centres (ICRC 11 February 2004; UNHCR 16 February 2004). The national Ombudsman has expressed concern that living conditions for IDPs in collective centres are unsatisfactory. The Ombudsman's report highlights, in particular, difficulties IDPs have faced in accessing healthcare as well as the inadequate hygiene in collective centres (Ombudsman of FYROM 13 October 2003).

National response

Under the Ohrid peace agreement the national authorities are responsible for implementing the right of the displaced to return to their homes within the shortest time-frame possible and to complete an action plan for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of areas affected by the hostilities. The Macedonian authorities have

largely supported the right of IDPs to return and implemented most of the legal reforms required by the Framework Agreement (USIP 30 November 2002).

Some organisations, however, have expressed concern that national authorities have employed forcible policies to hasten the return process of the displaced populations to restore the pre-conflict ethnic composition of the communities (IHF 24 June 2003; HCHR 7 March 2003). The government has also been criticised for failing to satisfy minimal conditions for the return of IDPs, including ensuring physical safety in return areas (IHF 24 June 2003).

International response

The international community responded rapidly to the needs of the displaced in Macedonia during and immediately after the conflict in 2001. The UN continues to maintain a significant presence in the country, supporting the implementation of the peace agreement, and democratic and legal reforms. A strong international monitoring effort by NATO and EU peacekeeping and police forces has also improved the overall security situation in the country.

The main humanitarian actor during the conflict was the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), which provided immediate relief and assistance to the displaced and resident populations. Until June 2003, the ICRC assisted IDPs with the regular delivery of food and non-food items. The ICRC continued to provide basic assistance to IDPs in collective centres until August 2003. Other international actors including UNHCR, UNICEF, UNDP, WFP, WHO, IOM, FAO, the European Commission and numerous NGOs have provided a range of services to IDPs including food and non-food items, health and psycho-social support, rehabilitation and reconstruction assistance. The European Commission and the International Management Group have been the primary actors involved in the implementation of housing reconstruction and rehabilitation. The UN strategy outlined continued support to IDPs in 2003, on the basis that the displaced population was identified as a vulnerable group in need of protection, humanitarian and rehabilitation assistance (OCHA 31 December 2002).

The return process has largely been possible due to the presence of the international community, particularly in the maintenance of security and the disarmament process. Security measures initiated by NATO in September 2001 were largely shifted to EU police and peacekeeping forces in March and December 2003. In 2003, UNDP assisted local authorities in a 45-day weapons amnesty programme which resulted in the handing over of 7,500 weapons (DPA 16 December 2003). The OSCE and the EU, among others, have also undertaken programmes, as directed by the Framework Agreement, to ensure that the composition of the police forces reflect the make-up of Macedonia; to provide training and assistance to the police; and to support confidence-building measures.

With improved security and large-scale return, most organisations have, since the end of 2003, phased out assistance to IDPs. The focus of the international community in the country has shifted from relief aid to longer-term development. The ICRC plans to continue to support the most vulnerable among the remaining IDPs in 2004 with income-generating projects. The ICRC programme is designed to meet the current needs of the displaced population, by providing livelihood support, in the transition phase between humanitarian assistance and development (ICRC January 2004).

To ensure the success of returns in the country, it is necessary that the national authorities and the international community continue to monitor the needs of the remaining displaced population, support their right to return or provide alternative durable solutions.

(26 February 2004)

CAUSES AND BACKGROUND

Background

The ethnic Albanian minority demanded equality with the ethnic Macedonian majority (June 2001)

- Two thirds of the Macedonians are ethnic Macedonians and one-fifth are Albanians, who live culturally and socially separated from each other
- Albanians feel that the Constitution makes a distinction between first and second-class citizens, instigating discrimination against Albanians
- An important Albanian demand was to have Albanian recognised as a second official language
- The Citizenship Act, adopted in 1992, was seen by the Albanians as restricting their rights and political influence

"In the beginning of March 2001 Macedonia attracted international attention following reports of clashes between Macedonian forces and Albanian armed groups of the National Liberation Army (NLA) in northern Macedonia close to the Kosovo border. The guerrillas claim to fight for the rights of Albanians within Macedonia. In the beginning of April, fighting spread to Tetovo and surrounding villages.

[...]

a) General Background

Macedonia has a population of more than 2 million. According to official statistics 66,6% are ethnic Macedonians while 22,9% are Albanians. There are also Turks, Vlachs, Roma, Serbs and others. Albanians claim that they constitute more than 30% of the population, and that there have been grave shortcomings in the last two censuses, despite the fact that the second one, in the year 1994, was conducted under the monitoring of the international community. Albanians claim that, due to the Citizenship Act, over 100 000 Albanians were left out of the statistics. A new census scheduled to take place in the autumn of 2001 will hopefully resolve the conflict over the size of the ethnic groups.

Macedonia has until recently been noted as a positive example of peaceful multiethnic co-existence in the Balkans. Since 1992 the country has had coalition governments consisting of both Macedonian and Albanian parties. However, despite co-operation at the political level, the relations between Macedonians and Albanians have been marked by growing geographic, economic and social segregation. There has been a lack of contact and collaboration between the two largest ethnic groups and a lack of understanding for each other's situation and motives.

There are a number of factors that separate the two main ethnic groups. Macedonians and Albanians belong to different cultures and religions. Most Albanians are Muslims while the Macedonians are Orthodox Christians. They speak different languages and there is little inter-ethnic communication. There are few mixed marriages. Albanians are geographically concentrated in the western areas close to the Kosovo border while Macedonians live in other parts of the country. Even in multiethnic towns, like the capital city Skopje, Macedonians and Albanians live in separate neighbourhoods, with their own cafés and meeting places. They read different newspapers that address mainly their 'own' population groups. Even after a doubling in numbers during the last two years, only 7% of civil servants are Albanians. Albanians have established a tradition of small enterprises and shops, and ethnic Macedonians and Albanians generally operate in different economic spheres. In the police less than 3% are Albanians.

Day-to-day discrimination and several episodes of police brutality and other human rights violations have been documented by Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International and the Macedonian Helsinki Committee. Consequently, there is a growing feeling of mistrust towards the state among Albanians. The war in Kosovo contributed to further widening the gap between the groups. Albanians sympathised with their 'brothers' in Kosovo, while ethnic Macedonians sympathised with the Serbs, as they feared that a Kosovo dominated by Albanians could give rise to increased nationalism among Albanians in Macedonia. The Macedonians also feared that the influx of hundreds of thousands of refugees from Kosovo might destabilise the country and alter the demographic balance in favour of the Albanians.[...]

b) The Constitution

The Preamble of the Macedonian Constitution has been the subject of controversy since it was adopted soon after the 1991 referendum on Macedonian independence from Yugoslavia. The dispute is based on whether Macedonia should become a 'civic state' for all citizens regardless of ethnicity, or a 'national' state dominated by ethnic Macedonians, as it is perceived mainly by the Albanian population. The Preamble states:

Macedonia is established as a national state of the Macedonian people, in which full equality and permanent co-existence with the Macedonian people is provided for Albanians, Turks, Vlachs, Romanies and other nationalities living in the Republic of Macedonia.

Albanian political parties claim that the Constitution is the main source of the current conflict. The Albanians feel that the Constitution divides the population into first and second-class citizens and thus represents the basis of discrimination against Albanians.

On the other hand, the general opinion among Macedonians is that the country is already rather generous regarding the 'rights of the Albanians'. Many ethnic Macedonians fear that constitutional amendments may threaten their identity and be the first step towards dividing the country. They suspect that the Albanians in reality wish to divide Macedonia in order to create a 'Greater Albania.'

c) Language and Higher Education

Macedonian language, written using the Cyrillic alphabet, is the official language in Macedonia. Minority languages can be used alongside Macedonian in municipalities where those nationalities are in majority or make up a 'considerable number of inhabitants'. To have Albanian recognised as a second official language is one of the most important demands for the Albanians. This would include the use of Albanian in public administration, courts, parliament, and in all levels of education.

The dispute over language has been harsh, particularly in regard to the issue of higher education. The Albanian community has long considered this as one of the most important Albanian demands. [...]

d) Census Disputes and the Citizenship Act

Albanians claim that over 100 000 Albanians were left out of the statistics of the census in 1994, after a restrictive Citizenship Act was adopted in 1992. The Citizenship Act has also been criticised by various international human rights organisations, the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities, UNCHR, etc. Such pressure has eventually led the Macedonian authorities to propose a new Citizenship Act. According to the draft law ten instead of fifteen years of residency will be sufficient for naturalisation, the provisions on the conditions like income, living place and health are much better, as are the provisions on marriage as a condition for earlier naturalisation. Nevertheless the Ombudsman's office regarded these improvements as minor, and assessed that this draft does not represent any substantial changes to the existing legislation.

The discriminative aspects of the legislation are also linked to the fact that ethnic Macedonians may be granted citizenship regardless of their country of residence. The term of the Act, that the state can also deny

a person citizenship for security reasons without giving any reason or explanation, was removed after a decision of the Constitutional Court of Macedonia three years ago. The Albanians complain that these restrictions have been intentionally instated in order to restrict the rights and political influence of Albanians." (IHF 8 June 2001)

Political breakthrough with signing of independent cease-fires with NATO (July 2001)

- In July 2001, the rebels and the government each signed a separate cease-fire with NATO, which paved the way for NATO deployment to disarm the rebels and army and police forces
- NATO indicated that the operation would be a voluntary one, without any enforcement

“For the first time since the start of the conflict in February [2001] there is cautious optimism that the civil war in Macedonia could stop. Last week the Albanian rebels and Macedonian government each signed a separate cease-fire agreement with NATO. If the Albanian and Macedonian politicians reach a political agreement, NATO is ready to commit a force of 3.000 people to observe the cease-fire and to disarm the rebels. But also the paramilitary groups as well as reservists of the army and police should be disarmed. Otherwise, the implementation of a political agreement could be in jeopardy.

[...]

Since it is unthinkable that the rebels would submit their arms to the Macedonian authorities, the Macedonian government asked NATO to collect those arms. NATO-spokesperson Paul Barnard declared in Skopje that NATO does not want to enforce the disarmament. It will be a voluntary arms collection. But, as we have seen in Kosovo, there is a real danger that only part of the weapons - possibly the oldest - will be submitted while the rest will be hidden - maybe on the other side of the border with Albania. The arms depots of the Albanians should be dealt with in an inclusive way , across the different borders.” (PC 11 July 2001)

Ohrid peace agreement paved way for conflict resolution (August 2001)

- The accord provided for constitutional change on the language issue and public representation, as well as creating the “double majority” voting system
- NATO stressed that before deploying a force, a cease-fire had to be in place and that the guerrillas would be willing to disarm voluntarily in exchange for an amnesty
- On the 13th of August 2001, the rebels signed an agreement with NATO to disarm, paving the way for NATO deployment
- In November 2001, constitutional amendments were made, but the issue of amnesty remained

"An accord signed today [13 August 2001] by leaders of Macedonia's main political parties is a step toward resolving complaints of inequality by the country's ethnic Albanians. But it is only part of a larger peace plan. The political accord does not include provisions under which guerrilla fighters would disarm in exchange for an amnesty. Those issues are to be resolved in a separate military agreement that is being brokered by NATO.

[...]

Under the accord, the constitution would be changed to recognize all of the country's ethnic groups -- and not simply the ethnic Macedonian Slav majority. Albanian would become a second official language in communities where more than 20 percent of the population is ethnic Albanian. There also would be proportional representation for ethnic Albanians in the Constitutional Court, in the government administration, and within the country's police forces.

The accord would create a 'double majority' voting system in parliament that would enable lawmakers from minority groups to block legislation that has support only from ethnic Macedonian legislators.

Robertson noted that the political accord satisfies one of three conditions that must be met before NATO deploys a force of 3,500 peacekeepers to help disarm ethnic Albanian guerrillas. NATO also is insisting that a sustainable cease-fire is in place and that the guerrillas agree to disarm voluntarily in exchange for an amnesty.

[...]

Alliance spokesman Francois Le Blevenec told RFE/RL the political accord clears the way for NATO envoys to start serving as mediators in indirect talks between the government and guerrilla leaders. He said it also gives President Boris Trajkovski and Prime Minister Ljubco Georgievski the authority to declare a partial amnesty as part of a disarmament deal.

[...]

But Trajkovski said yesterday that he doesn't think guerrilla leaders will be satisfied with the political rights gained by ethnic Albanians under today's political accord. Trajkovski says he still thinks the real goal of the guerrillas is to capture Macedonian territory in order to form a Greater Albania." (RFE/RL 13 August 2001)

The rebels accepted the agreement on the 13th of August:

"Ethnic Albanian guerrillas in Macedonia signed an agreement Tuesday with NATO to give up their weapons, Paul Barnard, a spokesman for the NATO negotiator Pieter Feith, told AFP.

Barnard said that the Macedonian government had also offered a partial amnesty to the rebels, the details of which would be released later.

[...]

The disarmament deal will pave the way for the deployment of a NATO peacekeeping force of up to 3,500 soldiers to enter Macedonia and set up collection points on rebel held territory to received voluntarily surrendered weapons." (AFP 14 August 2001)

In November 2001, constitutional amendments were made, but the issue of amnesty remained:

"On November 16, in a vote muscled by the European envoys, the Macedonian parliament adopted constitutional reforms giving the same rights to the ethnic minorities, primarily the Albanian community, as to the majority Macedonian population." (AFP 25 December 2001)

"A major remaining issue is the actual implementation of amnesty. UNHCR believes that the effective implementation of an amnesty is key in normalizing further the situation in FYROM. The amnesty should not only apply to the former Albanian rebels but also to draft evaders and deserters of all communities who had refused to take up arms during the six-month internal conflict. A generous amnesty will make for the smooth introduction of a multi-ethnic police force into the former conflict areas and will help reduce fear among people of all communities." (UNHCR 16 November 2001)

See, "Ohrid Framework Agreement", Government of Macedonia, 13 August 2001 [Internet]

Ethnic Albanian separatists warned of further conflict (January 2002)

- The Albanian National Army, an ethnic Albanian group, warned that it was ready for further fighting
- The ANA are believed to be former members of the Albanian nationalist movement which spawned the Kosovo Liberation Army, and claims to be fighting for a so-called Greater Albania

“The Albanian National Army (ANA), a shadowy ethnic Albanian group, warned Monday that its fighters would be ready for further fighting in Macedonia in response to what it called "possible offensives" by government forces.

In a statement quoted by the Macedonian state news agency MIA, the group said that it had decided to "step up preparations for an adequate response to possible offensives by repressive Macedonian forces against Albanians".

"We are forced to defend our interests, our homes and our families," the statement continued, adding that anti-Albanian forces within the Skopje government "had used all their potential for destroying the Albanian people".

The ANA claims to be fighting for what it calls a Greater Albania and has vowed to overturn a Western-brokered peace plan which ended an ethnic Albanian uprising in Macedonia last August.

The statement comes amid the return of joint police patrols in Macedonian regions, controlled until recently by the guerrillas of the self-styled National Liberation Army (NLA).

And that operation has been supervised by NATO, the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the European Union.

[...]

In recent months, Macedonian President Boris Trajkovski has pardoned 64 of 88 former rebels under the terms of an amnesty proclaimed in October as part of a NATO-sponsored arms collection operation and peace plan which has granted wider minority rights for ethnic Albanians.

But the ANA has rejected the accord and its statement said that the peace plan was "just a stab in the back for Albanians".

[...]

The previously unknown ANA are believed to be former members of the Albanian nationalist movement which spawned the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA)." (AFP 14 January 2002)

Local self-government law improved rights of ethnic Albanians (January 2002)

- The Macedonian parliament passes the local self-government law on 24 January 2002, giving Albanians more control in regions where they form the majority

“After months of political haggling, the Macedonian parliament has bowed to international opinion and passed a crucial devolution law [on 24 January 2002] to improve the rights of the Balkan republic's ethnic Albanian minority.

[...]

Known as the local self-government law, the measure forms a key part of a Western-sponsored peace accord. Unless it reached the statute books, there seemed little chance that a donors' conference would be convened to decide how much foreign aid should be allotted and how it would be distributed.

Now European Union officials say the conference may meet in early March [2002].

[...]

The devolution law covers budgeting, municipal planning, education, health care, public services, culture and welfare. Albanians sought more control over their affairs in the areas where they represent the majority. Albanian parties blocked the proceedings after deputies from Macedonian parties submitted dozens of obstructive amendments to the original draft. Many of these were aimed at a clause granting municipalities the right to merge - a step Macedonian deputies said would eventually lead to "federalisation" or "cantonisation".

[...]

The deadlock was broken after Albanian parties dropped their demand for municipalities to merge (they will be allowed to form joint administrative bodies instead) and agreed that health care funding should remain in the hands of the central authorities.

The assembly passed the bill by a two-thirds of majority, the margin now required for all measures relating to ethnic minority rights.” (IWPR 30 January 2002)

Political and humanitarian status quo as of March 2002

- Since August 2001, 15 constitutional amendments were adopted, as well as a general amnesty law
- The general security and humanitarian situation improved, stimulating a return to normalcy

“Since the signing of the Framework Agreement in August, 2001, the parliament of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (fYROM) has adopted 15 constitutional amendments, providing for additional minority rights in the areas of language, education as well as participation in public service. In addition, a general amnesty law for former Albanian insurgents was approved by parliament on 7 March, removing a major obstacle towards ethnic reconciliation and further reducing the threat of another humanitarian emergency.

The active mediation of the international community, including the presence of OSCE and EUMM observers and some 800 NATO troops under Operation Task Force Fox mission, has contributed to a general improvement of the security and humanitarian situation. As a result, international observers do not expect an organized armed conflict this spring and summer, but they note that pockets of disgruntled extremists could present a danger to stability. Field reports suggest that most of the population want to get back to normal conditions as soon as possible.

The deployment of Macedonian security forces is continuing slowly with minor problems, but reasonably well with the help of international monitors. Security forces have been deployed in over 50 out of 138 planned villages. Training for ethnically mixed security forces is also continuing apace. A second group of 250 recruits which includes 150 ethnic Albanians began training in February.” (UN OCHA 8 March 2002)

“While implementation of the Framework Agreement, including the redeployment of security forces and a law on amnesty, has proceeded more slowly than envisaged, the situation on the ground has improved dramatically since the summer of 2001, when the humanitarian community was assisting some 170,000 people who had fled their homes. Significant humanitarian and rehabilitation activities, not only in terms of the relief provided but also in terms of reuniting divided communities have been carried over the past six months. These activities have facilitated the return of more than 140,000 refugees and displaced persons by providing assistance to repair homes and basic infrastructure, restart schools and health services and restore basic coping mechanisms.” (UN OCHA 9 March 2002)

Police force entered last ex-rebel stronghold, prompting return of displaced (July 2002)

- On 5 July 2002, Macedonia's multi-ethnic police force entered the last former rebel stronghold
- People displaced during the fighting returned to their homes together with the police patrols

“Units from Macedonia's new multi-ethnic police on Friday entered a village in the northwest of the country, the last former rebel stronghold where government forces and ethnic Albanian guerrillas clashed last year, officials said.

Government spokesman Zoran Tanevski told AFP that the police patrols have entered the village of Tanusevci, near the border with the UN-administrated Kosovo province around noon (1000 GMT) Friday.

Tanusevci is the last of 140 villages that were controlled by ethnic Albanian guerrillas during last year's conflict which brought the former Yugoslav republic to the edge of the civil war.

"The return to Tanusevci marks the full control regained by security forces on the whole of the Macedonian territory," Tanevski said, adding that no incidents were reported during the police deployment of the village.

A dozen villagers who had left their homes during the conflict, as well as the representatives of NATO and the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) entered the village together with mixed patrols, Tanevski said.

A return of other residents of Tanusevci has yet to be organized, he added." (AFP 5 July 2002)

New legislation was adopted on use of Albanian language, but obstacles remain (June 2003)

- In June 2002, parliament adopted the last laws envisioned in the peace agreement and included rules on the use of the Albanian language in all government institutions
- Specific issues have remained contentious, including the use of Albanian on Macedonian passports, in parliament, and in education

"Although Albanian was granted official language status in June 2002 (RFE/RL 20 June 2002), HCHR noted in early 2003 that language rights remained 'an apple of discord' (Feb. 2003, par. 1.2). Specific issues of contention were the use of Albanian on Macedonian passports (IWPR 5 July 2002; RFE/RL 20 June 2002; MTV1 Televizija 11 Feb. 2003), the use of Albanian in parliament (HCHR Feb. 2003, par. 1.2; USIP 30 Nov. 2002) and in education (HCHR Feb. 2003, par. 1.2). According to the new law, only ethnic-Albanian members of parliament may address the parliament in the Albanian language; language rights in government were not extended to written communication or the use of Albanian by ethnic Albanian ministers when serving in government (USIP 30 Nov. 2002).

With regard to the government's language policy initiatives, the HCHR stated that,

[t]aking into consideration both the complexity of the language question and the number of wrongful steps in its implementation since the independence, the Helsinki Committee supports the Government's initiative [on Albanian-language elementary school classes], having in mind the existing Law on the use of the Macedonian language, and the need for passing a special law on the use of languages (Feb. 2003, par. 1.2).

In May 2003, the Macedonian Ministry of the Interior announced that it would begin issuing bilingual identity cards and that it planned to produce passports, driver's licences, car registrations and other identity certificates in both Macedonian and Albanian by the end of 2003 (MIA 14 May 2003). " (IRB July 2003)

Amnesty International expresses concerns about continued environment of impunity (2002-2003)

- Amnesty International has expressed concerns over a long period concerning continued allegations of police ill-treatment and torture
- AI expressed concern over the ill-treatment of ethnic minorities by police officers in January 2003

- There also was no progress regarding the fate of twenty people who “disappeared” during the conflict
- Two reports by AI document the failure to investigate the majority of human rights abuses committed during the 2001 conflict

AI Concerns about alleged ill-treatment by police of ethnic minorities

“Amnesty International has over a long period expressed its concerns about continued allegations of police ill-treatment and torture in Macedonia.

[...]

Alleged ill-treatment by police officers of people detained on suspicion of having committed a criminal offence affects all ethnic groups including ethnic Macedonians. However, in many of the cases Amnesty International has raised with previous administrations the alleged ill-treatment has had an ethnic or racial component to them in that the victims minority ethnicity or Muslim faith appeared to have been a, if not the, primary factor in the alleged ill-treatment. Indeed, in most of the cases detailed below there appears to have been no reason to suspect, or any attempt to prove, that the victim had been engaged in any illegal activity, and that the reason for the alleged ill-treatment was solely due to the victim's ethnicity.

To Amnesty International's knowledge, despite the frequency of allegations of police torture or ill-treatment, the number of prosecutions of police officers for such offences is so low as to be almost negligible. Amnesty International is further informed that, in the past, most if not all of the cases raised with the Macedonian authorities by the office of the Peoples Defender (Ombudsperson) have been dismissed as unfounded despite at times compelling evidence to the contrary. Amnesty International believes that this compounds the current climate of impunity.” (AI 22 January 2003)

AI Concerns about continued failure to address past abuses

“[T]here appeared to be no progress on ascertaining the fate of 20 people who either ‘disappeared’ or were abducted during the 2001 fighting, despite promises by the authorities that concrete information on the cases would be produced.

On 27 January Krenar Osmani was sentenced to six years' imprisonment for war crimes in connection with the events in 2001. However, there were concerns about the fairness of the trial and in April he and three other ethnic Albanians similarly accused of war crimes in connection with the 2001 insurgency were released from custody after the war crimes charges were dropped.” (AI 1 October 2003)

"The continued impunity enjoyed by the perpetrators of abuses committed during the conflict in Macedonia will perpetuate lack of respect for the rule of law, Amnesty International said today as it released the report *Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia: Dark Days in Tetovo*.

Amnesty International remains concerned that the human rights abuses committed during the conflict by both sides have not been subjected to investigation and are not likely to be effectively investigated in most cases. The only exception is a very small number of cases in which the International Criminal Tribunal for former Yugoslavia has declared an interest.

'The police operate in an atmosphere of impunity and there is no indication that the violations committed by state agents will be subject to any investigation, while members of the National Liberation Army (NLA) have been granted an amnesty,' the organization stated." (AI 15 August 2002, 'Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia: Impunity threatens lasting peace')

[...]

"An amnesty granted for 'criminal acts related to the conflict of 2001' has ensured that members of the NLA will not be held accountable for abuses of human rights. The authorities have shown no sign of investigating the activities of the security forces. The only investigations known to be in hand are being conducted by the International Criminal Tribunal for former Yugoslavia. It is focussing on a few of the

worst war crimes alleged to have been committed both by the Macedonian authorities and the NLA but has neither the mandate nor the resources to investigate all abuses.

[...]

The organization believes that a failure to effectively redress abuses of human rights and international humanitarian law will hinder the overall process of building a state which fully respects and protects the human rights of all within its jurisdiction." (AI 15 August 2002, "Dark days in Tetovo", pp.1-2)

For more information on police ill-treatment and torture, see also reports published by the Council of Europe, Committee for the Prevention of Torture [Internet]

For information regarding progress on the missing, see "Macedonia: Inquiry into missing deadlocked" 11 December 2003, IWPR [Internet].

General elections are largely in line with international standards (August – September 2002)

- Over 800 international observers monitored the polls, constituting the largest election observation mission ever deployed in Europe
- Election Day was characterized by a high turnout of voters, few and isolated incidents of violence
- The OSCE characterized the elections in general as an orderly process, except for a high incidence of group voting
- There was an upsurge in inter-ethnic and political violence and intimidation in the weeks preceding the general elections

“Yesterday's parliamentary elections in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia were largely in line with international standards, concluded the International Election Observation Mission in a statement issued today (attached). More than 800 international observers monitored the polls in what was the largest election observation mission ever deployed in Europe.

‘The citizens of this country have achieved a successful electoral process which could represent a major step towards restoring stability, reconciliation and democracy in the country’, said Kimmo Kiljunen, Vice President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the OSCE and Special Coordinator of the OSCE Chairman-in-Office to lead the OSCE Observation Mission. ‘The small number of extremists responsible for violence during the past few weeks and days must not be allowed to jeopardize this achievement.’

‘Despite a difficult political and security background, the electoral process showed commendable resilience throughout the campaign, which contributed substantially to a largely trouble-free election day’, added Julian Peel Yates, who is heading the long-term observation mission of the OSCE's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR). ‘Any election-related disputes must be resolved quickly so that there is no doubt about the results.’

‘We are confident that these elections will contribute significantly to the ongoing process of reconciliation after last year's crisis’, said Björn von der Esch, the head of the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly's delegation.

‘It is crucial now that the new Parliament takes up its work swiftly and that all its members, fully aware of their responsibilities towards their common State, tackle the reforms needed for the implementation of the Association and Stabilization Agreement with the EU’, said Doris Pack, the head of the delegation of the European Parliament.

Among the positive aspects of the electoral process highlighted by the International Observation Mission were the new election system adopted earlier this year, the exemplary work of the State Election Commission, as well as the electoral campaign which was well organized and appropriately policed.

However, the observers also expressed concern about a number of violent incidents which at times marred the election campaign and created a tense atmosphere. These incidents included the killing of police officers, hostage taking, and attacks on party offices and media representatives. While the media as a whole offered a wide range of information and views, the state media coverage of the campaign was biased in favour of the incumbents.

Election day was characterized by a high turnout of voters, few and isolated incidents of violence, and in general an orderly process, except for a high incidence of group voting.” (OSCE 16 September 2002)

“Although generally declining during the year, there was an upsurge in inter-ethnic and political violence and intimidation in the weeks preceding the mid-September 2002 general elections, underscoring the fragility of the peace deal.” (HRW 14 January 2003)

See also:

“Special Voting Procedures for IDPs to participate in 2002 elections (2002)” [Internal link]

“Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia Parliamentary Elections 15 September 2002”, OSCE/ODIHR Election Observation Mission, 20 November 2002 [Internet]

“Conclusions of the international monitoring of the 2002 population and housing census in FYR Macedonia” International Census Observation, European Commission, 1 December 2003 [Internet]

The section on Elections in the “Annual Report” of the International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights, 24 June 2003 [Internet].

Macedonian government adopts amnesty law (March 2002 and June 2003)

- In June 2003 the government adopted another amnesty law for those who had avoided compulsory military service since 1992
- An amnesty law was adopted in the beginning of March 2002
- In December 2001, the first amnesties were granted, meant to defuse ethnic mistrust and enable the return of police to rebel-dominated territory

“In June [2003] the government adopted an amnesty law for those since 1992 who had avoided compulsory military service which affected 12,369 people of whom 3,260 were ethnic Macedonians, 7,730 ethnic Albanians and the rest from Macedonia's other ethnic groups.” (AI 1 October 2003)

In the beginning of March 2002, an amnesty deal was reached:

“Following the pledge of the peace treaty, many political changes took place, beginning with the amnesty law for NLA members. This law was voted on and approved by the Macedonian Parliament in the late evening of March 7. About 300 prisoners and detainees held because of the armed conflict last year were released.” (IFRC 4 July 2002)

“Macedonian President Boris Trajkovski pardoned 11 jailed ethnic Albanian guerrillas on Wednesday, launching an amnesty seen as crucial to sustaining an August peace settlement.

The amnesty, aimed at defusing ethnic mistrust and enabling the return of police to rebel-dominated territory in coming weeks, was decreed under Western diplomatic pressure last month after weeks of nationalist obstruction.

It is to cover all rebels who are not indictable by the U.N. war crimes tribunal and voluntarily disarmed under NATO supervision by September 26, unless captured before then.

[...]

"The pardoning commission will continue to process others on the list of 88 pardoning proposals. The President will bring further pardoning decisions in the next few days." Officials said detainees would be freed after their names and cases were published in Macedonia's official gazette, expected shortly." (Reuters 5 December 2001)

An unofficial translation of the Amnesty Law , (Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia, No.18, 8 March 2003) is provided by UNHCR [Internet].

See also the unofficial translation of the "Decree Proclaiming the Law on Amnesty of Citizens of the Republic of Macedonia who did not complete their Military Obligation", 18 July 2003, UNHCR [Internet].

General security improved despite continuing threats posed by militants (2003)

- The presence of international peace forces has largely improved the security situation in FYROM
- The EU armed force took over from NATO forces in March 2003
- Multi-ethnic police forces were established in over 138 villages in and around the conflict zone and all checkpoints were removed by January 2002
- However, large amounts of weaponry remain in the hands of criminals and alleged rebel groups
- Despite significant improvements, violent incidents particularly on the part of armed ethnic Albanian rebels continued in 2003
- Amnesty International reported the ongoing existence of underlying tensions between Macedonian and Albanian communities

"The security situation in FYR Macedonia improved progressively throughout 2002 and early 2003. The redeployment of the NATO force, OSCE monitoring team and EUMM have all helped in this. The UN Mine Action Service co-ordinated activities addressing the problem of mines and UXOs. Multi-ethnic police forces were also established in some 138 villages in and around the conflict zone and almost all police checkpoints had been removed by January 2002. However large amounts of weaponry in the hands of criminals and alleged rebel groups contribute much uneasiness, while around 600,000 illegal weapons are speculated to remain in the country. Criminal incidents are predominantly centred either on human and drug trafficking rings or on political discord." (UNHCR 2003, p.1)

"At the end of March [2003], EUFOR - a European Union (EU) armed force of some 300-400 soldiers from different countries - took over the military functions from NATO of protecting monitors from the EU and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

Despite some violent incidents and the appearance of the so-called Albanian National Army - an armed ethnic Albanian group purportedly fighting for a united 'Greater Albania' whereby the areas in Macedonia inhabited predominantly by ethnic Albanians would secede and join with neighbouring Kosovo and Albania - the security situation remained relatively stable. However, underlying tensions and distrust between the Macedonian and Albanian communities remained and at times became apparent. In June in Skopje police shot dead an ethnic Albanian, Nexhbedin Demiri reportedly after he pulled a gun when police officers attempted to arrest him for robbery, violence and armed assault on the police. His death

prompted violent protests in his home town of Arachinovo - which is predominantly populated by ethnic Albanians and was the scene of confrontations in the 2001 fighting - with a crowd of civilians armed with automatic weapons taking over the police station and allegedly beating six policemen. Macedonian television crews covering the unrest were also attacked, and EUFOR involved in negotiations to restore the peace.

In January, it was announced that the notorious 'Lions' - a special mono-ethnic (Macedonian) paramilitary police force set up by the Interior Ministry following the insurgency in 2001- would be disbanded. The announcement prompted armed 'Lions' to block the main road from Skopje to Kosovo in protest. The protest ended with agreement that half of the 1,200 or so Lions would be incorporated into either police or army units. There had been a number of incidents of alleged human rights violations involving members of the 'Lions'." (AI 1 October 2003)

“[C]auses for serious concern remain. Large swathes of territory in ethnic Albanian dominated areas remain beyond the control of law enforcement. Not only are the population as a whole vulnerable, but police also fear for their own safety. Organised crime and a profusion of weapons, especially in weakly controlled border areas, have left significant parts of the country at risk. Mistrust between ethnic communities remains palpable. Killings in Tetovo in October dramatised the lingering danger of spiralling ethnic violence.

Macedonia's indigenous security institutions – both police and army – are weak and largely unreformed, relying on outmoded tactics that reinforce mistrust while undercutting effectiveness. International organisations are likely to have broad cooperation from the new government but many of the security programs they have introduced will take months (in some cases years) to complete. Meanwhile, the threat lingers that Macedonia could be destabilised by organised crime, Kosovo-based Albanian extremists, or election losers.

The real progress toward political stability and internal security that has been made has largely been possible because of unprecedented cooperation between NATO, the U.S. and the EU from the early days of the crisis in 2001. That cooperation remains essential for the transition period that Macedonia has now entered. Specifically, a military presence such as NATO's Task Force Fox currently provides is still indispensable. Largely manned and led by Europeans, Fox is less than one-thirtieth the size of the NATO force in Kosovo. It has contributed mightily toward establishing a 'secure atmosphere' that has seen more than 90 per cent of those displaced by the conflict return home while enhancing the effectiveness of other international actors in Macedonia, including the EU itself and its Monitoring Mission (EUMM), the U.S., and the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). It intervened critically at least three times over the past year to prevent inter-ethnic incidents from escalating out of control." (ICG 15 November 2002)

See also:

“Macedonia faces new risk of ethnic conflict”, Agence France-Presse, 3 September 2003 [Internet]

“Macedonia: Ohrid two years on (Progress has been made but doubts remain over the future of the republic's two ethnic groups)”, Institute for War & Peace Reporting, 19 August 2003 [Internet]

“Macedonia braces for increase in ethnic Albanian separatism”, Agence France-Presse, 19 September 2003 [Internet]

“EU launches Police mission in Macedonia” European Union, 15 December 2003 [Internet]

Section 6 on Inter-Ethnic Relations, “Early Warning Report”, UNDP, April 2003 [Internet]

“Underlying interethnic tensions result in violent incidents (2002-2004)” [Internal Link]

Political developments and progress in the implementation of the Ohrid Framework Agreement (2003)

- Progress has been made in implementing key aspects of the Ohrid Framework Agreement, in particular through laws passed in 2002 reinforcing minority language rights (2002)
- The process of decentralization of the government, another key component of the framework agreement has been slow
- A new law on local self-government was passed yet many details of the new local government system have yet to be defined
- The first parliamentary elections held since the end of the conflict were largely in line with international standards (September 2002)
- Voluntary surrender of weaponry took place between November-December 2003 with amnesty being granted to Macedonian citizens to surrender illegal arms without prosecution
- 2002 census results indicate a population of 2,022,547 (64.18% Macedonians, 25.17% Albanians, 3.85% Turks, 2.66% Roma, 1.78% Serbs, 0.84% Bosniaks, 0.48% Vlachs and 1.04% other ethnic groups)
- A Law on Asylum and Temporary Protection was adopted in August 2003

“The political and security crisis in 2001 brought the country to the brink of civil war and had a major impact on weakening the democratic institutions and reform processes in the political, social and economic spheres. The Framework Agreement – signed at Ohrid on 13 August 2001 – officially marked the end of armed hostilities between the ethnic Albanian armed groups and the Government forces. It set out political and constitutional reforms intended to improve the status of ethnic Albanians in FYR Macedonia and secured a cessation to the hostilities.

The Agreement remains the yardstick of FYR Macedonia’s progress towards a renewed democratic stability. The reform agenda includes increased representation of ethnic minorities in public administration and the police service and the use of minority languages across the public sector. The Agreement also has important implications for the process of administrative decentralisation. The government pledged to develop a stronger and more efficient local government equipped with the necessary financial means to exercise its new authorities and responsibilities. This process, which had already started before the security crisis in 2001, has become one of the cornerstones around which the renewed stability of the country is to be built and is a main focus of EC and other donors’ assistance, notwithstanding many obstacles to be confronted.

Progress has been made in implementing key aspects of the Framework Agreement. In March 2002, a new Amnesty Law was passed enabling the majority of the former ethnic Albanian rebels to return to civilian life without fear of prosecution. In May 2002, a law was passed stipulating the use of the Albanian language on identification cards and in June fifteen other laws mandated by the Framework Agreement were approved. Critically, these laws reinforced minority language rights and gave local communities a greater influence over local policing matters.

In other areas, however, progress has been slow. A major component of the Framework Agreement – decentralisation of government – has hardly begun. The new Law on Local Self-Government essentially provides just a framework. Many of the working level details of the new local government system are yet to be properly defined. To date, the political will to take this process forward has been lacking at central government level.

The first parliamentary elections in FYR Macedonia since the end of the armed conflict took place on 15 September 2002. Opposition parties led by the Social Democratic Union of Macedonia (SDSM), beat the then ruling nationalist party VMRO-DPMNE in the elections. The ‘Together for Macedonia’ coalition led by SDSM won 40.4% of the vote against VMRO’s 24.4%. In addition, the Democratic Union for Integration (DUI), a new party led by the former rebel leader, Ali Ahmeti, emerged as the dominant political force within the Albanian community, capturing 11.8% of the overall vote. A new coalition

government is now in place with both the DUI and the Social Democrats stating that future policies will be built upon fulfilling the outstanding commitments of the Framework Agreement.” (EAR 2003)

“[T]he final months of the year have been marked with political rather than economic happenings in the country. An action for voluntarily surrender of weaponry started in November and lasted till December 15. The amnesty programme allows all Macedonian citizens to surrender their illegal arms without fear of criminal charges. The action was judged a success and signifies a changed climate between Macedonian citizens.

Other issues, however, such as government decentralization laws, stirred rebellions in the municipalities and led to calls for referendum, the draft law for a new university in Tetovo again caused ructions.

According to the 2002 definite census results announced in December by the State Bureau of Statistics, Macedonia has a population of 2,022,547. Broken down into ethnic groupings; 64.18% or 1,297,981 are Macedonians, 25.17% or 509,083 are Albanians, 3.85% are Turks, 2.66% are Roman, 1.78% are Serbs, 0.84% are Bosniaks, 0.48% are Vlachs and 1.04% or 20,929 are other ethnic groups. There are 564,296 households and 23.1% of the total population live in Skopje. International community found the results ‘fair and accurate statistical analysis and represent a correct statistical image of Macedonia. The census was based on well established inter national and European standards.’

After the adoption of the Law for Asylum, and in line with changed focus of the humanitarian climate in the country, THAP (Temporarily Humanitarian Assisted Persons) status for refugees was not re-extended after September 31. Those people previously falling under this category were advised to apply for asylum and the majority (approximately 2,300 persons) accepted this advice.” (IFRC 5 February 2004)

*For a critical overview on the Ohrid Framework Agreement and its implementation, see :
“Macedonia: Implementation of the Framework (Ohrid) Agreement – July 2003”, Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, July 2003 [Internet] and “Special Report: Putting peace into practice - Can Macedonia's new government meet the challenge?” 30 November 2002, USIP [Internet].*

For information regarding the Macedonian Asylum law see “Macedonian Assembly adopts asylum law”, BBC Monitoring International Reports, July 2003 [Internet] and UNHCR's “Country operation's plans 2003 and 2004” [Internet].

*For more information and links regarding weapons in Macedonia, see:
“Weapons Amnesty and Legalization in Macedonia”, 04 September 2003 [Internet]
UNDP Macedonia website [Internet]
“Macedonia collects 7,500 weapons during amnesty programme”, Deutsche Press Agentur, 16 December 2003 [Internet]*

Causes of displacement

Summary of phases of conflict (February-August 2001)

- The rebels first actions were in the Tetovo and Skopje areas in February 2001, and a ceasefire was reached in April 2001
- Fighting broke out again at the end of April 2001, with fighting around Skopje, Lipkovo, Kumanovo, and Aracinovo

“Inter-ethnic relations have deteriorated over the past months due to the appearance of militant insurgent groups in February 2001. Their first actions were directed to the villages near the border with Kosovo, in the Tetovo and Skopje areas, and on the Skopska Crna Gora and Shar Planina mountains. The Government's immediate response was to secure the political and military isolation of the ethnic Albanian insurgent. After the extremists were driven out from their positions in the mountains, a ceasefire was announced after which most of the 20,000 refugees returned to their homes.

The ceasefire provided space necessary for the political dialogue on the long-term solution of the crisis. [...]

Following the ceasefire in April 2001, the situation deteriorated again on April 28th when eight soldiers were massacred in a terrorist ambush near the village of Vejce, close to the Kosovo border in the Tetovo area. In a reaction to the massacre, attacks occurred on Albanian properties at the beginning of May. Other nationalities were also victims of these revenge attacks. The turmoil was most intense in Bitola on May 1st and 2nd, and some incidents have been reported in Skopje, Veles and other towns. Afterwards, the insurgents in the so-called National Liberation Army (NLA) made attacks on several villages in Lipkovo Municipality, Kumanovo area. Around 15,000 people were caught in skirmishes, after many unsuccessful appeals from the security forces for them to evacuate the area. The latest NLA attempt to extend the area of conflict was in the village of Aracinovo, near Skopje (10 km from the centre of the city), was stopped by Macedonian security forces action after 2 weeks siege of the village.” (ACT 5 July 2001)

*For a detailed account of the fighting from January-May 2001, please see:
"Timetable of troubles in Macedonia" AFP, 8 May 2001*

Fighting in the Tetovo region caused displacement, and trapped thousands of civilians inside towns (February-March 2001)

- Fighting between the ethnic Albanian rebels and government forces in the Tetovo region caused the displacement of thousands and led to the isolation of civilians trapped in villages

“In late February, violence flared in Albanian-inhabited villages in northern Macedonia close to the border with Kosovo. In mid March, the violence spread to Macedonia's second largest city, Tetovo. The rebels claimed to be defending themselves against Macedonian security forces, i.e. their own government, and to be fighting for Albanian national rights in Macedonia. The coalition government in Skopje promptly raised the alarm, blaming Kosovo Albanian elements for exporting rebellion to Macedonia, and calling for the NATO-led forces in Kosovo (KFOR) to seal the border. The rebels claimed they were local Albanians, numbering 2,000 and recruiting dozens of volunteers from the surrounding area every day.” (ICG 5 April 2001)

“The recent crisis in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia led to the displacement of thousands of civilians and the isolation of an indeterminate number of others, who were trapped in remote villages around Tetovo and whose needs remained unknown for some time.” (ICRC 11 April 2001)

Concern for family was for some a reason not to flee, after alleged provocations by security forces and police (March-April 2001)

- Security forces and police allegedly provoked and mistreated the local population in their search for weapons
- The arrests and ill-treatment caused fear among the population, and some stated that concern for their family was the reason they had not fled

“The mayor of Xhepqishte, Vebi Ismaili, told of provocations by the security forces in the municipality and of police brutality in the village of Germa, where the forces - while they were searching for weapons - acted in a threatening manner and destroyed furniture and property in a number of houses.

[...]

In the village of Poroj, not far from Selce, we were told that Macedonian security forces entered the village one or two times every day. They were often masked carrying knives and they provoked the Albanians by playing Serbian music from the loudspeakers of the police vehicles. On 6 April Naser Veliu (42), Xhelal Halili (44) and more than 30 other men from Poroj (two from Germa) were arbitrarily arrested by the police. Some were arrested on their way to work, others in their homes. All were thrown into a military truck, and subjected to beating, kicking and verbal abuse for several hours. "We were beaten by canes, batons and other weapons, and one of the arrested was sexually abused," said Naser Veliu. The arrested men were taken to the police station in Tetovo where the ill-treatment continued. Several of the victims needed medical attention afterwards. Most were released without charges.

The incidents in Poroj appears to have been an act of vengeance on the part of the police after the armed clashes in the area in March, or possibly an attempt to frighten and subdue the population. The arrests and ill-treatment have caused fear among civilians, who experience strong feelings of humiliation. Several people stated concern for their family as the reason they had not joined "those in the mountains." (IHF 8 June 2001)

Renewed fighting in Kumanovo region displaced civilians, while hundreds were evacuated (April-May 2001)

- Frustrated with the slow pace of the political process and with the police conduct against Albanians, the rebels took up arms again in May 2001
- The fighting caused the displacement of civilians, while others were evacuated

“Tensions between the NLA and the authorities have been escalating over the past week, culminating with Albanian fighters in the Kumanovo area proclaiming an autonomous territory.

At the weekend, Albanian fighters killed eight Macedonian troops close to the border with Kosovo, in the worst outbreak of violence since the battles around Tetovo in March.

[...]

The NLA says its renewed activity is linked to their frustration with the slow pace of talks on improvements of Albanian rights. The government has so far rejected the community's demands for their status in the constitution to be elevated from minority to nation.

They claim to have been further angered by evidence that the police force has allegedly been harassing innocent Albanians, in operations against NLA targets.” (IWPR 3 May 2001)

Kumanovo region (Matejce, Slupcane)

"Ethnic Albanian guerrillas took the battle to the Macedonian government on Sunday [27 May 2001], capturing part of a village south of their main strongholds despite an ongoing security forces offensive.

Civilians continued to flee the area as police units sent reinforcements to Matejce, just south of the rebels' village strongholds in Lipkovo and Slupcane, where the guerrillas were threatening to over-run a police station.

[...]

A group of some 40 ethnic Albanian villagers said they had fled Matejce during the shooting, with one of them saying that a part of the village was under the control of ethnic Albanian guerrillas of the National Liberation Army (NLA).

[...]

He added that 1,358 people have been evacuated overnight from two hamlets south of Matejce -- Nikustak and Vistica -- which have so far been spared from clashes.

It was not clear how many civilians remained in Slupcane, which has a peacetime population of around 4,000 ethnic Albanians.

Hundreds, if not thousands, of civilians had remained in the village since early May, hiding from fighting in the cellars of their houses.

Slupcane has been the target of repeated government bombardments since May 3, when the NLA rebels seized the village in the name of their self-declared crusade for increased rights for Macedonia's ethnic Albanian minority." (AFP 27 May 2001)

Thousands of IDPs and local villagers refused to leave Lipkovo during cease-fire (May 2001)

- The government appealed to IDPs and local villagers to leave villages during cease-fire, but many stayed behind
- Reasons for not leaving were mainly solidarity, pressure from armed elements, as well as fear for the Macedonian police and army

"The flight of ethnic Albanian villagers from a rebel enclave in Macedonia dried up on Friday, disappointing the government after it appealed to civilians to leave the conflict zone.

Government troops are maintaining a cease-fire after bombarding rebel-held areas for two weeks, and authorities have warned villagers to use the opportunity to get out in safety before the army takes 'decisive action' against the guerrillas.

[...]

An estimated 1,500 villagers quit the area on Thursday, but most appeared to be from villages not actually occupied by guerrillas of the ethnic Albanian National Liberation Army (NLA).

There may still be as many as 3,000 villagers in Slupcane, a rebel stronghold which has suffered heavy bombardment by the Macedonian army, and an unknown number in Vakcince, the other main target of shelling.

The larger village of Lipkovo, which is also in NLA hands, is believed to be harboring thousands of displaced people who have abandoned their homes closer to the firing line.

'We have reports that villagers from Slupcane and two other villages have gone into Lipkovo, so the village population has been doubled,' the police official said. 'It wouldn't surprise me if some of them are living in the open.' (Reuters 18 May 2001)

"The Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Macedonia, appeals to the citizens of Lipkovo to leave the village due to their personal safety. The appeal says that the Ministry along with the international community will organize transport for the citizens of Lipkovo to any destination in Macedonia they choose. The evacuation of the civil population with busses from Lipkovo through Orizare and Opae to the gathering place - football stadium in Kumanovo will supervised by the International Red Cross." (GFYROM 30 May 2001)

"Apart from the people who agreed to be evacuated [by the ICRC], many of the villagers indicated that they were still not willing to leave their shelters. As previously stated, the reasons are multifaceted and cannot be taken in exclusion - either they express a reluctance to come into contact with the Macedonian authorities, or indicate a strong wish to stay together in a spirit of solidarity." (ICRC 18 May 2001, 'ICRC Update No.7')

"R Francois Steamm, the head of the ICRC in Skopje, said the organization estimates that there are roughly 10,000 ethnic Albanians living in the villages that are being targeted by the Macedonian army, Reuters reported. Steamm said the people remain there -- despite calls for them to leave for their own safety -- for several reasons. He said 'we cannot exclude [that] there is some pressure by the armed men, also some others are staying in solidarity, and a certain number are not leaving because they do not feel like encountering the Macedonian army.' Steamm added that 'there's every reason for concern over the state of refugees in these villages.' He said living in a cellar for a long period of time takes a 'physical and psychological' toll." (RFE/RL 23 May 2001)

"More than 10,000 ethnic Albanian villagers were refusing Wednesday to leave the rebel-held Macedonian village of Lipkovo, fearing they would be beaten by police, the local mayor told AFP.

Husamedin Halili said that at least 12,000 civilians were crowded into Lipkovo after villagers fled surrounding hamlets, and that 20,000 were trapped in the area, which has been the scene of fierce fighting for the past month." (AFP 30 May 2001)

Human rights violations in villages around Kumanovo were a cause of displacement (May 2001)

- Shelling and violent conduct by the army and the police forced civilians to leave their homes

"After the killing of 8 soldiers by the NLA on 28th April and of another two on 3rd May as well as the declaration of a 'liberated zone' around Kumanovo by the NLA, the Macedonian army and police started to resume their military actions against the NLA. The army and police forces started to shell, interrupted by some short ceasefires, around a dozen of villages in the northwest of Kumanovo, with a bigger number of villages, that can be only reached after crossing police checkpoints that can refuse the passage.

At the humanitarian relief organisation 'El Hilal' we spoke to a number of internal displaced persons (IDPs). One man came from the village Orizaje, being in the middle of the fighting zone, and he told us that one old man was shelled with 7 grenades when he went out of the house to do some field work. He also told us that the cemetery of the village was hit by 10 grenades, and that nearly all the houses had been destroyed.

About another village, Opae, being outside of the fighting zone by that time, we were informed by residents, that the police had used violent means in forcing them to leave the village. 'Both army and police entered the village. They came also to our basement, where 45 people had gathered, and made us leave by beating and pointing with guns at us. Some were beaten, when they had been on the street already. They tore apart the Koran, put it on the ground, and made us walk on it. They broke every window, took all paintings from the wall and then looted everything they could.' According to these reports also the mosque has been destroyed by the army. It struck them that only Albanian property was destroyed in this operation, but no Macedonian one.

We spoke also to the seven members of the Hamidi family one day after they had been evacuated from the village of Runica, 4 kilometers north of Slupcane, in connection with a military operation of the Macedonian army in this village. According to them, all 7 family members, including 4 young women, had been heavily beaten on the back and the breast. Three of them showed us the traces of the beatings. The

young man and one of the women additionally had head wounds from strokes with a kalashnikov. Reportedly the young man was covered with gasoline and threatened to be burnt, which was prevented by his mother and his sisters. The old father, also having been severely beaten so that his breast was swollen, was in a very bad condition and urgently needed to be transferred to a hospital, which was complicated by the fact that the family, as well as the relatives were too afraid to pass through the police checkpoints, who control everybody who is coming in and out of this region. According to the report of the family masked army members, numbering around 150, entered the ten house hamlet at around 4 a.m. in the morning of May, 21st. They said that the village at this time was with the exception of them empty, as all other villagers had left already in the night. They were forced to leave their house, and later had to watch the village burning. According to them the hamlet was completely destroyed. Only at 4 p.m. were they brought by a helicopter to the police station in Kumanovo, from where they were brought to relatives close to Kumanovo." (IHF 8 June 2001)

Fighting in Aracinovo lead to displacement of thousands, despite the conclusion of a cease-fire (June 2001)

- Civilians, many of whom were already displaced, fled Aracinovo out of fear for possible fighting
- Two weeks later, fighting around Aracinovo caused the village to be entirely abandoned, displacing more than 10,000 people

"Following the arrival of ethnic Albanian armed groups in Aracinovo, several thousands of people are reported to have left Aracinovo and nearby villages - either to Kosovo, where they are being cared for by the UNHCR, or within Macedonia. It is important to underline that these people, many of whom are already displaced from the Kumanovo region, decided to leave in anticipation of a possible outbreak of fighting in and around the village." (ICRC 15 June 2001)

"The cease fire brokered on Sunday, 24 th of June, prevented an escalation of military conflict (at least for a short time and limited to the area of Skopje), but did not prevent an escalation of the humanitarian crisis mainly related to the large-scale movement and displacement of population. The village of Aracinovo (with more then 10,000 inhabitants) was entirely abandoned, and heavy fights around the village triggered another large wave of people on move." (ACT 5 July 2001)

Renewed violence near Tetovo resulted in displacement of hundreds (November 2001)

- UNHCR warned of further displacement unless progress was made in implementing the peace agreement
- Renewed violence in the Tetovo region caused the displacement of hundreds
- The Macedonian president held the ANA, the New Liberation Army of Albanians, responsible for new attacks

"The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees today warned of further population displacement in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) unless significant progress was urgently made in implementing the 13 August peace agreement.

"Macedonia is heading dangerously close to a turning point," High Commissioner Ruud Lubbers said in New York. "There must be no further delays in the political peace process, particularly on the amnesty issue, if the country is to avert further displacement of its people."

Lubbers, in UN Headquarters in New York to discuss mainly the Afghanistan issue, expressed grave concern over the outburst of violence last weekend near the FYROM town of Tetovo which prompted hundreds of villagers to flee their homes.

[...]

Tensions rose over the weekend in northern Macedonia when government forces and former ethnic Albanian rebels clashed in the village of Trebos, near Tetovo, leaving three policemen dead. Seven Albanians were arrested. Many shops and schools remain closed in Tetovo. Fearing further violence, about 1,000 villagers reportedly fled the village of Ljuboten, north of Skopje, where intense security operations took place just before the August peace agreement.

The situation remains tense around the village of Semsovo in the Tetovo region, with state forces stationed in nearby villages. Most of the women and children have left the village, afraid of sporadic gunfire which only ceased on Wednesday with the arrival of European monitors who set up an overnight presence in the village." (UNHCR 15 November 2001)

The Macedonian president held a new rebel group responsible for new attacks:

"The president named a formation known as the ANA as one group responsible for new attacks.

"We are also seeing the so-called ANA, the New Liberation Army of Albanians -- they are standing behind the new terrorist activities," Trajkovski said, speaking in English.

"Even after the weapons were collected and the terrorists disbanded, terrorist groups still exist" he said." (AFP 19 November 2001)

POPULATION FIGURES AND PROFILE

Global figures

The displaced population is greatly reduced between 2001 and 2003 (January 2004)

- The estimated total number of internally displaced persons still seeking a solution in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia is 2,678
- There was an estimated population of 2,678 IDPs as of January 2004 compared with 74,000 in the aftermath of the conflict in August 2001

UNHCR Estimate of Refugees and Displaced Persons still seeking solutions in South-Eastern Europe, Map	1 January 2004	2,678
UNHCR Estimate of Refugees and Displaced Persons still seeking solutions in South-Eastern Europe, Map	1 December 2003	3,154
UNHCR Estimate of Refugees and Displaced Persons still seeking solutions in South-Eastern Europe, Map	1 October 2003	3,154
UNHCR Estimate of Refugees and Displaced Persons still seeking solutions in South-Eastern Europe, Map	1 July 2003	6,060
UNHCR Estimate of Refugees and Displaced Persons still seeking solutions in South-Eastern Europe, Map	1 April 2003	9,442
UNHCR Estimate of Refugees and Displaced Persons still seeking solutions in South-Eastern Europe, Map	1 January 2003	9,442
UNHCR Estimate of Refugees and Displaced Persons still seeking solutions in South-Eastern Europe, Map	1 September 2002	16,351
UNHCR Estimate of Refugees and Displaced Persons still seeking solutions in South-Eastern Europe, Map	15 January 2002	21,200
UNHCR Estimate of Refugees and Displaced Persons still seeking solutions in South-Eastern Europe, Map	31 October 2001	50,000
UNHCR/IFRC/ICRC	August 2001	74,000

(Sources: UNHCR/IFRC/MRC)

Total IDP population is 9,500 people (1 April 2003)

- Many estimated the real number of IDPs to be around 10,000, due to the fact that many have not returned yet while not counted as displaced any more

Estimate of displaced persons in the FYR of Macedonia as of 1 April 2003: 9,442 (UNHCR 1 April 2003)

The American Red Cross reported:

"The total number of IDPs in Macedonia currently is 7,421 persons. However this number may slightly increase in the next few weeks because there are still IDPs who are in the process of receiving a registration card.

Many estimate the real number of IDPs to be around 10,000. This is due to the fact that many have not returned to areas out of fear for their safety; yet the international community has given the 'go ahead' and no longer considers these people to be internally displaced.

Registration of IDPs is return related:

Most of the IDPs cannot return to their homes because:

the houses themselves are very badly damaged or completely destroyed (category III and IV on the UNHCR scale).

they are not satisfied with the security situation in the regions where they are from, and are afraid to go back.

These two criterias were also recognized by the Macedonian Government, MRC and other NGOs, so the re-registration process was based on them (only persons meeting these terms were re-registered as IDPs)." (ARC 16 August 2002)

Total IDP estimates from May 2001 till July 2002

- Following are IDP numbers at several moments during the conflict, as reported by several agencies, such as WFP, UNMIK, RFE/RL, UNHCR, ICRC, ACT, IFRC, and the Government of Germany

July 2002

"MRC/ICRC has just completed new re-registration of all IDP's and came out with figure of around 6,500 IDP's (1,500 in collective centers and the rest in private accommodation - host families." (MCIC 12 August 2002)

"According to information provided by the Skopje bureau of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) on 24 July, there are still 5,762 internally displaced persons in Macedonia, MIA news agency reported. About 4,000 persons are accommodated with families, while the rest live in hotels or student dormitories." (RFE/RL 26 July 2002)

March 2001

"16,401 internally displaced, down from 70,000 in August and September of last year, out of which 56 percent are ethnic Albanian, 34 percent ethnic Macedonian and 10 percent other minorities." (UN OCHA 8 March 2002)

December 2001

"The Macedonian Red Cross reported that as of 12 December, 20,200 IDPs were registered for assistance; of these, the great majority are staying with host families and approximately 3,000 are accommodated in 17 collective centres." (WFP 28 December 2001)

"The Macedonian Red Cross, which is conducting a registration exercise, estimates the number of IDPs to be 20,000, including 2,500 residing in collective centres." (WFP 14 December 2001)

October

"The Macedonian Red Cross reports that 53,800 people are internally displaced with 50,250 staying in host family accommodations and 3,550 in collective centres. The increase in the above numbers is due to the agency's re-registration of their beneficiaries, and does not reflect further displacement." (UNMIK 18 October 2001)

"As of 1 October, 41,200 people were still reported to be displaced, according to the Macedonian Red Cross - a significant drop from the 70,000 previously reported." (WFP 5 October 2001)

September

“The Macedonian Red Cross estimates the number of IDPs in FYRoM at 74,200. The registration of IDPs by the Red Cross Movement has been suspended in order to allow verification of the registered caseload.” (WFP 21 September 2001)

“Officials of the Macedonian Red Cross said in Skopje on 5 September that the number of internally displaced persons now stands at 75,878, dpa reported. Some 47,148 are from the Tetovo region, 16,266 from Kumanovo, 8,278 from Skopje and Aracinovo, and 4,186 from Skopska Crna Gora.” (RFE/RL 6 September 2001)

August

“The Macedonian Red Cross said that since the conflict in FYROM started in February, it had registered 70,728 internally displaced persons - 66,871 in host families and 3,857 in collective centres.” (UNHCR 28 August 2001)

“As of 22 August, the number of IDPs stood at some 60,000.” (WFP 24 August 2001)

“Some 5,000 persons displaced as a result of the fighting during last week have been registered by the Macedonian Red Cross, making the total number of displaced persons within the country 53,000.” (UNHCR 14 August 2001)

“As of 3 August, the Macedonian Red Cross reported the registration of 47,420 IDPs that are registered within various Red Cross branches around the country. The large majority is accommodated with host families, while some 2,950 persons are lodged in 14 collective centres.” (WFP 10 August 2001)

“Currently in Macedonia there are 47,400 registered internally displaced people, most of them come from the northwest part of the country.” (IFRC 6 August 2001)

July

“As of 20 July, the Macedonian Red Cross (MRC) reported the registration of 31,673 IDPs as a result of the conflict that started in February. Approximately 1,400 persons are lodged in five collective centres, while the large majority is accommodated with host families.” (WFP 27 July 2001)

“While the Government supported by international community is searching for a durable political solution, some 50,000 ethnic Albanians and Macedonians remain displaced within Macedonia, seeking shelter with relatives or friends as well as in the recently established collective centers in the area of the capital Skopje. [...]

Additionally, there are IDP’s still not registered and also around 15,000 people in great needs because they are trapped in the villages.” (ACT 5 July 2001)

June

“Ruud Lubbers, UN High Commissioner for Refugees, estimated that as of 20 June 2001 circa 80,000 people had had to leave their homes in Macedonia due to the conflict. According to UNHCR figures some 48,000 of these people have fled to Kosovo.” (Government of Germany 22 June 2001)

May

“The Macedonian Red Cross has registered almost 6,000 people displaced by the latest clashes between government forces and ethnic Albanian fighters. With those still homeless from the clashes in March and April, the total of registered displaced people countrywide is 8,170. Most of the displaced have been taken in by host families.” (IFRC 25 May 2001)

The crisis showed a peak of 84,669 IDPs in August 2001; table with total IDP numbers by month (March-November 2001)

- In the first phase of the conflict some 22,627 people were displaced (March 2001), who returned when fighting stopped
- The registration process by the MRC stopped at the beginning of September 2001
- In November 2001, a re-registration process was conducted which put the IDP number at 25,000

"With the first phase of armed activities in Skopska Crna Gora region, north of the capital, the number of registered IDPs from the villages affected was **22 627** people in the month of **March [2001]**. Most of the IDPs fled towards two main destinations Skopje region and Kosovo, where they change their status to a refugee.

The situation calmed down during **April** resulting with **2 169** IDPs registered by the MRC. Situation got worse beginning of May when 14 719 people have been registered. As the events developed to more serious outbreak of violence, so was the numbers of IDPs rising. In order to be more illustrative here is a table breakdown of registered people March till October:

Month	No of registered
March 2001	22 627
April 2001	2 169
May 2001	14 719
June 2001	35 497
July 2001	54 683
August 2001	84 669
September 2001	-29 285 (= 54 000)
October 2001	3 272 (returnees from Kosovo); 49 000 registered

Please note that the IDPs registered in March were assisted and later went home. The numbers as of April are cumulative. One should also mention that registration process stopped beginning of September. Security situation in some of the crisis areas improved and many IDPs have return back. Therefore reduced number of 54 000 in September. [...]

October distribution figures revealed total of 49 271 IDPs, out of which 3 398 accommodated in collective centers. Beginning of November throughout the whole month a re-registration process was conducted in order to obtain updated figures on the actual state. There were around 25 000 IDPs registered in November." (E-mail from IFRC Macedonia to NRC Geneva 7 December 2001)

IDP figure is hard to estimate and varies greatly through time (September 2001)

- Frequent movement of IDPs to and from their homes alters the IDP number greatly
- Another complicating factor were returning refugees from Kosovo who did not return to their home villages

"Because of the frequent movement of displaced persons to and from their homes during the course of the fighting, the number displaced at any one time could vary greatly. There were no recorded internally displaced persons in Macedonia at the beginning of the year.

[...]

Many people have been displaced for short periods of time, frequently returning to their homes after clashes have subsided. [...] Further complicating the count of internal displacement was the occurrence of large numbers of people fleeing to Kosovo-about 76,000, many of whom (an estimated 19,000) returned to Macedonia, but not always to their original homes (mostly to Skopje).” (USCR September 2001)

Geographical distribution

Number and geographical origin of IDPs (2004)

- Early 2004 estimates indicate that there are 2,678 internally displaced persons (718 families)
- 1640 are being sheltered with host families and 1038 are in collective centres
- The main villages of origin of the displaced population are Aracinovo, Matejce, Tetovo, Opaе, Veles, and Brest

“Out of a total of 2’678 IDPs (or 718 families) 1640 are in Host Families. 1038 are staying in Collective Centers.

[...]

Municipalities of origin of displaced people

Main Municipality of Origin	PERSONS
Aracinovo	666
Matejce	464
Tetovo	348
Opaе	224
Veles	205
Brest	200

(Source: ICRC 11 February 2004)

The six places of origin mentioned above represent nearly 80% of all the displaced.” (ICRC 11 February 2004)

Geographical locations of registered displaced people

Registered IDP's in HF	PERSONS	Family	Host Family
Municipality			
Bitola	1	1	1
Gostivar	12	2	2
Kumanovo	212	77	77
Ohrid	2	1	1
Tetovo	267	59	57
Skopje	495	116	108
Sub - total	989	256	246

(Source: IMG 14 February 2004)

Number and locations of IDPs (August 2002)

- In August 2002, 7,421 people were still internally displaced

- A total of 5,447 persons were sheltered with host families, while 1,974 were accommodated in collective centres

15.08.2002 IFRC/ICRC/MRC

IDP in HF	PERSONS	Family	Host Family
Municipality			
Bitola	22	5	5
Vinica	6	3	3
Gostivar	13	3	3
Veles	208	21	20
Kavadarci	2	1	1
Kicevo	1	1	1
Kocani	7	3	3
K.Palanka	0	0	0
Kumanovo	2,756	608	603
Ohrid	2	1	1
Prilep	0	0	0
Radovis	3	1	1
Resen	7	2	2
Kratovo	2	1	1
Struga	3	1	1
Strumica	0	0	0
Tetovo	849	176	178
Gevgelija	0	0	0
Skopje	1,566	238	238
Sub - total	5,447	1065	1061

IDPs in Collective Centres

SK Region	Persons	Family	KU Region	Persons	Family	
Ranka Milanovic	95		Hotel Kristal	155		
T.Stefanovski -Senic	138		Hotel Kuba	167		
Partenije Zografski	116		Internat	61		
CC Zdravko Cvetkovski	131		Dom za stari	18		
Dimitar Vlahov	42					
Cicino Selo	115					
Stiv Naumov	461					
Megashi	22			401	0	
Hotel Pelagonija	282					
Olimpisko selo	136					
25 Maj	34					
Gerontoloski	1					
	1,573	0		Sub Total	-	1,974
Total of IDP population with RC cards				7,421		

(IFRC 15 August 2002)

Areas of origin of remaining IDPs (August 2002)

"most of the IDP's population are from Kumanovo region, Tetovo region and Skopska Crna Gora." (IFRC 15 August 2002)

"Most of the IDPs are from villages near the city of Tetovo, while the rest are from Aracinovo (village near Skopje) and Lipkovo area (community with few villages near Kumanovo)." (ARC 16 August 2002)

Number and locations of IDPs (May-July 2002)

- In July 2002, only 6,500 IDPs remained, 1,500 of whom stayed in collective centers
- In May 2002, 16,351 people were still internally displaced
- A total of 13,837 persons were sheltered with host families, while 2,514 were accommodated in collective centres

July 2002

"MRC/ICRC has just completed new re-registration of all IDP's and came out with figure of around 6,500 IDP's (1,500 in collective centers and the rest in private accommodation - host families." (MCIC 12 August 2002)

May 2002

Total May 14th 2002			
Municipality	Persons	Family	Host Family
Berovo	0	0	0
Bitola	109	33	33
Veles	1	1	1
Vinica	10	4	4
Gevgelija	33	10	10
Gostivar	305	78	69
Debar	346	54	54
Kavadarci	14	5	5
Kicevo	21	6	5
Kocani	18	7	7
Kratovo	2	2	2
K.Palanka	1	1	1
Krusevo	6	3	3
Kumanovo	4,281	878	823
Ohrid	119	35	26
Prilep	171	44	34
Radovis	3	1	1
Resen	17	4	3
Sv.Nikole	22	6	6
Struga	34	9	8
Strumica	43	16	14
Tetovo	3,547	1,180	1,085
Skopje	4,734	942	844
Sub - Total	13,837	3,319	3,038

Note

Some of the IDPs from Skopje & Kumanovo area are accommodated in Collective centres as follows:
(This number is part of the total number of registered IDPs)

CC Ranka Milanovie	105	Hotel Kristal	160
CC Tome Stefanovski – Senic	163	Hotel Kuba	167
CC Partenije Zografski	122	Dolno Konjare	53
CC Zdravko Cvetkovski	138	Dom za stari	19
CC Dimitar Vlahov	47	Dojran Holiday camp	0
CC Cicino Selo	154	Crven krst Dojran	65
CC Stiv Naumov	673	Negorci	30
Children embassy Megashi	22	Polin Dojran	0
Hotel Pelagonija	352		
Olimpisko selo	186		
25 Maj	58		
1 Maj	0		
Total No of IDPs in CC	2,020		494
Total No of IDPs in CC			2,514
Total No of IDPs in Host Families			13,837
Total No of IDPs			16,351

(MRC 14 May 2002)

A de-registration exercise for IDPs was carried out (May 2002)

“The process of de-registration, conducted by the MRC, is ongoing, and decreasing of IDP number is expected. Only persons with damaged houses cat.3&4 will be eligible for IDP status.” (Aidmacedonia 9 May 2002)

“Due to this, already two collective centres in Dojran were closed and only CCs in Negorski Banji, Geveglja and MRC camp in Dojran are left open.” (Aidmacedonia 4 April 2002)

Number and locations of IDPs (January 2002)

- In January 2002, 13,432 IDPs were hosted in 2765 host families, and 2,871 IDPs were sheltered in 18 collective centers
- The grand total of assisted persons was 21,104 IDPs

IFRC/ICRC MRC

IDP in HF	Persons	Family	Children*	Host Family**
Municipality	Dec. 01			
Berovo	0	0	0	0
Bitola	99	31	3	30
B.Makedonski	60	20	2	19
Valandovo	0	0	0	0
Veles	2	2	0	2

Vinica	10	4	1	4
Gevgelija	1	1	0	1
Gostivar	363	87	16	70
D.Hisar	0	0	0	0
Debar	343	55	22	50
Delcevo	0	0	0	0
Kavadarci	7	3	0	3
Kicevo	14	4	1	4
Kocani	18	7	1	7
Kratovo	0	0	0	0
K.Palanka	1	1	0	1
Krusevo	6	3	0	3
Kumanovo	4,589	938	166	820
Negotino	0	0	0	0
Ohrid	122	36	3	27
Prilep	162	41	1	32
Probistip	0	0	0	0
Radovis	3	1	1	1
Resen	19	5	2	4
Sv.Nikole	26	7	4	7
Struga	41	11	3	10
Strumica	52	18	3	15
Tetovo	3,525	1139	82	999
Stip	0	0	0	0
Skopje	3,969	763	159	656
Sub - Total	13,432	3177	470	2765

IDP in Collective centres

	Persons	Family	Children*
CC Ranka Milanovic	107	34	3
CC T.Stefanovski – Senic	150	46	1
CC Partenije Zografski	120	36	4
CC Zdravko Cvetkovski	135	43	2
CC Dimitar Vlahov	48	14	2
CC Cicino Selo	151	40	11
CC Stiv Naumov	710	204	15
Megashi	22	6	4
Hotel Pelagonija	517	154	8
Olimpisko selo	304	86	8
25 Maj	57	17	4
Hotel Kristal	160	57	2
Hotel Kuba	158	52	7
Dolno Konjare	62	26	0
Dom za stari	21	13	1
Makedonka Dojran	29	13	1
Negorci	34	12	2
Polin Dojran	86	22	1
Sub - Total	2,871		

Total of IDP population with RC cards	16,303
---------------------------------------	--------

Micro/series displaced NOTE 3 months programme Jan/March 2002	
Municipality	Persons
Tetovo	4,378
Skopje	423
Sub – Total	4,801

Grand total of assisted persons	21,104
---------------------------------	--------

* Children under 2 years

** Number of host family

(E-mail from the IFRC Information Centre for Refugees to NRC Geneva 17 January 2002)

Most of the IDPs are housed with host families, while a minority is sheltered in collective centers (October 2001)

- IDPs were accommodated in collective centers, the first being opened in July 2001 with a total of 21 in August 2001
- IDPs were also accommodated in host families, with a peak of 68,812 in September 2001

"Accommodation in collective centers

As needs rose to accommodate huge numbers of displaced people, the Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare identified possible institutions within the country. Seeing that most of the IDPs were from the north west and north east part of the country, initial priority was given to use all available facilities in Skopje and its surroundings. Therefore most of the 21 collective centers as there were operative during the peak were in Skopje region. However, Red Cross summer resorts and other suitable institutions around the country offered accommodation for the displaced.

The first collective center was opened in July 2001 when some 1 298 people found shelter in the beginning of the month, rising to 2 946 at the end of the month. End of August there were 3 857 persons accommodated in 21 collective centers, while similar is the number of 3398 reported for October in 19 collective centers.

Accommodation in host families

IDPs were/are also accommodated in host families. When numbers of the displaced were highest during the month of August, some 60 662 IDPs were residing with host-families, rising to 68 812 beginning of September, and some 50 250 beginning of October." (E mail from IFRC Macedonia to NRC Geneva 7 December 2001)

"High majority of IDPs are settled in with host families (in most cases with relatives). This is also the case with IDP's in Macedonia (ethnic Macedonians from affected areas moved to their relatives in Skopje, Kumanovo and other towns in the South-East of the country)." (USCR September 2001)

Displaced fleeing violence in Tetovo fled mainly to local villages or to Skopje (July 2001)

- Fighting around Tetovo displaced thousands, who mainly fled to family in Skopje, or to villages in the region of Tetovo

“They are among 350 inhabitants of the village of Lesok who have fled and taken refuge in Zilce, following intense fighting over the past week near the flashpoint northwest town of Tetovo between ethnic Albanian guerrillas and government forces.

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) says 8,000 Macedonian Slav people have fled their villages overall, fearing for their lives as ethnic Albanian rebels fight for what they say are minority rights.

Most took refuge with their families in the capital Skopje, while others went to villages around Tetovo, the biggest Albanian town in Macedonia.” (AFP 27 July 2001)

Fighting around Aracinovo displaced thousands (June 2001)

- Fighting around Aracinovo displaced more than 10,000 people

“Following the arrival of ethnic Albanian armed groups in Aracinovo, several thousands of people are reported to have left Aracinovo and nearby villages. [...] The Macedonian Red Cross branches of Sindjelic, Ilinden and Momin Potok in Skopje city has registered around 2100 people who left Aracinovo and the surroundings over the last three days.” (ICRC 15 June 2001)

“The cease fire brokered on Sunday, 24th of June, prevented an escalation of military conflict (at least for a short time and limited to the area of Skopje), but did not prevent an escalation of the humanitarian crisis mainly related to the large-scale movement and displacement of population. The village of Aracinovo (with more than 10,000 inhabitants) was entirely abandoned, and heavy fights around the village triggered another large wave of people on move.” (ACT 5 July 2001)

Ethnic violence around the city of Tetovo created some 20,000 IDPs (March 2001)

- Fighting in the Skopska Crna Gora and Tetovo regions caused the displacement of some 20,000 people, fleeing mainly to Skopje

“Following the recent violent incidents in Macedonia near the border with Yugoslavia, several hundred inhabitants of Albanian origin have fled the villages of Tanusevci, Malina Mala, Gosince and Brest to seek refuge in safer areas of Macedonia or in neighbouring Kosovo.

About 500 of them have been taken in by relatives in various places between Skopje et Kumanovo, and especially in the village of Aracinovo, where they are experiencing considerable hardship.” (ICRC 9 March 2001)

“The ICRC and the Macedonian Red Cross registered around 20,000 internally displaced people from the Skopska Crna Gora (north of Skopje) and Tetovo areas in the northern part of the country. Approximately 14,000 of them were registered in Skopje, and the rest in other parts of the country.” (ICRC 11 April 2001)

“Around 1300 families in FYROM have taken the displaced people into their homes.” (ICRC 30 March 2001)

Disaggregated data

In January 2004, 42% of the displaced population was ethnic Albanian and 37% Macedonian (2004)

Ethnicity of Displaced Population in January 2004

Albanian	c. 1120 or 42%
Macedonian	c. 988 or 37%
Serb	c. 450 or 17%
Roma and Bosniacs	c. 4%

(ICRC 11 February 2004)

Ethnicity of Displaced Population in August 2003

“Ethnic composition: Out of 3319 registered IDPs 44.4% are ethnic Albanian, 38% Macedonian, 13.6% Serb, 3.8% Roma and 0.2% others” (UNHCR 22 August 2003)

Some 30 percent of the IDP population was ethnic Macedonian (March 2002)

“16,401 internally displaced, down from 70,000 in August and September of last year, out of which 56 percent are ethnic Albanian, 34 percent ethnic Macedonian and 10 percent other minorities.” (UN OCHA 8 March 2002)

Majority of displaced are women, children and elderly people, while over half of the displaced were ethnic Macedonian (March-September 2001)

- The IDPs are mainly women, children and elderly
- In September 2001, out of the 70,000 IDPs some 60 percent were ethnic Macedonians

“The displaced are mainly women, children and elderly people who left their villages in haste for fear of the fighting, while the menfolk stayed behind to watch over their homes and livestock.” (ICRC 9 March 2001)

“The Macedonian Red Cross has registered at least 70,000 people displaced within the country, 60 percent of whom are ethnic Macedonians.” (UNHCR 25 September 2001)

PATTERNS OF DISPLACEMENT

General

Displaced mainly fled to host families (mostly relatives), but are also sheltered in collective centers (March-September 2001)

- The majority of IDPs are sheltered with host families, while a minority is sheltered in collective centers
- Poor IDPs left villages in a poor condition, while town-dwellers mainly left with vehicles and personal belongings
- Some IDPs returned to the city during the day for work, and went back to the host families in the evening

“High majority of IDPs are settled in with host families (in most cases with relatives). This is also the case with IDP's in Macedonia (ethnic Macedonians from affected areas moved to their relatives in Skopje, Kumanovo and other towns in the South-East of the country). [...]

Only a small number of people (around 800), mostly from Aracinovo, are settled in five collective centres in Skopje.” (ACT 5 July 2001)

“By mid July, collective centers had been established in eight locations to accommodate displaced people-six in the Skopje area and two in Kumanovo. Most, however, found shelter with relatives and friends.” (USCR September 2001)

“The conditions of the displaced vary from poor people fleeing villages in a rather poor condition to town-dwellers who were mainly able to leave with vehicles and personal belongings. Reports from displaced from Tetovo suggest that some people are returning to the city during the day to work and returning in the evening to their host families.” (ICRC 24 March 2001)

Displacement occurred according to ethnic patterns (July 2001)

- In July 2001, ethnic Albanians were leaving Skopje while Macedonians left Aracinovo and Tetovo, showing a process of ethnic homogenisation
- UNHCR expressed concern about the ethnic separation, posing potential difficulties for return

“As a consequence of these incidents and because of the towering distrust between Macedonians and Albanians, there is an emerging process of ethnic homogenisation: Albanians are leaving Skopje, Macedonians are leaving Tetovo. Those Macedonians who decided to stay in Tetovo are threatening to establish so-called "self-defence committees".” (PC 11 July 2001)

“UNHCR is deeply disturbed by reports that Macedonian Slavs are fleeing ethnic Albanian areas of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, a development that recalls some of the darkest days of the past decade in the Balkans.

Eric Morris, UNHCR's special envoy for the region, said the refugee agency has been concerned about the possible separation of ethnic populations in FYROM since the beginning of the conflict earlier this year.

'Our fear has been that one ethnic community would go in one direction, toward the state security forces, and the other community would go the other direction, in search of security on the other side,' said Morris, who has recently visited several villages in the affected areas of northern FYROM. 'This is now happening in some places. It was not my feeling that 'ethnic cleansing' was the intent of the conflict, but if there's going to be a separation of the population, the consequences could be the same. It can spiral out of control. And if a community believes it was forcibly expelled, enormous barriers will be created for any eventual return.'

Morris, who was at UNHCR's Geneva headquarters on Tuesday, said he was particularly disturbed by the recent departure of Macedonian Slavs from the towns of Aracinovo, northeast of Skopje, and from Lesok, north of Tetovo. He recently visited both towns." (UNHCR 24 July 2001)

Cease-fires were secured to evacuate trapped villagers (May 2001)

- ICRC secured cease-fires to evacuate villagers
- Most people preferred to stay out of solidarity, fear, or were forced by the armed groups

"The ICRC was able to secure three ceasefires from both sides in the conflict in order to reach the affected villages, namely Slupcane and Vaksince, where it arranged for the evacuation of vulnerable persons and delivered much-needed medical supplies.

It will continue to try to gain access to these villages to offer, in its role as neutral intermediary, the opportunity for people to leave if they wish and to respond to immediate humanitarian needs." (ICRC 18 May 2001, 'ICRC Update No.6')

"Most people are reluctant to leave their homes either because they fear coming into contact with the Macedonian authorities or because they express a strong sense of solidarity to stay together in their homes. It cannot be excluded, although this was not directly articulated to the ICRC by the villagers, that they are may be under pressure to stay from elements within their community, including from members of the armed groups." (ICRC 10 May 2001)

PHYSICAL SECURITY & FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT

General

Underlying tensions between ethnic communities result in violent incidents (2002 – 2004)

- The threat of rekindling internal conflict and extremist ethnic Albanian groups have frequently been downplayed by the international community and the government
- Security has greatly improved since 2001 with the presence of the OSCE and with the rise in ethnic Albanian representation in the police force
- Although security is said to have improved, a number of incidents in 2003 threatened the security situation in FYR Macedonia

“When it comes to Macedonia, the government and international community consistently accentuate the positive. Diplomats have downplayed the threat of internal conflict and dismissed ethnic Albanian extremist groups as uncoordinated and isolated. The international community has also been quick to hail police re-deployment under OSCE guidance as an unqualified success.[...]

Macedonia has made important strides in filling the security vacuum left from the conflict of 2001. The number of ethnic Albanians in the police has steadily risen, and OSCE field monitors and police advisors have done yeoman’s work. Albanian villagers, who reflexively blocked even token police entry in 2002, now generally welcome multiethnic patrols and increasingly cooperated in law enforcement efforts.² OSCE-sponsored Citizen Advisory Groups have brought citizens and police together to discuss and resolve concerns. Despite continuing complaints about army presence, border incidents have been reduced.

In a number of areas, ethnic Albanians and officials have even asked for a greater police presence and acknowledged that well-armed teams are needed to deal with criminals. One mayor maintained that the absence of police was a Macedonian ploy to let crime fester in Albanian areas.[...] Most villagers chose to stay out of a tense 12 June 2003 stand off with police in Aracinovo.[...] The increase of Albanians in the police has been equally important outside the former crisis areas, in towns like Gostivar, Debar, Kicevo and around Struga and Ohrid.

Great credit for the improvements in police relations should go to Interior Minister Hari Kostov. His predecessor, Ljube Boskovski, nearly provoked armed confrontations with ethnic Albanians on at least three occasions,[...] and the reputation of the ministry suffered considerably due to his actions and those of the special force, the Lions. Kostov, a former banker, has been an active reformer. During a stand off with villagers near Vejce, he waved off helicopters and other traditional police means of ‘solving’ problems, sat down with local Albanians and listened during emotional negotiations that ultimately deescalated the situation.

Yet, there is a darker side. Consider a by no means complete list of major incidents that have occurred in the last ten months:

[...]

SCHOOL DISPUTES

In early October 2002, Albanians in Semsevo, northeast of Tetovo, ignored procedures and unilaterally changed the school’s name from that of a Macedonian hero to that of a local Albanian hero, whose bust they installed at the entrance. Macedonian parents saw this as a hostile gesture and withdrew their children.

In Kumanovo, as tensions were climbing toward conflict in spring 2001, an Albanian teacher was beaten, and Albanians took their children from the high school. A powerful bomb exploded near the entrance of the high school on 25 December 2002 killing a passer-by, wounding others and narrowly missing killing scores of Macedonian students.[1]

In both cases, painstaking OSCE mediation, even with participation of senior officials, has failed to produce an understanding.[2] In Semsevo, a U.S.-EU offer to build a new gymnasium failed to solve differences, and Macedonians did not return to the school. In Kumanovo in May 2003, Macedonians blocked 180 Albanians, accompanied by police and international representatives, from attending a mixed school. In response, four days later, more than 1,000 Albanians blocked a main road into town. Further high-level mediation has led to a tentative understanding that one official calls 'an agreement for more separation' rather than an actual solution.[3] These two disputes, direct by-products of the 2001 conflict, are important test cases for post- Ohrid Macedonia. In a sign of how difficult this issue has become, Education Minister Azis Pollozhani has given up preaching mutual respect for national symbols and floated the idea that schools should be numbered rather than named.

More recently, bitter disputes over schooling have emerged in Skopje and the second-largest city, Bitola. On 11 September 2003, Macedonian parents pulled their children out of a high school in the capital to protest Pollozhani's decision to transfer in seven classes of Albanian students. The next day, Macedonian students and parents launched a boycott of a Bitola high school in opposition to Pollozhani's decision to have Albanian taught. The minister was accused of trying to 'import' Albanians into primarily Macedonian Bitola.[4] Chauvinistic messages that Albanians are not welcome in Bitola ensued amid rising tensions and rock-throwing incidents. In Skopje, only a police cordon prevented a direct confrontation between Albanian students trying to enter the school and Macedonians protesting against Pollozhani. The Skopje stand-off is centred in the highly-mixed area of Cair.[5] Appalled at the reaction, Interior Minister Kostov expressed 'shame' at the denial of the right of Albanians to study in their own language. However, the government has temporarily suspended Pollozhani's decision, and he has been sharply criticised from several quarters for allegedly mismanaging the entire matter.

TENSIONS BETWEEN ETHNIC ALBANIANS AND TURKS

In another barometer of post-Ohrid ethnic relations, Turkish parents are increasingly at odds with Albanians over schooling in their language, ability to select school directors and perceived pressure to identify themselves and their children as Albanians.[6] A report by an experienced international official said ethnic Turks are being pressed 'to think that one day the Tetovo region will be a purely ethnic Albanian area, with ethnic Albanian culture and and identity for their children'.[7] It concluded that this pressure is leading to the forced assimilation of the Turkish community.

It is a revealing irony that Ohrid, which diminishes the pre-eminence of ethnic Macedonians and, in theory, should boost the standing of all citizens, is unpopular not only with Orthodox Serbs and Vlachs, but Muslim Turks as well. Muhic, the Macedonian Muslim and dialogue expert, believes that 'all non-Albanian ethnic communities have a negative attitude toward the Ohrid Agreement' as favouring the Albanian community.[8] For their part, Albanians are balking at sharing their gains with other minorities.

After the recent appointment of a Turk, Zoran Sulejmanov, as a judge on the constitutional court, PDP Vice-President Abdylhadi Veseli complained bitterly that 'Albanians did not fight to see their places go to others'.[9] Prominent Albanians in the Debar area maintain that the local Macedonian Muslims are 'really Albanians'.[10]

With Albanians pitted even against co-religionist minorities, it is no wonder that Ohrid implementation with Macedonians seems mostly a zero-sum struggle of the two dominant groups. In turn, the gnawing suspicion that Macedonians and Albanians will inevitably return to conflict saps the commitment necessary to make the agreement work. With Georgievski and Xhaferi constantly asserting the incompatibility of the two largest communities, it is no wonder that support for Ohrid continues to flag.[11]" (ICG 23 October 2003)

[Footnote 1] Albanian students have subsequently been crowded into a shift system in a primary school building where bizarre allegations have emerged of ‘poisoning’. Observers believe the allegations may be connected to poor ventilation in the kitchen, or simply mass hysteria. Nevertheless, the complaints were serious enough to be considered a possible motive for the December 2002 bomb.

[Footnote 2] Factionalism within each ethnic community has dogged the mediation. Albanians will close out the school year in the ‘Workers University’ (like a junior college), with the aim of concluding a deal for shared use of the high school in 2004, followed by deals on the town’s other two secondary schools. Possibly a ‘multicultural school centre’, with international financing, might also be built to provide much needed capacity for both Albanians and Macedonians.

[Footnote 3] ICG interview with Deputy Minister of Interior Fatmir Dehari, 21 May 2003.

[Footnote 4] Bitola, known as Manastir in Albanian, has important symbolic value for Albanians for its role in producing the language. It was the site of riots in 2001, following incidents with the NLA in other parts of Macedonia. The riots inflicted serious property damage on Macedonian Muslims as much as the town’s Albanians.

[Footnote 5] The fate of Cair will be a particularly sensitive issue in the forthcoming municipal boundaries and Skopje laws. Many Macedonians believe that Albanians want to turn it into an ‘Albanian-controlled’ town in Macedonia and suspect this as a motive for the timing of Minister Pollozhani’s decision, which could have been issued in July or August when it would not have triggered such a sharp reaction. As in the Kumanovo school dispute, competition over scarce resources seems also to drive the Cair controversy; its school is operating at maximum capacity, with at least one Macedonian class forced to another site.

[Footnote 6] In theory, Ohrid ensures the education rights of all citizens, not just Albanians. It provides for primary and secondary education in native languages for all minorities; and while Albanians, as a ‘20 per cent-plus’ population are given the special privilege of university level education in their language, all minorities are to benefit from ‘positive discrimination’ (affirmative action) to ensure that enrolment matches their composition in the population. Ohrid agreement, Part 6, ‘Education and Use of Languages’, especially paragraphs 6.1-6.3 and paragraph 4 of Article 48. This mandates that students also study the Macedonian language.

[Footnote 7] Informal report entitled, ‘Educational issues for minorities other than ethnic Albanians’, provided to ICG.

[Footnote 8] Ferid Muhic, writing in Country Note on Macedonia, published by the NGO WSP International on 6 June 2003, p. 39.

[Footnote 9] Quote in ‘Parliament elects six out of nine constitutional judges’, *Skopje Diem*, 8 May 2003. See also ‘All the Turks will boycott classes’, *Dnevnik*, 1 April 2003.

[Footnote 10] ICG interviews in Debar, 13 January 2003.

[Footnote 11] Although diplomats avoid the politically incorrect subject, the disparity in Albanian and Macedonian birth rates is seen by Georgievski and others as inexorably bringing the two communities into more conflict. Referring to the census controversy, the deputy director of the bureau of statistics, Milaim Ademi, indirectly affirmed Macedonian fears. He told the Albanian daily *Shekulli* that Albanians cannot be less than the 22.7 percent figure of the 1994 census since 38 per cent of the newborn babies in the country in 2002 were Albanian. ‘The arguments of Ademi are that the increase of the Albanian population is much higher than the other ethnic nationalities,’ in ‘Demography: 38 percent of newborn are Albanians’, *Skopje Diem*, 26 August 2003.

For a chronology of recent major security incidents, see “Appendix A, Chronology of Recent Major Security Incidents” in “Macedonia: No Room for Complacency” International Crisis Group, 23 October 2003

See also:

“Mysterious explosions in Macedonian City”, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, 10 February 2004 [Internet]

“Refugees flee northern Macedonia as police clamp down on militants”, Deutsche Presse Agentur, 1 September 2003 [Internet]

“Incidents Aimed Against Framework Agreement”, Statement by the Macedonian government, 1 September 2003 [Internet]

“Security Situation”, paras. 174-176 in “Reports from the Council of Europe Field Offices June 2003”, Council of Europe, 23 July 2003 [Internet]

“Outbreaks of looting and attacks against the homes of displaced Macedonians and Serbs (2003)” [Internal Link]

UXO/Landmine threat to return of IDPs (2002-2003)

- The UN Mine Action Services estimates that about 80 villages were affected by UXOs, hampering the safe return of about 100,000 IDPs and refugees (2002)
- In July 2002, 55 villages were still affected, preventing the return of an estimated 8,000 people (December 2002)

“Key developments since May 2002: The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia completed destruction of its stockpile of 38,921 antipersonnel mine stockpile on 20 February 2003. In 2002, a total of nearly 3.9 million square meters of land was cleared, destroying 19 mines and 131 UXO.

[...]

FYR Macedonia’s landmine and unexploded ordnance (UXO) problem is largely the result of a conflict that broke out in early 2001 between Albanian insurgents (NLA) and FYR Macedonia government security forces.[...] According to the UN Mine Action Service (UNMAS), UXO poses ‘by far’ the greater threat: ‘Mines have been laid but their use was limited.... [A]bout 80 villages were affected to varying degrees by UXOs, hampering the safe return of about 100,000 IDPs [internally displaced persons] and refugees.’[1] In mid-July 2002, about 55 villages were still affected, preventing the return of an estimated 8,000 people.[2]

In its report to the OSCE and in an intervention during the May 2003 intersessional meetings, FYR Macedonia referred to the UXO problem in the south of the country, dating from World Wars I and II.[...] Clearance was being planned, but had not been budgeted for by the government, so international donations would be required. The Mine Action Office in Skopje investigated the affected area known as the ‘Thessalonika line,’ which consists of a World War I-era frontline trench stretching for approximately 250 kilometers from Ohrid to Gevgelija. Between in 1965 and 2002, 21,037 items of UXO were found and destroyed from the area, and UXO killed 14 and injured 142 people.

During a meeting held on 27 January 2003 between the Deputy Minister of Defense, Rizvan Sulejmani, and the UN Mine Action Office, it was agreed that the Ministry of Defense would formally request NATO and UN assistance in clearing the affected area.[...]” (Landmine Monitor Core Group August 2003)

AI reported on human rights abuses perpetrated by both sides of the conflict (August 2002)

- The Macedonian police reportedly used torture and ill-treatment of ethnic Albanians
- The NLA also ill-treated civilians and drove ethnic Macedonians out of their homes in attempts at ethnic cleansing

"The evidence from the Tetovo region indicates that the police routinely used torture and ill-treatment of ethnic Albanians both as a means of interrogation and, as many victims believed, of reprisal for actions by the NLA," the report stated.

"The NLA, which initially targeted the police and army, committed human rights abuses by abducting and ill-treating civilians and by driving ethnic Macedonians out of their homes in an apparent attempt at 'ethnic cleansing'."

[...]

Violations of humanitarian law by the NLA include:

abductions of civilians. The whereabouts of some civilians remain unknown and Amnesty International fears some may have been victims of unlawful killings;

injuries to civilians;

displacement of civilians, the majority being ethnic Macedonians but also of other ethnic groups including Roma, Turks and Serbs." (AI 15 August 2002, "Impunity threatens lasting peace")

HRW reported separation and torture of IDPs by Macedonian police forces (May 2001)

- Macedonian forces allegedly separated out ethnic Albanian men fleeing clashes, and interrogated some, to gain information on the rebels
- Many ethnic Albanians decided not to flee out of fear for the Macedonian forces
- Human Rights Watch stated that the ill-treatment violates international human rights law, and in the most severe cases amounts to torture
- The rebels claimed that one of the main reasons for its armed rebellion is the failure of the Macedonian government to address police abuse and discrimination against ethnic Albanians

"Macedonian forces are systematically separating out ethnic Albanian males fleeing fierce fighting in northern Macedonia, and severely beating some of the men at police stations, Human Rights Watch said today. In the most severe cases documented by Human Rights Watch, the ill-treatment appears intended to extract confessions or information about the National Liberation Army (NLA) and amounts to torture. The fear of violence at the hands of the Macedonian police is also stopping many ethnic Albanians from fleeing to safety into government-controlled territory.

'Ethnic Albanian men fleeing the fighting in Macedonia face severe ill-treatment by the police,' said Holly Cartner, executive director of the Europe and Central Asia division of Human Rights Watch. 'We have documented serious beatings and torture of ethnic Albanians at the Kumanovo and Skopje police stations in the last week. The victims we interviewed have the bruises and injuries to back up their claims of abuse.'

On May 22, Macedonian forces launched an offensive against ethnic Albanian fighters of the NLA who had seized control of villages located in the vicinity of the northern Macedonian town of Kumanovo. An estimated fifteen thousand civilians remain in the NLA-controlled territory, sparking concerns of significant civilian casualties if the fighting continues. Since the beginning of the renewed offensive, Macedonian forces have separated out men from the civilians fleeing the fighting and have severely beaten some of them.

Human Rights Watch researchers have documented cases of severe beating at the Kumanovo police station, located in the region where the latest fighting is taking place, as well as at the Skopje police station, located in the capital city of Macedonia. Some of the tactics involved hundreds of blows to the soles of the victims' feet—a torture technique known as falanga which causes severe pain and swelling and can lead to kidney failure—as well as extended beatings on the hands, buttocks, arms, and heads of the victims. The men interviewed by Human Rights Watch indicated that they had heard the screams of many other beating

victims at the police stations, suggesting that the scope of such abuse may be widespread and condoned at the police stations.

Human Rights Watch said that the ill-treatment violates international human rights law, and in the most severe cases amounts to torture.

Many of the ethnic Albanians are reluctant to talk to international observers because they fear further retaliation from the Macedonian police, and have in some cases been warned by their abusers not to discuss their maltreatment. [...]

On Tuesday, May 29, Human Rights Watch researchers observed a group of approximately thirty-five ethnic Albanian men from the village of Matejce who were separated from their female relatives and taken into the police station at Kumanovo.

[...]

"Ethnic Albanian men remaining in the villages under NLA control fear ill-treatment and torture at the hands of Macedonian forces," commented Cartner. "There is little doubt that this fear is one of the reasons why so many ethnic Albanian men are refusing to leave their homes in the conflict zone."

Police forces have also abused ethnic Albanian civilians this past week during raids against suspected NLA sympathizers in Tetovo, the scene of earlier fighting between the NLA and government forces. Human Rights Watch researchers documented the cases of ten ethnic Albanian men who were beaten during police raids in the villages of Dzepeiste and Poroj on May 25. During the raid on the Dzepeiste home of Naser Junizi, a schoolteacher and village leader accused by the Macedonian government of assisting the NLA, police commandos beat Naser Junizi, two of his brothers, his sixty-eight-year-old father, and his eighteen-year-old son. Police also entered the Poroj compound of the Saiti family, kicking and breaking three ribs of thirty-six-year-old Rami Saiti and attacking his seventy-three-year-old father and seventeen-year-old cousin before apparently realizing they had entered the wrong home and rapidly leaving.

[...] The NLA has claimed that one of the main reasons for its armed rebellion is the failure of the Macedonian government to address police abuse as well as other forms of discrimination against ethnic Albanians.

Although the Macedonian police appear responsible for the majority of beating cases, Macedonian military forces have also been implicated in beatings. Macedonian military troops appear responsible for the beating of a family of seven in the village of Runica, in which many houses were reportedly burned down by Macedonian troops on May 21, 2001." (HRW 31 May 2001)

Some 22,000 people were trapped in villages during fighting (July-August 2001)

- In July 2001, some 22,000 people were trapped in villages in the Kumanovo, Tetovo and Aracinovo regions, steadily fuelling the IDP number as they flee
- The number of affected civilians, also including already displaced people, rose to 100,000 by August 2001

"Most preoccupying in humanitarian terms is the situation of civilians living near the two main distinct lines where the fighting has been concentrated. That is:

in a string of villages to the west of the town of Kumanovo. Around 15,000 villagers remain in this area, many of them in the village of Lipkovo;
in the mountainous area above Tetovo, where exchange of fire still takes place on an almost daily basis. Between 3,000 and 5,000 civilian residents are believed to be affected. Access to this area for humanitarian organizations remains extremely difficult for security reasons.

There has also been fighting between these two fronts, for instance around the villages of Aracinovo and Radusa. An estimated 2,000 civilian residents are affected.

There is a steady trickle of displaced from among the resident population, either as a result of spontaneous movement or small-scale ICRC-assisted evacuations, giving rise to a continuous increase in the number of IDPs.” (ICRC 27 July 2001)

August 2001:

“The civilians who remained in areas directly affected by the conflict are still living in very difficult conditions. These are mostly in the Albanian-populated areas along the border with Kosovo - in the Kumanovo, Tetovo and Skopska Crna Gora areas - which were caught up in the fighting between the National Liberation Army (NLA) and the Macedonian armed forces. Problems faced include the destruction of civilian housing and damage to other property, and injuries to civilians. Around 100,000 people have been affected to date, including those who fled their homes and were registered as internally displaced persons at some time since the beginning of the conflict. While the exact number of residents currently affected is not known, estimates vary between 60,000 and 80,000 (about 20,000 in Lipkovo, including returnees, 8-10,000 in Shipkovica, and around 40,000 in Tetovo/Jazince).

[...]

The number of vulnerable residents requiring urgent assistance is likely to rise when people start returning to their villages, once they are confident that it is safe and that the ceasefire is holding.” (ICRC 28 August 2001)

SUBSISTENCE NEEDS

General

Ombudsman of the Republic of Macedonia reports that living conditions for many IDPs are unsatisfactory (2003)

- The Ombudsman of the Republic of Macedonia is an institution responsible for protecting the constitutional and legal rights of citizens
- The Ombudsman visited the biggest collective centres in Skopje and Kumanovo where IDPs live as well as a number of smaller collective centres
- The Ombudsman reported that most Albanian IDPs live with host families, whereas most Macedonian IDPs live in collective centres
- The report indicates that for a number of IDPs, living conditions are poor, in particular in terms of hygiene and access to free medical care

“Subject: Report about the conditions of the dislocated persons and measures for improvement of their condition.

The Ombudsman of the Republic of Macedonia as an institution that is protecting the constitutional and legal rights of the citizens is observing the conditions of the dislocated persons who were forced to leave their homes and properties because of the war conflict in 2001. With a purpose to find proper solutions for resolving this serious problem with his recommendations, suggestions and opinions, the Ombudsman intervened few times to the Government of the Republic of Macedonia and to other institutions and organizations who are responsible for the conditions of the dislocated persons. Unfortunately the interventions of the Ombudsman weren't understood and used as it's predicted in the Law for the Ombudsman.

With the purpose to inform himself about the moment condition of this persons, exactly to see near by the state and conditions in which the dislocated live, the Ombudsman in September 2003 visited the biggest collective centers in Skopje and Kumanovo where the dislocated still live. During this visit the team had conversations with the most of the dislocated.

The team had a visit in the collective centers: “Ranka Milanovich”, “Zdravko Cvetkovski”, “Tome Stefanovski-Senich”, “Olimpisko selo”, “Chichino selo” and “Partenie Zografski” in Skopje and in the centers “Kristal” and “Kuba” in Kumanovo.

The Ombudsman made this report from the visit:

In this moment there are 3 100 dislocated people from Tetovo and Kumanovo regions, 2 000 of them are settled in the collective centers. 36% of them are Macedonians, around 50% are Albanians and around 25% of them belong to the Gypsies, Bosnian and other communities. Most of the dislocated Albanians are settled in families and most of the Macedonians are settled in the collective centers. Even if the Ombudsman can't visit all dislocated who are settled in families and to see what conditions they live in, he is equally worried about their destiny since they have the same problems and needs as the dislocated who are settled in the collective centers.

Generally, the Republic of Macedonia, the institutions and the organizations that are responsible for the protection of rights of the dislocated persons basically are taking humane care for these citizens. Still, the conditions in which the dislocated are settled are far from the normal family and domestic living-right established with the international law and Constitution of the Republic of Macedonia. With giving this report the Ombudsman is aware that in this kind of situations it's very difficult to provide all principles of humanity for the dislocated, but the collective settlement of this people longer than two years evolved in to justified revolt, impatience and criticism towards the State, its responsible institutions and other institutions and organizations.

For example, the settlement of this people doesn't meet their needs because whole families live in one room, and in particular collective centers because of returning of some families in their homes their rooms are empty and locked so other families can't use them. Using that rooms would be very important for families with big generation difference and for those families who have children who are going to school and don't have conditions for studying.

Some of the dislocated persons who are settled in the collective centers in Skopje which are intended for pupils and students, yet all of them are living together. This kind of settlement, mixing the pupils and students with the dislocated has a negative influence on the process of education and socialization of these young people and that is the opposite from their legal right for proper settlement.

Persons who are settled in these centers, with some exceptions are not satisfied with the meals, which they are getting regularly. The food is monotonous, not tasty, they get fruit and vegetable very rare, and the needs of the children are not satisfied too. In some cases they don't eat food at all, there is no milk for the children or they are getting a small amount.

The dislocated have many objections about the amount and quality of the means for hygiene, the amount is very small and because of their bad quality they can't use them at all. In all collective centers, except in the collective center Olimpisko selo, the dislocated have one bathroom and toilet, and in some collective centers 40 people are using one bathroom and toilet, so they can't keep there hygiene at proper level. The dislocated persons who are settled in the collective center Chichino selo live in the worst conditions. Because of very low level of hygiene in this center the dislocated were sickened by the food, so they had to pay for the medications.

Considering the above-mentioned complaints about the settlement, the dislocated request from the authorities to find a way for their settlement in the objects (existing or who are in the process of building) in which every family would have at least the basic conditions for normal living, which is one room, kitchen and bathroom.

The dislocated have complains about the slowness and unjustified treatment for the next registration, because using the cardboard's from the registration made in 2002 is a problem for the dislocated especially when they are using them for public transportation (the clerks who are making control in the busses are taking them away), and for medical care, so they have to pay the expenses by them selves.

When we are talking about the pupils and the material condition of their families, it is necessary to emphasize that they are not in condition to provide school materials. We have to mention that the pupils who are settled in the collective center Chichino selo, do not go to school because are molested by the inhabitants who live in that village. They were looking for a protection from the police, but they didn't do nothing about that.

The dislocated demanded heating for the winter season and winter clothes.

The dislocated from the Kumanovo region are afraid to visit their houses and properties in that region because of security reasons.

Besides their reports, they're requesting for returning in their normal life, since returning in their houses and properties is unquestionable. That means providing security conditions in that regions where these people lived before the war had started, hastening the process for the reconstruction of their homes with the purpose of their return. This is in the interest not only of the citizens but also of the Government of the Republic of Macedonia and other institutions and organizations who are taking care for the dislocated persons.

Considering this actual condition with the dislocated persons, the Ombudsman considers that to this persons are rioted the rights determined by the Constitution of the Republic of Macedonia and with the International Conventions for the Protection of Human Rights, especially the right for invulnerability of the home, the right for free moving, the right for every person to chose the place for its living and the right of ownership which implies violating other rights.

From the stories that we heard, and for solving these problems of the people from the crisis regions, the Ombudsman considers that the State in this very case, in the past period longer than two years didn't do enough for solving the problem with inside dislocated persons, especially on safety level. This is one of the main reasons that reflect negatively on the process of returning the dislocated persons in their homes.

Bearing in mind the above-mentioned conditions of the dislocated persons and with the purpose for their improvement, the Ombudsman in the agreement with article 22 from the Law for the Ombudsman ("Official newspaper of R.M" no. 7/97) of the Government of the Republic of Macedonia the responsible Ministries , other responsible institutions and organizations and the International organizations who are responsible to take care for the dislocated persons in the Republic of Macedonia suggests them to take following measures and activities:

1. Immediately taking the necessary activities for improvement of conditions in the collective centers which are inadequate in this moment, improving the hygiene and medical care, the nutrition which suppose to contain sufficient amount of milk, providing hot water, winter clothes, shoes and other things.
2. Improving the conditions for education, the regular tuition for every child no matter of ethnical structure, in agreement with the article 44 from the Constitution of the Republic of Macedonia.
3. Taking the activities for making general strategic program on security and hastened return of the dislocated persons in their homes.
4. Making another registration of the dislocated persons which will insure the use of the public transport and free medical care.
5. Taking measures and activities for widening of the spatial settling of the dislocated persons.
6. Dividing the pupils and the students from the dislocated persons. They should be settled on a different floors and they should use different corridors.
7. Providing nappies for little children (this recommendation is especially for the children settled in the collective center Chichino selo).

These recommendations are for the dislocated persons who are settled in families too. In agreement with the article 23 from the Law for Ombudsman, the institutions and organizations are obligated to inform the Ombudsman about the measures who are taken on a base of his suggestions, opinions and recommendations, in a time limit of 30 days.

With a wish for cooperation, respect and trust and with the purpose for informing and finding adequate solutions about this problem, the Ombudsman sends this report about the dislocated persons to the responsible international institutions who are taking care about the dislocated persons.

Skopje, 13.10.2003

Ombudsman Branko Naumoski" (Ombudsman of the Republic of Macedonia 13 October 2003)

IDPs identified as vulnerable group in 2003 UN humanitarian strategy (2003)

- IDPs were among the vulnerable groups identified for priority focus within UN protection, humanitarian, and rehabilitation assistance programmes during 2003
- Poverty and unemployment were identified as key vulnerability criteria
- Other vulnerable groups included refugees, ethnic groups who are a minority within their communities, rural families and children with special needs

“In this post-conflict, transitional context, the UN Country Team has identified insecurity, restricted access to basic services, as well as poverty and unemployment as main vulnerability criteria. Lingered problems associated with the dissolution of the former Yugoslavia such as unresolved citizenship status and the lack of personal documentation have also been highlighted as significantly impacting vulnerability. Based on these criteria, the following vulnerable groups have been identified for priority focus within UN protection, humanitarian, and rehabilitation assistance programmes during 2003.

IDPs and Refugees

Identifying solutions for 9,013 [3] internally displaced persons (IDPs) and another 3,658 [4] refugees still in Kosovo is a priority for the humanitarian community. In addition, return for the majority of the 3,500 refugees [...] from the 1999 Kosovo crisis is still not viable due to continued insecurity and restricted access to basic services and economic opportunities for minority groups in Kosovo. At the same time, there is little political support within FYROM for local integration of these refugees, primarily comprised of Roma, Gorani, and Serb ethnicities.

Ethnic Groups who are Minority within their Communities

Subtle as well as overt harassment, vandalism and violence continues to impact minorities within communities, especially for pockets of ethnic Macedonians and Serbs. This continued insecurity is translating into mono-ethnic areas, segregated health and education services and lingering fears that the conflict could re-ignite. Problems accessing property, economic opportunities and decision-making mechanisms further marginalize families who form minorities in certain communities.

Other Socially Vulnerable Populations

While large segments of the Macedonian population can be classified as socially vulnerable, statistics indicate that extreme poverty is most prevalent in large rural families including in mountain villages with impeded or no access to basic services and goods.

The correlation between educational levels and poverty is also strong, with the highest poverty rates observed amongst households where the breadwinner has only a primary education (5). Similarly, for certain groups of children, access to education is a key vulnerability criteria including for young children with no access to early learning and stimulation programmes; children, particularly girls, who have dropped out of school without completing primary education and children with special needs, especially those in institutional care, including children with disabilities, abandoned and orphaned children and children in conflict with the law.” (OCHA 31 December 2002)

[Footnote 3] UNHCR statistics, October 2002

[Footnote 4] Government's Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy, November 2000

Unemployment and poverty identified as key issues in the post-crisis period (2003)

- Unemployment and poverty are key issues identified by the European Agency for Reconstruction in FYR Macedonia, in particular amongst the rural population
- Population movements from rural to urban centers has aggravated urban-based unemployment and affected both ethnic Macedonians and Albanians
- Reduction in the public sector has also resulted in economic uncertainty among ethnic Macedonians who previously had enjoyed privileged access to public and state jobs
- The country's economy continued to deteriorate in 2003 as a result of factors including, discontinued production and trade due to the conflict and mismanagement of the economy
- The poverty rate in the country is at 24.5%

“More immediately, unemployment and the relatively poor economic outlook are pressing issues, which can feed into the ethnic tensions in the country. There are also parallel problems confronting FYR Macedonia in this post-crisis period. Under-development in the countryside is creating severe poverty amongst the rural population. The drift of the population from rural areas to urban centres has resulted in an ever-increasing urban-based unemployment, which has affected both ethnic Macedonian and Albanian groups.

On top of this rural poverty, there is a growing crisis in the state sector. Pressure from the IMF to reduce the size of the public service, together with the need to restructure the old state-owned enterprises, will have a disproportionate effect on different ethnic groups in the population. There is now a growing feeling of economic insecurity among ethnic Macedonians who in the past enjoyed privileged access to jobs in the public sector and state-owned enterprises. The Framework Agreement obligations to increase the number of ethnic Albanians in these sectors may, at the outset, aggravate inter-ethnic relations.” (EAR May 2003)

“The country's economy continued to gradually deteriorate. As a result of the conflict and of the previous long-term unfavorable economic trends, the standard of living of the population fell. The negative economic situation could be largely attributed to state expenditures linked to the 2001 armed conflict and to discontinued production and trade in the areas of the country that were closely involved in the conflict. However, the situation was also a result of the continued mismanagement of the economy, illegal privatizations, and abuse of power for purposes of securing personal and party benefits by the ruling coalition of the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization – Democratic Party of Macedonian National Unity (VMRO-DPMNE) and the Democratic Party of Albanians (DPA), who were in power until the September elections.” (IHF 6 June 2003)

“[A]ccording to the National Statistical Office, the poverty rate in the country is 24.6%. Over 500,000 people live on less than 150 Denars per day, which is considered the poverty line
[...]

[T]he assessment that the unemployment and poverty situation in the country seem to be serious; that there is a relatively modest belief in an improvement; and that the risk of public protests should be taken seriously. In a nutshell, the short-term risks springing from poverty and unemployment must be taken seriously as they might have sufficient potential to destabilize the country and its institutions (UNDP April 2003, p. 23-26)

Humanitarian needs of the IDPs and returnees (July-August 2002)

- The most urgent needs of displaced and host families were for food, hygiene and health
- Returnees face similar needs
- Typical cases concern displaced without return prospects, who do want to go back but are not on the priority list for shelter reconstruction

"There is a need to support them [the displaced] and their host families as well as those in collective centres – specifically for food, hygiene and health. Returnees also have similar needs. There are also special needs regarding water supplies in some regions (Kumanovo and Tetovo) and agricultural support." (ACT 25 July 2002)

Example:

"[...] for many of these displaced persons, the situation is quite desperate. [...] displaced person, an older gentleman from a nearby collective center. He is 50 years old, has been living in this collective center for over a year, has no job and cannot return home since it was completely burned down; yet, he is not on the priority list to have it replaced. In the meantime, he cannot provide for his family and is quite ashamed. He is not looking forward to remaining in this collective center for another year but has no options. This can be considered a very typical case." (ARC 16 August 2002)

Food

Macedonia's agricultural sector seriously weakened by conflict (November 2001)

- In many conflict areas, farmers could not plant or harvest the fields, because they either had been displaced or because of unexploded ordnance
- This agricultural deficit could result in food insecurity and food aid dependency

"The conflict has had a devastating impact on the country's agricultural sector, which had already been weakened by the break up of Yugoslavia and the EU's decision to ban livestock exports. In many of the conflict-affected areas, farmers could not plant or harvest their fields as they had either been displaced from their homes or faced the threat of unexploded ordnance. Crop production has also been adversely affected by three years of drought, which have brought water reserves to dangerously low levels. FAO estimates that the yields of staple and fodder crops in 2001 will be 25 to 30% lower than average. Without targeted support the agricultural production deficit in drought and conflict-affected areas will result in increased food insecurity, a growing dependence on food aid and the loss of farming livelihoods." (UN-OCHA November 2001, pp.15-16)

Health

Health and psychosocial needs of IDPs (2001-2002)

- Key areas of concern identified by WHO, partner organisations, and the Ministry of Health include a strong urban bias of health personnel, fragmented health care structure (2002)
- Polarisation between ethnic groups as a result of the conflict has also exacerbated problems in health personnel allocation (2002)
- UNICEF coordinated a comprehensive psychosocial assessment involving 32 teams interviewing some 6,000 IDP and host families during August 2001
- The assessment revealed that 85% of IDPs interviewed suffer from grief and anxiety, 77% had been exposed to armed conflict and 7% had been victims of violence (2002)
- Damaged health facilities, electrical and water supplies coupled with displacement and travel restrictions reduced health capacity (2001)

- The needs of displaced strained the already fragile health system (2001)
- Communicable diseases posed significant risks to displaced living in host families and collective centers (2001)

Health

“During the crisis, WHO worked closely with the Ministry of Health (MOH) and partner organisations to ensure essential supply of drugs, to improve health service provision in vulnerable communities and to monitor public health concerns such as potential outbreaks of water borne diseases. In October 2001, WHO together with the MOH conducted a rapid health assessment, to identify key issues and prioritise health interventions. Based on the results of the assessment, WHO has developed a strategy to support access to health care services in under-served areas affected by the conflict while also addressing structural problems to upgrade health care provision.

A key area of concern identified by the assessment is a strong urban bias of health personnel [1], which is further impacted by a fragmented, centralised health care structure. In addition, polarisation between ethnic groups as a result of the conflict has exacerbated problems in health personnel allocation and has resulted in an increasing tendency to opt for separate, parallel structures. Of particular concern are the conflict affected areas where public services do not adequately function.

Other areas of concern include poor maintenance of health facilities with an estimated 85% of the clinics in the crisis area in need of repair and maintenance and 32% in need of complete reconstruction. A lack of essential equipment, some of which was looted or damaged during the conflict, further compounds structural problems. In addition, 82% of medical facilities and 56% of clinics reported some drug shortage, despite significant humanitarian assistance.” (OCHA March 2002)

[Footnote 1] 1 Doctor per 303 inhabitants in Skopje compared to 1: 799 in Kumanovo and 1: 890 in Tetovo.

Psychosocial Needs

“To assess increased levels of vulnerability within the population as a result of the conflict and displacement, UNICEF, together with Government counterparts and NGO partners, coordinated a comprehensive psychosocial assessment involving 32 teams interviewing some 6,000 IDP and host families during August 2001. The assessment revealed that 85% of IDPs interviewed suffer from grief and anxiety, 77% had been exposed to armed conflict and 7% had been victims of violence.

To support IDPs in coping with conflict related stress and trauma, existing psychosocial activities were expanded and mobile teams and SOS help lines added during the second half of 2001. Since then, UNICEF and WHO, working in cooperation with the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health, are working to make psychosocial support available to all children in FYROM through the development of a multi-sector training of trainers programme. The aim of this programme will be to ensure that every school, clinic and centre for social work has at least two staff members trained in psychosocial assistance techniques. The programme will also include broader skills to assist in the recognition and referral of psychological difficulties, including neglect and abuse.” (OCHA March 2002)

“Damage to health facilities, electrical and water supplies coupled with displacement and travel restrictions on medical personnel has reduced health capacity, resulting in increased vulnerability of both the remaining and the returning population in conflict areas. At the same time, the needs of high-risk groups such as IDPs and refugees further strained the already fragile health infrastructure. Drug availability has also been reduced and immunisation rates have dropped to as low as 20% in some of the conflict-affected areas. In addition, communicable diseases, especially Tuberculosis pose a significant risk to those living in overcrowded conditions common in host families and collective centres. Moreover, ethnic tension has

heightened concerns that not all population groups are afforded equal access to health services.” (OCHA November 2001, p.16)

“Although the fighting in the Tetovo and Kumanovo districts and villages near Skopje has not caused huge numbers of war-wounded, the situation has put considerable strain on the health services available. This affects the ease with which both residents and IDPs can gain access to health services meeting their everyday needs.” (ICRC 28 August 2001)

Shelter and non-food items

Most IDPs sheltered with host families with small numbers still living in collective centers (June 2003)

- The government announced that there were over 5,500 IDPs in June 2003
- Data collected by the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs and the Red Cross indicated that 1,400 families were still not in a position to return
- Approximately 3,900 IDPs were being hosted with families and 1,600 still living in collective accommodation (as of June 2003)
- 5,000 buildings with minor damage have been reconstructed with the assistance of the international community (as of June 2003)
- 1,500 buildings are still in the process of being reconstructed (as of June 2003)

“Vlado Popovski, who is a minister without portfolio in charge of refugee questions, told the government on 2 June that there are still 5,548 internally displaced persons in the country, MIA news agency reported. In July 2002, the official number of displaced persons was 5,762. According to data collected by the Labor and Social Affairs Ministry and the Red Cross, more than 1,400 families cannot return to the homes they left during the 2001 interethnic conflict. Some 3,942 displaced persons found refuge with other families, while 1,606 persons are still living in refugee centers. About 5,000 buildings with minor damage have been reconstructed with the help of the international community. The reconstruction of another 1,500 buildings is still in progress.” (RFE/RL 3 June 2003)

ACCESS TO EDUCATION

General

Displaced have access to (disrupted) education system (December 2001)

- All displaced are included in the education system in the areas of refuge
- The education process was disrupted because of damaged structures, insufficient school space in hosting communities and a lack of material and personnel

"As for access of education, all IDPs are included in the education system in the new areas where they have fled. The Info-Office within the Red Cross of Macedonia is the main site where IDPs, but also refugees and social cases turn for assistance." (E-mail from IFRC Macedonia to NRC Geneva 7 December 2001)

"The education process has been disrupted as a result of damaged structures in conflict areas, insufficient school space in hosting communities and a general lack of essential material and human resources. Security concerns within schools and a threat of parallel systems are also of concern and are linked to increased ethnic tensions including harassment of students who form the minority within their schools and/or communities." (UN-OCHA November 2001, p.17)

ISSUES OF SELF-RELIANCE AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Self-reliance

Floods displace some 4,000 Roma (January 2003)

- Over 200 households were flooded and 600 people evacuated
- NGOs reported that the greatest damage was inflicted upon the Roma settlements of Sredorek and Bavci
- ACT reported some 4,000 people to be affected by the floods, the majority being Roma from Kumanovo
- Most were sheltered temporarily with host families, while 400 persons were accommodated in collective centers

[H]eavy torrential rains [...] caused the rivers Konjarka and Lipkovska to overflow. In Kumanovo, northeast from Skopje, over 200 households were flooded which resulted in the evacuation of some 600 persons from the settlements of Sredorek and Bavci.

ACT member the **Macedonian Center of International Cooperation (MCIC)** reported that the greatest damage was inflicted upon these two predominantly Roma settlements. Also affected were five power stations in Kumanovo, leaving a part of town without electricity for 12 hours. The floods moved towards Kriva Palanka town causing landslides. Heavy rains also caused the River Vardar to overflow, affecting some 30 homes in Veles town, weekend houses and thousands of hectares of farm land in the Gevgelija area. All railway traffic was blocked for 24 hours.

The floods resulted in the loss of two lives; a woman was buried alive in her house when it collapsed, and a man died from a heart attack triggered by the sight of his flooded home.

Displacement: Some 4,000 people are affected by the floods, the majority being Roma population from Kumanovo. Most of them have found temporary shelter with host families, while some 400 persons are accommodated in collective centers.

Health Risks: There is a threat of water borne diseases such as typhus, paratyphus, diphtheria and hepatitis A.

Response: The Crisis Management Center which was established during the civil conflict in Macedonia, has been authorized to co-ordinate counter-flood actions. The regional civil protection units have distributed food, blankets, mattresses and clothes to the affected population. MCIC completed emergency distribution of basic food commodities and sleeping bags to the temporary shelters and a few other affected sites. Affected families were also assisted by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). In addition, the Macedonian government decided rendered social assistance to both displaced and host families.” (ACT 17 January 2003)

Public Participation

Special voting procedure for IDPs to participate in 2002 elections (2002)

- The election law provides for special voting for IDPs; IDPs cast ballots at their current location one day in advance of regular voting
- Based on information by the State Bureau of Statistics, 4,351 IDPs were to vote in 5 different municipalities
- Observation data collected on advance voting day tend to show a poorer performance than on election day, with 16% of polling observed rated “poor” (against 2.5% on election day)
- The case of the IDP voting in Kumanovo IDP center “Kamp Kristal” raised particular concerns
- At the Kumanovo IDP center, voting had to be interrupted after two hours, due to inefficiency of the EB conducting the vote and disruptive behavior by some voters and party activists

“1. Special Voting

The law provides that military personnel on duty, prisoners and internally displaced persons (IDPs) cast ballots at their current location one day in advance of regular voting. However, it does not specify whether these categories of citizens voting outside their place of permanent residence should receive a ballot corresponding to the district where they are from, or the district in which they are temporarily located. The SEC decided to provide these voters ballots from their place of origin.

Based on information from the MoJ (and the State Bureau of Statistics), the SEC was required to provide for voting by 862 persons in prison or custody at 10 correctional institutions; around 8,000 military personnel on duty at 93 military bases, headquarters or units; and a total of 4,351 internally-displaced persons (IDP), who would vote in five different municipalities. Special voting had to be conducted by the EB nearest to these locations.

This operation became a difficult challenge, especially in view of the SEC’s interpretation of the Election Law that the number of ballot papers printed and distributed should be exactly the same as the number of voters registered. The SEC intended thereby to minimize the potential for ballot-box stuffing or ballot-swapping. This approach, however, eliminated flexibility in distributing ballots where they were needed.

As a consequence, the SEC had to design a complex system of delivery of these ballots from the printing house in Prilep directly to the location where the polling would be conducted, and of return of ballots from these locations to the districts in which they would be applied. The printing factory had to prepare ballot packs for soldiers, prisoners and IDPs based on the special excerpts of the VL. These special ballot packs were then sent, through the relevant RECs and MECs, to the EBs conducting special voting. In addition, since separate ballot packs for all EBs had already been prepared by the printer, a number of ballots corresponding to the special voters from EBs had to be physically separated from the regular packs.

Observation data collected on advance voting day tend to show a poorer performance of the EBs than on election day, with 16% of polling observed rated “poor” (against 2.5% on election day), and a significant incidence of group voting. The case of the IDP voting in Kumanovo IDP center “Kamp Kristal” raised particular concerns, since voting had to be interrupted after two hours, due to both the inefficiency of the EB conducting the vote and disruptive behavior by some voters and party activists, preventing each others’ supporters from casting ballots.” (OSCE 15 September 2002, pp. 7-8)

Overview

“The 15 September 2002 parliamentary elections in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia were conducted largely in accordance with OSCE commitments and international standards for democratic elections. Some actions by the Ministry of the Interior and the outgoing principal governing party in the period after election day and before final completion of the election process, however, raised serious concern.

This first post-conflict election was an integral component of the Ohrid Framework Agreement that ended the crisis in 2001, and was widely perceived as a test for the return of the country to stability. In this respect, the successful conduct of these elections was a major contribution to restoring the basis for peace and a regular democratic process, and represented a notable political accomplishment. For the second time in successive parliamentary elections power has been transferred democratically from government to opposition.

In view of the challenging political background and in light of recent election observation conclusions, the 2002 parliamentary elections reflected the following principal achievements:

The new election laws adopted in June 2002 effectively addressed some shortcomings observed previously, and overall provided an adequate legislative basis for elections;

- Election commissions generally conducted their work in a neutral and professional manner, and the State Election Commission (SEC) in particular operated transparently and in a collegial way. The SEC issued instructions which clarified the interpretation and improved the uniform application of the election laws;
- The political campaign was relatively restrained;
- The policing of campaign rallies, other electoral events, and election day was appropriate;
- The media were broadly pluralistic and voters were offered a wide range of information on the activities of contestants. Public regulatory bodies monitored and reported on political advertising and coverage of the campaign on television, but these reports did not lead to enforcement.

The election campaign period was marred at times by violent incidents, including attacks on and the killing of police officers and hostage taking not explicitly related to the election, attacks on party offices, as well as threats to and attacks on media representatives. In addition, certain actions by the authorities contributed to heightened tension during the campaign. Violent incidents, threats, and apparently selective application of law enforcement proceedings against candidates have no place in a democratic electoral process. Nevertheless, the election process itself worked well and demonstrated considerable resilience in the face of these pressures.

Other shortcomings became evident during the electoral process, and in the period immediately thereafter:

- State television channels did not provide fair and equal coverage of the election. There were numerous violations by both State and commercial channels of the rules regarding political advertising and election coverage;
- The election laws still contain ambiguities and inconsistencies, especially with respect to the provisions on complaints and appeals, the determination and announcement of election results, and the voting rights of non-resident citizens;
- The method of appointment of election administration bodies requires further consideration; and
- Undue pressure was brought on the SEC after election day by the Minister of the Interior and other representatives of his Ministry and of the governing party VMRO-DPMNE. Their conduct violated OSCE commitments on elections to be free of intimidation and the separation of State and political activities.

Election day was characterized by a high turnout of voters (73.4%), few and isolated incidents of violence, and in general an orderly voting process, except for a significant incidence of group and proxy voting in certain ethnic minority areas. The vote count was largely free of problems.

A number of factors contributed to the effective conduct of these elections, in particular:

- As noted above, the professionalism of the SEC, which guided the electoral process through a difficult general environment;
- The large number of international and domestic non-partisan observers, which increased transparency and public confidence in the elections; and
- The significant difference in the margins of votes won by the main competing parties, which reduced pressures in the post-election period, in particular with respect to the determination of results.

The absence of any of these factors could expose remaining shortcomings in the election system and pose a greater challenge than on this occasion.” (OSCE 20 November 2002, pp. 1-2)

Lobby groups for the displaced (2001-2003)

- IDPs formed two associations to lobby for their rights
- The IHF reports that IDP associations were largely unsuccessful in their efforts to establish dialogue with local authorities
- The IHF also reports that there were indications that some internally displaced persons had initiated lawsuits against the state for compensation of damages incurred during the conflict
- A new state body was established in 2002 to resolve the situation of IDPs, but it did not include an IDP representative
- The NGO Zora aims to lobby for the rights of IDPs from Arachinovo

“In an attempt to provide for some protection of their own rights, the IDPs established two associations, which made unsuccessful efforts to establish a dialogue with representatives of the authorities. There were indications for the institution of several private lawsuits against the state for compensation of damages incurred during the armed conflict. In December, a new state body was established to resolve the situation of IDPs, but it did not include an IDP representative.” (IHF 24 June 2003)

The NGO “ZORA” lobbies for the rights of internally displaced individuals from Arachinovo. The organisation’s goal is to influence the decision-making processes related to the future of the Macedonian IDPs from Arachinovo through different participatory activities that aim at collecting information, opinions and recommendations from IDPs. For more information, see [ZORA's website](#) [Internet]

PROPERTY ISSUES

Law and policy

Summary of property law (2001-2003)

- Sections 6 and 7 of the law "Zakon Za Obligacioni Odnosi" (2001) place responsibility on the Republic of Macedonia to restore property damaged due to acts of violence or terror
- Articles 166 and 167 (Section 6) hold the state responsible for acts of terror, public demonstrations and manifestations and compensation for material losses
- Article 174 (Section 7) establishes that it is ultimately the State's responsibility to compensate for material loss

"According to Sections 6 and 7 of the law "Zakon Za Obligacioni Odnosi" ratified in September 2001, the Republic of Macedonia is responsible for property damage due to acts of violence or terror, and sustains the obligation to restore the property to its original condition:

Section 6

SPECIAL CASES OF RESPONSIBILITY

Responsibilities due to acts of terror, public demonstrations or manifestations

Article 166:

(1)The state shall be responsible for any damage caused by death, bodily injury, and/or the destruction of property of a physical or legal subject, resulting from an act of violence or terror or from public gatherings and civil demonstrations;

Article 168

(1)For all the damage done by unknown (unidentified) perpetrator, the state is responsible.

Section 7,

COMPENSATION FOR MATERIAL LOSSES

Article 174:

(1)The responsible body is under obligation to provide compensation for material losses, such that all physical property that suffered damage be reinstated to its original condition.

This law means that although other groups may be involved in repairing damaged property, it is ultimately the State's responsibility to finish the job." (EC Delegation to FYROM/IMG 2003)

Restitution

Overview of rehabilitation and reconstruction efforts (December 2003)

- The EC Delegation in FYROM with the technical assistance of the International Management Group (IMG) coordinate reconstruction efforts which are expected to be completed in July 2004
- The housing rehabilitation process began in 2001 and has been supported by a total of 9 donors (multilateral and bilateral)

- In September 2001, 6589 houses had been affected by the conflict amounting to reconstruction costs of 33 million EURO
- As of December 2003, 99% of destroyed houses eligible for reconstruction have been rehabilitated or are under rehabilitation
- The rehabilitation process is ongoing in 56 villages in 17 municipalities
- The total donor contribution amounted to 32 million EURO, approximately 1 million EURO less than the total estimated cost
- According to the ICRC, approximately 2,670 IDPs had not yet returned to their places of origin, for reasons including that their houses have not yet been reconstructed (December 2003)

"During the armed conflict in the autumn 2001 a substantial number of Houses were Damaged or Destroyed and a large number of persons left the Conflict Affected Area.

General Information about the Housing Rehabilitation Sector:

· The EC Delegation in FYROM with the technical assistance of the International Management Group in FYROM coordinates the effort by the present 5 active donors and their implementing partners until the completion of the process in July 2004

· A total of 9 donors (multilateral & bilateral) having a total of 13 implementing partners have contributed throughout the housing rehabilitation process commencing in September 2001

As per September 2001 the situation was as follows:

· 6589 houses had been affected by the Conflict (EC financed Damage Assessment) (Damage Category I: 3532/ Category II: 1525/ Category III: 707 / Category IV: 825)

· Houses in 74 towns / villages in 18 Municipalities were affected by damages or destruction

· The cost for rehabilitation of the 6589 houses was calculated at EURO 33 million (Rehabilitation to a "Basic Living Standard")

· More than 170.000 persons were directly affected by the conflict out of which a total of 76.000 persons were internally displaced and approximately 90 - 100.000 persons became refugees

As per today the situation is as follows:

· A total of 99% of the damaged / destroyed houses eligible for reconstruction have either been rehabilitated (mainly category I & II) or are under rehabilitation (mainly category III & IV).

The status specifically for Category III and IV are as follows:

· Reconstructed: 1087 (69%), Expected 31.12.03: 47 (3%), Expected 31.03.04: 67 (4%), Expected 31.08.04: 95 (6%), Non-Eligible Houses are 11% and Intended / Outstanding Houses are 7%

The rehabilitation of the category III & IV houses are the time and funding demanding houses

· The rehabilitation process is ongoing in 56 villages in 17 municipalities

· The total contribution presently is 32 million EURO, which is approximately 1 million EURO less than required for the houses that meet the general donor criteria for being rehabilitated

· Approximately 2.670 internally displaced persons have not yet returned to their place of origin for various reasons (houses not reconstructed / lack of security / health problems or other criteria recognized by ICRC). Moreover, according to UNHCR - FYROM, 1.561 refugees have also not returned for similar reasons.

The presently displaced persons and refugees are expected to return following the pace of the rehabilitation of the houses, besides those registered for other reason than damaged house." (European Commission Delegation in FYROM 12 December 2003)

See also documents on reconstruction efforts issued by the EU Delegation of the European Commission to the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and the International Management Group Housing, Reconstruction Coordination, Conflict Affected Areas, Housing Sector:

“Damages by Category /Actual & Reduced Budget”, 21 January 2003 [Internet]

“Outstanding Houses – Category I, II, III & IV” 7 November 2003 [Internet]

“Housing Sector: Donations/Housing Sector – Category I, II, III, IV” 21 January 2003 [Internet]

“Implementation Schedules – Category I, II, III & IV” 7 November 2003” [Internet]

“Outstanding Houses – Category I, II, II & IV”, 7 November 2003 [Internet]

International donors support reconstruction of the remaining destroyed houses in Matejce (2003)

- The Netherlands, Germany and Italy have provided the necessary finances for the reconstruction of 175 remaining houses belonging to ethnic Albanians, Macedonians and Serbs in Matejce
- The reconstruction of 26 houses belonging to ethnic Albanians was to be completed end of February

“With the assistance of three foreign governmental donors - The Netherlands, Germany and Italy-, the European Commission's Office in Skopje and the International Management Group (IMG) have provided the necessary finances for reconstruction of the remaining houses in Kumanovo village of Matejce damaged during the last year's war conflict in the country, MAKFAX reported.

The reconstruction of 26 houses belonging to ethnic Albanians in the second phase of the Program are in progress, and will be completed in February. Reconstruction of 46 houses was already completed in the spring of 2002. The preparations for the 2nd phase covering 175 houses belonging to ethnic Albanians as well as Macedonians / Serbs are in progress.

In order to highlight the key issues related to different activities to be undertaken before the reconstruction can commence and other issues related to the actual return when the housing reconstruction is completed, the European Commission and the IMG is organizing a hearing and information meeting for all ethnic Macedonians and Serbs from Matejce, the press release reads.” (Government of Macedonia, 22 January 2003)

General

Outbreaks of looting and attacks against homes of displaced Macedonians and Serbs (2003)

- 46 EU-funded reconstructed Macedonian houses were looted and demolished in Opae village
- President of the board of IDPs of Opae village stated that these incidents indicate a lack of security in the area
- An assessment of the security situation in Matejche, Opae, Ropaljce and Dumanovce villages was to be conducted by the government
- Displaced Macedonians have expressed the fear that arson attacks in Opae and Aracinovo are part of a campaign to deter them from returning to ethnic Albanian areas
- The authorities maintain that extremists are responsible for the outbreaks of violence without the support of local populations

EU-funded reconstructed house in Lipkovo area demolished (May 2003)

“The police haven’t discovered any of the perpetrators of the looting and destruction of Macedonian houses.

The house of Vladimir Ilievski was demolished in Opae village in Lipkovo area, while he is now living in a rented apartment in Kumanovo. The reconstruction of Ilievski home was completed on 18 May and then, one day after that, the night between 7:00 and 8:00 pm it was completely looted. All the doors and windows were stolen, and one part of the house was destroyed. The project for reconstruction of houses from third and fourth category by IMG agency ended with the reconstruction of Ilievski family’s house, one of the 46 houses of Macedonians from Opae village. However, just like the previous 45 houses, which were completely destroyed, part of them burnt, the Ilievski’s house faced the same fate.

The police haven’t discovered any of the perpetrators of the looting and destruction of reconstructed Macedonian houses. The President of the Board of displaced people from Opae village, Ivan Cvetkovski, said that this was just another evidence that there was no security in the village and that all the efforts of domestic and international factors for safe return of Macedonians and Serbians from Lipkovo area are futile.

‘Donors have only been wasting money for house reconstruction in which we cannot return to live, while they don’t want to invest in places where we feel safe,’ Cvetkovski points out.

Displaced Macedonians and Serbs from Matejche, Opae, Ropaljce and Dumanovce villages are to receive written answer from the Government related to ascertaining the real security situation in that region and conducting an evaluation of all the movable property and real estate lost during the military conflict.” (Reality Macedonia, 28 May 2003)

Displaced Macedonians fear arson attacks signal campaign to deter them from returning to ethnic Albanian areas (February 2003)

“When Zoran Dimkovski's house burned down on February 11, it was widely suspected that he was the latest victim of a campaign waged by ethnic Albanians to warn displaced Macedonians against returning to their villages.

The attack in the village of Opae attack came a few days after a similar incident at Aracinovo, near Skopje. The house burned there belonged to Vide Krstevski and his family, who like the Dimkovskis and other uprooted Macedonians had been living in temporary accommodation since the conflict two years ago.

Krstevski told the daily newspaper Dnevnik, 'Even though the media claim it is safe to live in Aracinovo after these incidents I don't know whether this will be ever possible. We are simply not going back.'

Aracinovo, 10 kilometres away from the capital, saw heavy fighting when Albanian rebels took over the village in June 2000, forcing many Macedonians to flee.

Vojce Zafirovski, senior advisor on police issues at the interior ministry, played down the danger. 'These are the latest attempts of certain individuals and extremist groups to put pressure on citizens of Macedonian ethnic origin to move out of the crisis regions,' he told IWPR.

[...]

Jana Petrusavska, president of the Association of the Temporarily Displaced Persons, took a different view, claiming the arson attacks - five over the last couple of months - made coexistence in the crisis regions impossible.

Grozda Stankovska, whose Aracinovo home was burned down, said the latest attacks were a clear case of ethnic cleansing.

'The state is to blame for this,' she told IWPR.

'At night, there are no security forces in Aracinovo and the houses are left to the mercy of the people living there.'

'During the 2001 conflict my house was slightly damaged. Later, my neighbours robbed and demolished it. Now its been burned to the ground - and the government suggests we should go back to the village.'

'We neither can nor want to go back to Aracinovo,' Petrusavska told IWPR. 'Nobody guarantees our safety there. The authorities have no strategy for building confidence among the population and no ways of protecting us from our former friends.'

During the conflict, 650 Macedonians were displaced from Aracinovo and about 60 of their houses were damaged or destroyed. Before 2001, the village had 1500 households of which 173 belonged to Macedonians. The latest census in November registered 11,000 inhabitants, all of them Albanian.

Petrusavska said a few displaced elderly Macedonians go to their properties in Aracinovo during the day looking for buyers for their homes and to sell what possessions they have left.

The mayor of Aracinovo, Reshet Ferati, condemned the arson attacks and said they were the work of people who want to stop Macedonians and Albanians living together. 'There are other citizens of Macedonian origin who live here and have no problems,' he said.

The spokesman for the Office of Security and Cooperation in Europe, OSCE, Wolfgang F. Greven, tended to support the mayor's view.

'These acts have been carried out by criminals who obviously have no respect for anything. We know they have no support among the local population,' he said.

He expressed hope and confidence that Macedonian police would bring the offenders to justice.

There have been outbreaks of vandalism in other areas too. Jovan Bulevski, a journalist for the Macedonian Radio station reporting from the predominantly Albanian Tetovo area, said the village of Jelosnik at the foot of Sara Mountain had been targeted by extremists.

‘All the inhabitants of this purely Macedonian village were chased away during the war and they are still living as temporary displaced persons,’ Bulevski said. ‘The renovated houses have been demolished several times now and the village church of the Holy Mother was vandalised as well.’

The interior ministry says it has registered cases of arson and other criminal acts in crisis spots, and Zafirovski admitted that the effectiveness of ethnically-mixed police patrols, which have been welcomed in many of these regions, has been limited by the fact that they do not operate at night when the arson attacks occur.” (IWPR 28 February 2003)

See also:

“Reconstruction Coordination: Conflict Affected Areas: Housing Sector – Reports of Burned/Vandalized/Demolished/Looted Houses”, 7 November 2003, EU Delegation of the European Commission to FYROM/International Management Group (IMG) [Internet]

“High rate of return obscures subtle but ongoing pressure on minorities to leave majority areas (2003)” [Internal Link]

“Some return, some do not: refugees and IDPs in Macedonia” Oneworld Southeast Europe, 30 December 2002 [Internet]

“Arachinovo: Macedonian Houses burn, Police remains clueless about arsonists”, Reality Macedonia, 29 September 2003 [Internet]

Displaced people contest measures required to obtain property (2003)

- IDPs who want to return must sign one of two agreements to obtain reconstruction assistance
- A number of IDPs have refused to sign these agreements because they believe they will be forced to return or are awaiting other forms of compensation from the government
- IDPs have lodged complaints in the courts regarding compensation for damages incurred during the 2001 conflict
- Representatives of displaced persons from Matejce, Ropaljce and Opae met with government representatives in May 2003
- The IDPs have requested that their assets be evaluated and that they receive compensation for damages occurred from the 2001 hostilities
- 258 IDPs from Matejce refused to return until an evaluation has been made, including the general security situation in the Lipkovo region
- The board of displaced persons has also claimed that the state has put pressure on internally displaced persons to sign agreements while failing to enact appropriate conditions for return

IDP’s who want to return must sign one of two agreements (a Tripartite Agreement or a Bipartite Agreement) to obtain reconstruction assistance. The TPA is an agreement between the beneficiary, the donor and the government whereas the BPA is an agreement between the donor and the beneficiary. The difference between the agreements is based on the level of damage to the property. Both agreements cover the practical and legal aspects related to receiving a donation for reconstruction assistance.

However, numerous displaced people throughout the country have refused to sign these agreements because they believe they will be forced to return. Some IDPs are waiting for the government to compensate them for other losses incurred during the 2001 conflict. A number of IDPs throughout the country have lodged claims in courts. (IMG 26 February 2004)

“The Coordinating Body of displaced persons from Matejce, Ropaljce and Opae on Friday had a meeting in Kumanovo with the minister without portfolio Vlado Popovski at which the DPs presented their position and requests. The meeting was also attended by Minister of Agriculture Slavko Petrov, deputy Minister of Labour and Social Policy Boge Cadinovski and the chief of the Kumanovo police, Slobodan Sekirarski. No concrete solution was found and Minister Popovski promised the displaced persons that they would hold another meeting in 12 days, after he receives a written answer from the Government about their requests. The displaced want their assets to be evaluated and to get compensation from the state about the damages they suffered as well as an evaluation of the general security situation in the Lipkovo region. To this Minister Popovski said that they first have to sign the tripartite agreements, after which their houses would be reconstructed. At the same time, a police station would be built in Matejce.

However, the DPs say that if they sign the tripartite agreements they would give up what was taken from them.” (NATO 19 May 2003)

“The government wants the DPs to sign the tripartite agreements for the reconstruction of their houses, however they say that there is a law for obligatory compensation, according to which the government has to evaluate the damages caused during the conflict. One day after the meeting the boards met with many of the displaced persons in the presence of OSCE and EU monitors, in order to inform them about the talks with Minister Popovski. A total of 258 displaced persons from Matejce refuse to sign the contracts until an evaluation is made and until the illegal weapons in the Lipkovo municipality are collected.” (NATO 7 April 2003)

“The board of displaced persons from Matejce says that the government body for solving the problems of IDPs, led by minister without portfolio Vlado Popovski, in the past six months has been putting pressure on them to sign the agreements and at the same time it doesn’t do anything to create conditions and fulfil the requests of the DPs. ‘The state doesn’t want to make evaluations of the property we had before the war and makes us accept an agreement about building houses of 50 to 80 square metres, depending on the number of family members’, Miroslav Mladenovic from the board says.

The security situation in Matejce still doesn’t allow for the displaced Serbs and Macedonians to feel safe and return to the village. Part of the Albanian population there is constantly demolishing the orthodox religious objects, especially the village “Sv. Georgi”, which has been repaired several times.” (NATO 8 April 2003)

To view copies of the Bipartite and Tripartite Agreements, click on the links listed in the Sources Section below.

Many displaced lost their homes and all of their possessions, including livestock and crops (July-December 2001)

- Assessment of property damage was difficult in affected areas due to fighting, but witnesses told of heavy destruction to homes and infrastructure
- Damage was also done to the agricultural sector, with livestock dead and crop production lost
- Overall damage assessment by the government gave an estimation of 350 millions USD
- Many properties in conflict areas were destroyed, and great numbers of displaced lost their houses and all of their belongings

“Damage to the community infrastructure in the affected areas can not be assessed at the time being due to the ongoing military activities. However, according to media reports and witnesses from the villages, the first impression is that there has been heavy destruction to private homes and other infrastructure in the villages where extremists were positioned. This is due to the military tactics of the Macedonian forces, who

carried out long and heavy shelling of the villages, after ensuring that the civilian population had left the village. Villages from the first phase of the conflict in March (e.g. Tanusevci and Gracani, with app. 300 houses) have been level to the ground. More than [sic!] half of the houses in the other villages in the current conflict area (Vaksince, Slupcane, Matejce in Lipkovo area - app. 1,200 houses; Aracinovo in Skopje area - 2,000) have been destroyed.

Serious damage has also been done within the agriculture sector. Most of the livestock was left in the affected villages, when people fled from their homes. All livestock is now lost: either killed by shelling, or dead because of lack of food. This is causing additional danger in the area - pollution of the air, earth and water from the animal corpses. Further damage to agriculture is due to the loss of crop production: either from deliberate fire in the fields or because access to the fields for harvest is not possible.

Damage has been assessed in the areas where there were riots by ethnic Macedonians (twice in Bitola and in Skopje). Around 40 shops and 50 houses of Muslims (ethnic Albanians, but also many Macedonians, Bosnians and Gorani people) were burnt down in Bitola, while 17 shops were damaged in Skopje (more than [sic!] half of them owned by ethnic Macedonians).

Overall damage assessment by the Macedonian Government gives an estimation of 350 millions USD (including the effect of the crisis on the economy of the country)." (ACT 5 July 2001)

"Seeing that the crisis regions were affected with serious armed conflict including heavy weaponry, there are many destroyed properties. Great numbers of IDPs have lost their houses and all of their belongings as they were burned or robbed. In the aftermath of the conflict many international and domestic agencies conducted the assessment of the level of destruction and started its activities of repair." (E-mail from IFRC Macedonia to NRC Geneva 7 December 2001)

PATTERNS OF RETURN AND RESETTLEMENT

General

Expected trends in IDP returns (2003 – 2004)

- Obstacles to IDP return are best understood on a village-by-village or individual basis, however overall trends may be observed, including perceived lack of security and damaged homes
- The total number of remaining IDPs from the 2001 conflict is expected to decrease until the end of 2003 and in spring 2004, mainly due to rehabilitation and reconstruction of houses
- It is expected that return will remain stable during winter months due to difficult weather conditions, particularly in mountain villages
- From spring 2004, a small number of IDPs are anticipated to return with the planned completion of rehabilitation/reconstruction work, particularly in the Aracinovo and Skopska Crna Gora region
- A number of IDPs (between 1'400 – 1'700 from the Skopje and Kumanovo region) are expected to continue to refuse to return to their villages due to perceived lack of security

“Although obstacles to IDP return are best analyzed on a village-by-village, or even individual basis, a few overall trends may be observed. The total number of remaining IDPs from the 2001 conflict is expected to decrease until the end of 2003 (further rehabilitation and reconstruction of damaged and destroyed houses, further stabilization of the security situation), remain stable during the winter months (difficult weather conditions, particularly in the mountain villages) and again decrease in Spring 2004 (remaining reconstruction of houses of damaged or destroyed houses).

From Spring 2004 on, only a small number of further IDP returns related to the completion of the rehabilitation and reconstruction work can be anticipated, mainly 300 IDPs from Aracinovo and Skopska Crna Gora region (Brest), and 200 IDPs from central Macedonia (Veles, argument based on the No of houses to be repaired), almost all of them ethnic Albanians. It is expected that in 2004 approximately 1'400 to 1'700 IDPs from the villages of Aracinovo, Matejce and Opae (Skopje and Kumanovo region), but as well from Radusha (Skopje region) and Tetovo town might continue to refuse to return to their villages (i.e. perceived lack of security, requesting security guarantees). Many of the remaining IDPs are supposed to already have decided not to go back to their villages/towns of origin, but to stay or move permanently to other locations in Macedonia.” (ICRC 11 February 2004)

See also “[Security problems constitute main obstacles to return of the displaced \(2003 – 2004\)](#)” [Internal Link]

Humanitarian and rehabilitation assistance continued to be essential for return (May 2002)

- Humanitarian programs facilitated the return of displaced through reconstruction and rehabilitation programs
- However, full return was not established yet as a consequence of political, economic and humanitarian insecurities

- A key humanitarian concern was the threat of unexploded ordnance and mines, as well as damage to homes

“Since the signing of the Agreement, more than 150,000 of the 170,000 displaced have returned home. Humanitarian programs have facilitated this return by rebuilding homes and providing basic household inputs; repairing schools and providing books and school materials; rehabilitating and equipping clinics; providing seeds, fertilizer and feed for livestock; working with doctors, teachers and other professional to address health access and psychological stress; and financing community projects to meet urgent infrastructure needs and build confidence between ethnic groups.

The emergency however, has not entirely passed and return is not yet fully sustainable. Some communities remain divided, ethnic and crime related violence continues and families inside and out of the former crisis area are without jobs and struggling to meet their basic needs. With elections coming and contentious issues such as the census, revised citizenship legislation and financing for decentralization on the agenda, continued support for political progress is as important as ever.

To tackle the remaining obstacles to return and move communities past the current fragile peace, continued humanitarian and rehabilitation assistance is also essential. A key humanitarian concern is the ongoing threat of unexploded ordnance and mines, which is impacting access to reconstruction and agriculture programs as well as the redeployment of mixed police patrols. The remaining repair and reconstruction of damaged and destroyed homes needs also to get underway quickly in order to capitalize on current favorable weather conditions and ensure people can return to their homes before winter. In addition, expectations for tangible improvements in daily living conditions are growing and stabilization will increasingly be tied to socio-economic improvements. Short term investments in agriculture, small business revitalization, health and education are therefore, needed to bridge gaps before longer term development programmes and investment projects come fully on line.

Just over US \$ 41 million is needed to cover humanitarian priorities in FYROM, including US \$ 14.5 million to rebuild the remaining 900 structurally damaged homes, US \$ 2.9 million to rid the country of the main unexploded ordnance and mine problem and US \$ 23.5 million to support continuation of humanitarian programs prioritized in the 2002 United Nations Consolidated Appeal (CAP).

If people are unable to go home for fear of mines or lack of shelter, or have no way of providing for their families once they have returned, there is a real risk that continued progress on the Framework Agreement will stall. Resources for these programs are needed now to re-energize the peace process by ensuring the obstacles to return and lasting peace are removed.” (UN OCHA 2 May 2002)

Displaced ethnic Macedonians returning to Lipkovo asked for temporary colonies (April 2002)

“Since the efforts of the displaced ethnic Macedonians and Serbs from the Lipkovo region to pay a visit to their homes have been ending unsuccessfully, they asked from the mayor of Kumanovo municipality to provide them a location where a temporary colony would be built.” (Aidmacedonia 15 April 2002)

Although nearly half returned to the Tetovo region, many ethnic Macedonians refused to return without an escort of Macedonian troops (October 2001)

- By October 2001, almost half of the displaced ethnic Macedonians returned to the Tetovo region
- The government organised go-see visits for IDPs to promote return to the Tetovo region
- Macedonians stated that they did not feel safe unless accompanied by their own troops and police

“A significant number of displaced ethnic Macedonians have returned to their homes in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia's Tetovo region, where they are in the minority. Up to 40 percent of the displaced Macedonian population has gone back to villages in the region 40 kms west of Skopje. It was the scene of some of the heaviest fighting in the six-month ethnic Albanian insurgency. Returns in the Tetovo region, such as the mixed villages of Tearce, Neprosteno, Odri, Dobroste and Lesok, are considered one of the crucial elements in the peace process reached in August.” (UNHCR 19 October 2001)

“The government has been organising go-see visits for IDPs to promote returns to the Tetovo region, which is heavily populated by ethnic Albanians, but apprehensions persist. UNHCR has been visiting the region regularly in a bid to help build confidence in the 13 August peace agreement and allow the return of both refugees and displaced people.” (UNHCR 12 October 2001)

However, the displaced were still reluctant to return, unless accompanied by troops:

“Another thorny issue is the return of displaced people to their homes. Macedonians say they do not feel safe unless their own troops and police accompany them. But Albanians fear the return of the military might leave them open to retaliation, and would prefer ethnically-mixed security forces.” (IWPR 16 October 2001)

Return pattern was dictated by the security situation in the region (September 2001)

- UNHCR expressed its concern that return would be impeded by insecurity
- Ethnic Albanians stated that return to the Kumanovo region was impossible because of police checkpoints on the road
- Many ethnic Macedonians returned to their villages only during the day and left again before the night out of security concerns

“While UNHCR supports the right of all displaced people to go home, we are concerned that many of the returnee families return only to find that they cannot move into their original residences because of security concerns. Leaders of some 6,000 ethnic Albanian internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Kumanovo, for example, say they cannot return to their villages up in the hills because of police checkpoints on the road.” (UNHCR 11 September 2001)

“Most of the displaced ethnic Macedonians from predominantly ethnic Albanian areas venture out to their villages during the day only, as they fear for their safety during the night.

A displaced ethnic Macedonian family with small children told UNHCR that they had gone back to their home in a village of Ljuboten, scene of an intense security operation just before the peace agreement was signed on 13 August, but decided to leave after spending three nights at home. They said they heard gunshots in the village during the night. Another displaced Macedonian family said they did not have high hopes for returning before winter. They said they would return only after the redeployment of Macedonian security forces.” (UNHCR 14 September 2001)

More than half of the displaced fleeing fighting at Aracinovo returned home by August 2001

- Over 5,000 displaced returned to Aracinovo by August 2001, but many ethnic Macedonians were reluctant to return

- UNHCR emphasised that steps had to be taken to allow ethnic Macedonians displaced from overwhelmingly ethnic-Albanian populated areas to return to their villages in safety

“More than half of the 10,000 residents who fled fighting at Aracinovo, a largely ethnic Albanian village just outside the capital of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM), have returned since Sunday. Of the 5,000 who have gone back to the village, about 2,500 are staying overnight, while the rest are cleaning their houses during the day. Few of the estimated 250 ethnic Macedonians families residing in the village have indicated willingness to return. They only go back to pick up their belongings.

Aracinovo was heavily devastated in June during intense fighting between Macedonian forces and ethnic Albanian rebels.

[...]

It is particularly important to stabilize the ethnic Macedonian community, which is in a minority situation in Aracinovo. All efforts must be made to help them return to their homes.” (UNHCR 3 August 2001)

Ethnic division threatens return, says UNHCR:

"The High Commissioner stressed that the "security dilemma" must be resolved for all Macedonians. He emphasised that steps had to be taken to allow ethnic Macedonians displaced from overwhelmingly ethnic-Albanian populated areas to return to their villages in safety. While ethnic Albanians are a minority in FYROM as a whole, in many areas in the north of the country it is the ethnic Macedonians who are in the minority.

Lubbers warned that prolonged displacement of FYROM's ethnic communities could jeopardise the chance for return and reconciliation. "We believe that the longer the refugees and the displaced persons stay away from their homes, the more bitter and radicalised they are becoming and the deeper the ethnic divisions in the country are growing," he wrote." (UNHCR 7 August 2001)

Majority of displaced fleeing violence in Tetovo region returned by the beginning of April 2001

- By April 2001, many displaced fleeing fighting in the Tetovo region in March 2001 returned home

“The week of 2 April was marked by a complete cessation of military activities in the Tetovo region, following an offensive launched into hillside villages by the Macedonian army on 25 March and completed on 31 March. Today Tetovo town is once again bustling with people and traffic, the shops have reopened and commercial activity has resumed. A significant number of the 20,000 displaced people who were registered by the Macedonian Red Cross in the immediate aftermath of the outbreak of fighting in the Tetovo region have returned to their homes.” (ICRC 11 April 2001)

Return prospects

National authorities declare conditions are in place for displaced persons to return to Tetovo Villages (2003)

- Social Affairs Minister Manasievski stressed that security and social conditions are in place for IDPs to return home

- 160 IDPs fled from Tearce, Lesok and Neprosteno villages during the 2001 conflict

“Social Affairs Minister Jovan Manasievski says that conditions are in place which would allow displaced persons from Tearce, Lesok and Neprosteno to return home. A total of 160 displaced persons from the three Tetovo villages live at so-called collective centres, having fled their homes during the 2001 military conflict. Manasievski, who visited the former crisis area Thursday (13 March), stressed that all security and social conditions needed for return have been implemented and that reconstruction activities are nearly complete.” (Southeast European Times 13 March 2003)

Obstacles to return and resettlement

Security problems constitute main obstacle to return of the displaced (2003 – 2004)

- Approximately 2678 IDPs (718 families) have not yet returned to their place of origin
- 1640 are being sheltered in host families and 1038 are living in collective centres
- Out of 2678 IDPs approx. approx. 66% had security problems over return and 34% have damaged or destroyed houses, although displacement may also be due to other factors (February 2004)
- Out of 3319 IDPs, 57.3% have security concerns over return and 42.7% have damaged or destroyed houses (August 2003)
- The international community has planned the repair and reconstruction of over 5,000 houses by end 2004 to address housing-related displacement
- In some cases, displacement may be long-term including IDPs who feel unsafe in their places of origin due to inter-ethnic tensions
- IDPs may also have other reasons for not returning, including economic reasons and the schooling of their children
- ICRC will continue to support the most vulnerable amongst IDPs in 2004

Reasons for ongoing displacement

<p>“Destroyed house 911 or 34%</p> <p>Security problems 1767 or 66%</p> <p>*The above figures have to be taken with caution as somebody with a destroyed house might also be displaced for other reasons (among them security reasons). Those who stated to have a security problem might also be displaced for other reasons (economical reasons, schooling of children...)” (ICRC 11 February 2004)</p> <p>“Reasons for the ongoing crisis: Out of the 3319 IDPs, 57.3% have security concerns over return and 42.7% have damaged or destroyed houses” (UNHCR 22 August 2003)</p>

“At the end of 2003, a remaining 2678 IDPs (or 718 families) have not yet returned to their place of origin. 1640 of them have their temporary home in host families; the other 1038 are lodged in collective centres.

There are several reasons for the ongoing displacement, e.g. homes were damaged during the conflict, security problems in some communities hinder IDPs from returning, or IDPs chose to stay at their new

residences for a variety of reasons. To meet the obstacle of damaged homes, the International Community, supported by a wide variety of donors, has organised the repair and reconstruction of more than 5,000 houses. This work will end in September 2004, so that by then all cases of housing-related displacements should be solved.

In the other cases, the displacement will likely be of a long-term nature. Some of the IDPs for example state they would not feel safe at their places of origin and refer to the inter-ethnic tensions the country still faces. Some fear staying overnight only and visit their homes during the day. Apart from security constraints, IDPs often have other reasons for which they decided to stay at their new residence, e.g. economic reasons, the schooling of their children, etc. The monitoring of the relation between these different groups, i.e. displaced people, returnees, returnees-to-be and the resident population as well as interventions in support of the most vulnerable amongst the IDPs, are a task for the ICRC in 2004.” (ICRC January 2004)

See also:

“Expected trends in IDP returns (2003-2004)” [Internal Link]

“ICRC income-generating projects help vulnerable displaced civilians to become more self-reliant (2004)” [Internal Link]

High rate of return obscures subtle but ongoing pressure on minorities to leave majority areas (2003)

- UNHCR officials warn that the high return rate obscures the persistent polarisation of communities
- Though serious acts of violence are rare, there has been a failure of returnees to reintegrate socially and economically and minority returnees face constant pressure to leave
- There have been repeated acts of vandalism, harassment and abuse in certain areas, in particular in villages along the Tetovo-Jaznice road along the Kosovo border
- Property sale by minorities continue and local officials have confirmed that property sale among both Macedonians and Albanians in certain areas has accelerated

“Like pollsters, aid officials sketch a mixed picture. Macedonia had one of the fastest multiethnic returns of refugees seen in the Balkans.[1] However, UNHCR officials warn that the high return rate obscures the persistent polarisation of communities. While serious acts of violence are rare, according to UNHCR, Macedonians face a ‘subtle but constant pressure to leave’ areas where they are a minority.[2] Officials have produced a graphic, sagging ‘return curve’ that reflects the failure of returnees to reintegrate either socially or economically. UNHCR and OSCE cite repeated acts of vandalism, harassment and outright abuse in some villages along the Tetovo-Jaznice (Kosovo border) road. In one widely reported case, confirmed by OSCE, the gas station of a determined Macedonian proprietor has been repeatedly damaged.[3] In Opae in the Kumanovo area, 46 reconstructed houses have been looted, according to reports confirmed by UNHCR.

Albanians in general have been reluctant to identify perpetrators or speak about the problem in OSCE sponsored Citizens Advisory Group meetings with police. Some officials describe an incipient, postconflict sense of domination or entitlement on the part of many Albanians. ‘There won’t be any Macedonians living here in two years’, one Albanian in a village near Tetovo confidently told observers. Some Albanians candidly acknowledge a downturn in relations and a threat from criminals and extremists. A mayor said he would not surrender his own weapons in a UNDP-assisted government collection program nor would he expect Macedonians to do so.[4]

Albanian mayors also acknowledge what aid officials have long suspected: property sales by minorities on both sides continue apace. Especially distressing is the confirmation from the Mayor of Zajzas that the

house-sale phenomenon is accelerating among both Macedonians and Albanians in the Kicevo area – far to the south of the 2001 fighting.[5] This suggests that the feeling of vulnerability among minorities has spread beyond the former crisis areas. Citizens lament the creeping ethnic division of Skopje, symbolised by the reluctance of Macedonians to venture at night north of the Vardar to the old bazaar, formerly a lively multiethnic centre.

Young Albanians, seizing on the language rights in the Ohrid agreement, show greater reluctance to learn or speak Macedonian. Young Macedonians show a proclivity toward chauvinism as well. In solidarity with Macedonians engaged in a school dispute in Semsevo, youths massed in anti-Albanian demonstrations that led to ethnic beatings in Skopje.” (ICG 23 October 2003, p.22)

[Footnote 1] Macedonia has an over 95 per cent return rate – virtually a miracle compared with the situation in Kosovo, Bosnia- Herzegovina and Croatia. Of some 160,000 total displaced persons and refugees, only 6,300 are still not back in their homes - an equal number of Albanian and Macedonian displaced persons totalling 4,600, and about 1,700 mostly Albanian refugees. ICG interview with Goran Momirovski, UNHCR spokesman, 20 June 2003. About 1,600 are still stuck in collection centres and form the key, angry holdouts against return (especially to Aracinovo, near Skopje and Matejce, near Kumanovo). Also, hundreds of Roma refugees from Kosovo have mounted protests at the Greek border, demanding entry into Greece or other third countries.

[Footnote 2] Separate ICG meetings with OSCE officials, 20 June 2003.

[Footnote 3] ICG interview with OSCE official, 20 June 2003.

[Footnote 4] The program has been twice delayed and is now not slated to begin until November 2003. Albanians state that a crucial factor for success is if NATO will agree to be involved in the weapons collection, even if only symbolically.

[Footnote 5] ICG interview with Mayor Rufat Huseini of Zajas, January 2003.

Vandalism of houses and IDPs re-selling their property constitute obstacles to return (2003)

- According to the government, major obstacles to return are the demolition of already reconstructed houses and a preference amongst IDPs to sell their property
- The government noted that it was necessary to take measures to encourage IDPs to return to their homes, including improvement in security and confidence in the police and local authorities

“The number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Macedonia reached 5,548 as of 28 May, according to data submitted to the government on Monday (2 June). About 3,942 are sheltered by families; the rest live in 16 centres in Kumanovo and Skopje. The government is reviewing the progress of the reconstruction of houses belonging to IDPs and damaged in the 2001 military conflict. Government spokesperson Saso Colakovski said 6,590 buildings were partly or fully damaged in the crisis areas. The European Commission and the International Management Group are helping with the reconstruction project, which has already entered its second phase. According to the government, the major obstacles are the continuing demolition of already reconstructed houses and a preference among IDPs to sell their property in the crisis areas. The government agreed it should aim to improve security and step up confidence in police and local authorities in order to convince IDPs to return to their homes.” (Balkantimes 2 June 2003)

See also “[Outbreaks of looting and attacks against homes of displaced Macedonians and Serbs \(2003\)](#)” [Internal link]

International community in Macedonia condemns destruction of houses in Jelosnik and Opae villages but reiterates support to the return process (June 2003)

- The EU, OSCE and NATO issued a joint statement condemning arson, looting and demolition of houses in Jelosnik and Opae villages
- The international community also strongly encouraged the authorities to increase the patrols of multiethnic police forces in these areas and to conduct an investigation regarding these incidents

“The representatives of the international community in Macedonia strongly condemned the recent arson, looting and demolition of houses in Jelosnik and Opae villages.

EU special representative Alexis Brouhns, head of the European Commission Donato Chiarini, head of the European Agency for Reconstruction Daniel Giuglaris, US Ambassador Lawrence Butler, OSCE Ambassador Craig Jenness and NATO Ambassador Nicolaas Biegman said in a joint statement that these houses were either under reconstruction or reconstructed by the international community in order to facilitate the return of all internally displaced persons and refugees.

The recent incidents, reads the statement, will not affect the engagement and support of the international community in the process of returning the displaced persons to their homes.

‘In order to prevent future incidents, we strongly encourage the authorities to increase the patrols of multiethnic police forces in these areas and to conduct an investigation regarding these incidents, in compliance with the international practice. We encourage all those living in these areas to cooperate in the investigation,’ reads the statement.

The international community provided total of Euro 33 million aimed at reconstructing the houses damaged during the crisis in 2001.” (Macedonian Information Agency 4 June 2003)

Obstacles to return were different according to ethnicity of displaced persons (August 2002)

- Displaced faced difficulties in returning, mainly because of damage to houses, the security situation, or age or health reasons
- Most ethnic Albanians do not return because of damage to houses, while ethnic Macedonians face insecurity as an obstacle to return
- Despite funding, reconstruction of houses is very slow, creating tensions in relation to return
- Impunity towards persons guilty of human rights abuses installed fear in displaced persons and formed a barrier to return

“The remaining IDP's were fitting three basic criteria:

their houses are damaged (category 3 or 4)

they cannot return because of security reasons (still not demined area, threats from other local population,...)

they are old, disabled persons

In practice, most of the ethnic Albanians (app. 2/3 of the total IDP number) are not returned because of the destroyed houses, while ethnic Macedonians, Serbs and Roma are not returning because of the lack of security (especially in villages of Aracinovo and Matejee. Displaced ethnic Albanians are mostly from Lipkovo area.

Priority is reconstruction of houses and [...] there is funding for all remaining houses, but the works are progressing problematically slow, which is rising tension in relation to the return.” (MCIC 12 August 2002)

IFRC Macedonia specifies the second reason of non-return further:

Not able to go home because the house is damage 3 and 4 category (total destroyed)

Not able to go home because of security reason (If the person is minority in the village or if somebody from the family was in the military services from one of the sides)

Medical issue

(IFRC 15 August 2002)

AI gave another reason besides the above-mentioned:

"While the 2002 Law on Amnesty alleviated these concerns for ex-NLA members, deserters and draft evaders, it did not address fears that human rights abusers on both sides of the conflict were still at large and a barrier to safe returns." (AI 15 August 2002, "Dark days in Tetovo", p.24)

Policy

Macedonian government imposes deadline for displaced to return home (2003)

- The government-established deadline to close all IDP camps located around Skopje expired on March 7, 2003
- The government ordered a group of mostly ethnic-Macedonian IDPs displaced from the Tetovo region to return to their homes
- Many IDPs cite continued lack of security and economic instability as obstacles to return
- Those whose homes have not yet been reconstructed, students of Skopje University and parents whose children are attending schools in the area of their temporary accommodation are exempt
- Some IDPs announced protests against the government's decision

“On March 7, the government-established deadline to close Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) camps located around Skopje expired. On that date, the government ordered a group of mostly ethnic-Macedonian IDPs, displaced from the Tetovo region as a result of the 2001 conflict, to return to their homes. Their return is seen as an important step toward normalization in the country. However, despite government efforts, many IDPs cite a continued lack of security and economic instability preventing their return. The former camp residents remain in the Skopje area.” (USAID March 2003)

“Macedonia's minister in charge of internally displaced persons, Vlado Popovski, said on 6 March that he expects most of those targeted by the government's 7 March deadline to return home will do so, local media reported. The midday deadline is for internally displaced persons from the Tetovo region to leave their temporary accommodations and return to their homes, "Utrinski vesnik" reported the same day. Those whose destroyed homes have not yet been reconstructed, students of Skopje University, and parents whose children are attending schools in the area of their temporary accommodation are exempt from the order. Some reportedly have refused to return, citing an unstable security situation, and have announced protests against the government's decision,” (RFE/RL 7 March 2003)

Human rights organisation criticises national authorities for forcing the return of IDPs (March 2003)

- The IHF notes in its annual report that the Framework Agreement did not envisage alternative solutions to the problems of IDPs, leaving in practice only one alternative, return
- IHF notes that national authorities failed to satisfy minimal requirements of return, including compensation for housing, agricultural products and cattle IHF also criticises the authorities for failing to provide the necessary infrastructure and service required for return
- The Helsinki Committee for Human Rights-Macedonia critiqued the government-issued deadlines for displaced persons to leave collective centres in a press release in March 2003
- The organisation speaking on behalf of representatives of IDPs lists a number of minimum conditions for return which had not been met by national authorities

Overview

“Contrary to international standards, the Framework Agreement did not envisage alternative solutions to the problems of the IDPs. In practice, this left only one solution: return to the previous place of living. In order to prevent the ethnic cleansing of the territories after the 2001 conflict – and with the support of the international community – the state insisted (using force and blackmail if necessary) that all displaced persons return to their pre-conflict homes as soon as possible.

However, the state failed to satisfy the minimal prerequisites for their return: most of the damaged houses were not reconstructed; the repaired houses were not equipped with basic appliances and facilities; compensation was not paid for cattle killed nor agricultural crops destroyed by army bombardment; the necessary infrastructure and services were not provided; the life, property, and security of citizens were not secured; and some of the reconstructed houses of ethnic Macedonians and Serbs were robbed and destroyed again, particularly in the villages of Jedoarce, Otunje, Setole, and Aracinovo in the Tetovo region.” (IHF 24 June 2003)

“PRESS RELEASE ON THE COERCIVE ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE DISPLACED PERSONS

(Upon the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy report demanding a part of the internally displaced persons to leave the coordination centers by March 7, 2003)

In its 2002 Annual Report, the Helsinki Committee for Human Rights of the Republic of Macedonia already condemned the coercive methods and threats employed by the Government, which insisted all displaced persons to return to their places of living in the shortest possible period. The most recent governmental decision and the means of realization by the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy indicates that this trend has been continued by the new Government also. Namely, the Government makes decisions, while the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy (on the basis of ‘serious analysis’) distributes notifications to the displaced persons that the collective centers will continue to house solely the families whose ‘homes have been fired and demolished... as well as high school and university students that study in Skopje, until the closing of the school year.’

This decision resulted in a revolt by the largest part of the displaced persons, whose representatives listed a number of reasons whereby they consider that the minimum standards for return have not been met, and especially due to:

1. The Ministry of Interior's notions about the favorable security condition in Tetovo, and the villages of Neproshteno, Leshok, Tearce, Otushishte and Jegunovce in the vicinities of Tetovo are untrue. This was confirmed by a number of counter-arguments:

- in the last two weeks, two houses have been burnt down in "Jeloshnik" and Leshok;

- rifle shootings can still be heard in these regions;
 - the collection of weapons has still not been performed;
 - unidentified armed persons still operate in the area;
 - the evening Tetovo-Jazince bus line is still out of function;
 - in the schools where their children are supposed to study, the pupils are subjected to daily threats, and even heavy physical assaults;
2. On the lists of people that should leave the rooms are a large number of people whose homes have been robbed and demolished and which have been included in the reconstruction process;
 3. The persons who have been listed and whose houses have been reconstructed (and have not been ravished or burnt down in the meantime) state that they are deprived of the elementary internal living conditions, i.e. that they do not possess the basic household items; and
 4. They have not been provided with any guaranty regarding their life, property and safety.

At the last meeting between representatives of the displaced persons and representatives of the Government's Coordination Body the displaced persons' demands and suggestions were not accepted, while it was also pointed out that the Government remains on the stand to have the decision executed in the foreseen period, in accordance with the 'national interest' not to depart from those areas, but also justify the donations in the eyes of the foreign donators.

Initiating from the notion that these persons left their homes as a result of the policies and actions undertaken (or omitted to be undertaken) by the State, including the unexplained change of criteria whereupon a person is considered to be and aided as a displaced person, as well as due to the fact that the State is responsible for the protection of the basic human rights (as the right to life, inviolability of the home, right to free movement on the territory of the Republic, free choice of personal logging, free enjoyment of privacy, right to social security and social protection, right to education and children's rights) which means a responsibility and application of the international documents that regulate this subject, the Helsinki Committee for Human Rights of the Republic of Macedonia demands the Government to:

- reconsider its decision regarding the exemption of aid in accommodating and providing with food all persons that have been enumerated in the lists as bound to leave the collective centers, especially having in mind that this action concerns also a number of international governmental and non-governmental organizations that participate in the humanitarian aid for those IDPs;
- take seriously in consideration the displaced persons' arguments and help them in regards to their demands for provision of elementary conditions for survival either in the places they have left, or offer them an alternative;
- engage additional means for the advancement of the security condition and provide unlimited movement on the entire territory of the Republic of Macedonia, especially in the regions where there is a great number of displaced persons;
- undertake appropriate steps for inclusion of the displaced persons in the confidence building process in the places where they have been displaced from (create conditions for participation of the representatives of the displaced persons in the so called 'advisory committees');
- undertake special measures for social and psychological protection and rehabilitation of the internally displaced persons, as persons who are continuously under stress and feeling of insecurity as a result of the experienced violations of their home and property - especially those who have been injured, ill-treated, kidnapped during the crisis; persons who have lost a member of their family or a close relative; as well as the persons who have felt great fear or inner pain.

The Helsinki Committee appeals in particular to the members of the Albanian community in the Parliament, the Government and other State structures, to actively and visibly join in the detection of the most appropriate solutions, aimed at the creation of conditions for return of the internally displaced persons.”(Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in Macedonia 7 March 2003)

See also Section 2.1 Forced return of internally displaced persons, Helsinki Committee for Human Rights, Monthly Report for June 2003 [Internet link] and Section 4 of the Helsinki Committee for Human Rights Annual Report for the year 2003, 15 January 2004 [Internet].

Organised by the government, ethnic Macedonians returned to the ethnic Albanian Aracinovo region (September 2001)

- In September 2001, the government organized the return of ethnic Macedonians to an ethnic Albanian area adjacent to Aracinovo
- UNHCR expressed its belief that the safe return of displaced ethnic groups in regions where they are in the minority is crucial to the peace process
- The government also announced plans for the return of displaced Macedonians to some villages in the Tetovo region, 60 kms northwest of Skopje

“Around 300 ethnic Macedonian internally displaced persons (IDPs) from the FYROM village of Brnjaci went home today in the first government-organized return to an area largely populated by ethnic Albanians. The Brnjaci residents were taken by bus from collective centers in nearby Skopje, where they had been staying for the last three months, for the 20-minute trip to their village. Brnjaci is adjacent to the town of Aracinovo, where up to 10,000 ethnic Albanians had earlier gone back. Around 70 residents returned to Brnjaci earlier.

UNHCR believes the safe return of displaced ethnic groups in regions where they are in the minority is crucial to the peace process in the country after a six-month conflict. Early this month, UNHCR organized a bus shuttle to enable the Brnjaci residents to visit their homes, which showed little damage from the fighting. On Sunday, the government announced it was time for the IDPs to return to Brnjaci, saying students returning to schools will use the collective centers, with UNHCR support.

The government has also announced plans for the return of displaced Macedonians to some villages in the Tetovo region, 60 kms northwest of Skopje. A secure environment in many areas is yet to be established.” (UNHCR 18 September 2001)

HUMANITARIAN ACCESS

General

Human rights organisations were targets of governmental intimidation (2002-2003)

- The Macedonian Helsinki Committee and other human rights organisations were targeted by the government
- Government media sources accused the organisation of lack of patriotism and treason
- Representatives of the MHC were verbally attacked
- The Brussels-based International Crisis Group was also the subject of government-critique

“The Macedonian Helsinki Committee (MHC) and other organizations became targets of government-orchestrated intimidation campaigns. The publication of MHC's 2001 annual report, which included accounts of violations by the Macedonian police, triggered accusations of treason and lack of patriotism by the government-controlled media. A statement from the Ministry of the Interior labeled Mirjana Najcevska, the MHC chairperson, "state enemy no.1" and "anti-Macedonian." In September, Najcevska was also verbally attacked by Minister of the Interior Boskovski following an MHC statement expressing doubts about the political impartiality of the police. Boskovski launched a similar smear campaign against the Brussels-based International Crisis Group and the author of its report on official corruption in Macedonia.” (HRW 14 January 2003)

NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL RESPONSES

National response

Government adopts national plan to fully implement Ohrid agreement that includes confidence-building measures and the safe return of displaced persons (2003-2004)

- Decentralisation is the main issue to be addressed with the action plan
- Two other central priorities are the need to build confidence and strengthen security measures and the safe return of displaced persons
- Other issues to be addressed by the action plan include representation in the state administration
- On 3 February, 2003 the Government adopted three documents defining tasks and deadlines for the implementation of the Framework Agreement

“An action plan to fully implement the Ohrid agreement is to be adopted by the Macedonian government next week, heralding a new era of cooperation for the region.

The plan envisages amendments to more than 90 laws to meet the requirements laid down in the agreement, which brought the republic's civil conflict to an end in August 2001. The reforms should be in force by the end of next year.

[...]

The plan, scheduled to be adopted on January 13, was created at a top-level meeting on December 26, when the Macedonian President Boris Trajkovski met government officials and party leaders in the presence of the United States ambassador Lawrence Battler and European Union special representative Alexis Brouhns.

Only VMRO-DPMNE leader Ljupco Georgievski - who was prime minister at the time the agreement was signed - did not take part, apparently in protest against the arrest of members of his party on corruption charges.

[...]

Decentralisation is a main issue outlined in the agreement, and is being treated as a priority. The government is to prepare a set of laws to begin this process by December 2003 at the very latest, with the transfer of authority from central to local level planned for the end of 2004.

Two other priorities identified at the December meeting was the need to build confidence and strengthen security measures in the wake of the conflict and the the safe return of around 8,000 displaced persons - mostly ethnic Macedonians - to former crisis regions.

The issue of representation in the state administration is also being tackled, but officials have warned that this will not happen overnight. ‘The biggest problems are Macedonia's unfavourable economic and social climate and high unemployment,’ Xhaferi told IWPR.

‘The agreement asks us to employ more ethnic Albanians in the state administration at a time when we have already had to lay off thousands of its employees - mostly Macedonians. There is a danger that political opponents may try to use this as an argument that Ohrid is favouring the former over the latter.

‘But we are preparing our priorities in a number of institutions where more Albanians are going to be employed with a minimum of Macedonians being made redundant. This process will be transparent and we hope that everyone will understand that this is not against any one group.’” (IWPR 9 January 2003)

“At its session on 3 February, the Government adopted three documents defining tasks and deadlines for the implementation of the Framework Agreement: the Plan for the Implementation of the Framework Agreement; the Operational Programme for Decentralisation of Power 2003-2004; and the Basis for the Improvement of the Adequate and Equitable Representation of the Communities in Public Administration and Public Utility Companies. The documents contain overall objectives and lists of laws and regulations that need to be amended as well as a preliminary calculation of the funds needed for their implementation.

On 14 February the signatory parties to the Framework Agreement met to reaffirm their commitment to complete and timely implementation of the Agreement and expressed their support for the three documents adopted by the Government. According to the conclusions of the meeting, decentralisation is to be implemented fully before the local elections in 2004.” (COE 14 April 2003, paras. 124-125)

See “Session of the Government”, Program Activities for 2003 Adopted, FYR Macedonian government, 17 February 2003 [Internet]

Selected UN activities

IDP-related activities of UNICEF (May 2002)

- UNICEF supported the Ministry of Health, and provided health supplies and vaccines
- With UNICEF support, national NGOs are providing psychosocial activities to children and families of all ethnicities that have been either displaced or are hosting displaced individuals

“Early Childhood Development

UNICEF supported the Ministry of Health to strengthen outreach networks and medical mobile teams throughout the conflict-affected area and in communities hosting IDPs in addition to maintaining its countrywide early childhood development programs. Proposed early childhood development activities include provision of essential medicines and mother and child health equipment and services, immunisation campaigns, community-based health promotion and health education programmes, the promotion of breastfeeding, safe motherhood practices and expansion and enhancement of early learning and stimulation programmes.

With available funds UNICEF concentrated efforts on providing essential medicines and health supplies, including 10 emergency health kits for 100,000 people for three months, five physician and five public nurse kits, consumable medical materials, 200,000 sachets of oral re-hydration salts, basic clinical equipment, paediatric drugs, Infant Starter Kits and other medical supplies to hospital units, health centres and pharmacies. UNICEF also supplied essential mother and child health equipment to facilities for mothers-to-be in conflict-affected area and host communities. For IDPs living in collective centres, UNICEF delivered hygiene items in coordination with the Red Cross and conducted health education classes for IDPs, women and young people in the six summer centres in Kumanovo and Skopje.

UNICEF provided vaccines for immunisation of refugee children lodged in collective centres. WHO, in coordination with UNICEF, assessed the health status of the conflict affected population through a Rapid Health Assessment survey.

Child Protection / Human Rights / Rule of Law

UNICEF has concentrated on the coordination and implementation of psychosocial activities following a country wide vulnerability assessment of IDP and host families. With UNICEF support, national NGOs are providing psychosocial activities to children and families of all ethnicities that have been either displaced or are hosting displaced individuals.

UNICEF also provided winter clothing packages to some 3,000 children hosted in collective centres and other institutions during the winter period.” (UNICEF 29 May 2002)

UN Country Team strategy programmes include sustainable return, integration, and access to basic services for IDPs (2003)

- No consolidated appeal was issued for the FYROM in 2003
- The UN Country Team identified insecurity, restricted access to basic services, as well as poverty and unemployment as main vulnerability criteria in post conflict, transitional FYROM
- Programme activities for 2003 focused on sustainable return/integration, protection/human security, access to basic services, economic recovery and decentralised governance
- Key vulnerable groups identified by the UN country team include IDPs and minority returnees

“As a result of the improved security and humanitarian situation, the United Nations Country Team has decided not to issue a 2003 Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal (CAP) for the FYROM. However, recognizing that pockets of instability remain and vulnerable groups will continue to be impacted by insecurity, the depleted economy, inadequate health and social service protection, and ongoing political changes, the UN Country Team has developed a common strategy which aims to address the needs of the most vulnerable while also linking humanitarian priorities to development programming.

To achieve this objective, the UN Country Team has identified 5 areas of intervention. Activities to overcome obstacles to 'sustainable' return or to provide integration solutions will aim to assist the remaining displaced population resume their lives. Improving human security and ensuring access to basic services for both the displaced populations as well as those who are minorities within their communities has also been prioritized to foster stability and ensure protection of the most vulnerable. With unemployment and poverty topping the lists of concerns for the majority of Macedonians, economic recovery programmes will support resumption of livelihoods and provide key linkages to development priorities. Finally, the process of decentralization has been highlighted as a crucial area that will require intensive community and capacity building inputs to support transfer of responsibility from central to municipal authorities in order to advance social, economic and political rights.

[...]

STRATEGIC HUMANITARIAN OBJECTIVES AND PRIORITIES

To ensure that the humanitarian assistance needs of the most vulnerable groups are addressed, while supporting policies, which promote sustainable solutions and foster an environment of security and development for all.

This objective will be supported by activities in the following priority areas:

Sustainable Return / Integration

Continued progress on the remaining obstacles to sustainable return including protection monitoring, completion of de-mining activities, and support for resumption of households and livelihoods will complement housing reconstruction and infrastructure rehabilitation activities carried out by EAR and NGOs. At the same time, durable solutions for the residual 1999 Kosovo refugee caseload will be actively pursued. Visits and information exchange to inform decisions on return, financial assistance for voluntary repatriation or integration, and lobbying for extended rights under the temporary protection status will aim to provide viable options for refugees.

Protection / Human Security

A key challenge during this post-conflict period will be to prevent an increase in tension by reinforcing the rule of law, ensuring respect for the rights of all, and building confidence between ethnic groups to stabilize still very tense communities. Supporting the government to revise legislation and design national strategies in the areas of asylum law, citizenship, human rights and child rights will assist in reinforcing principles of democracy and improving human rights practices.

Public awareness campaigns and access to legal assistance will promote rights as well as responsibilities of all citizens. Strengthening controls to combat concerns such as trafficking of human beings is also a priority.

Access to Basic Services

Shrinking budgets, ethnic division and geographic inequities are negatively impacting access to essential services, often for those who are most vulnerable. In the health sector, a strong urban bias of health personnel exacerbates these problems and has resulted in several underserved rural areas. Ensuring access to essential medical services, in underserved areas as well as for vulnerable groups such as Roma women and children, is therefore, high on the list of humanitarian concerns. Equal access to education, especially for those who are minorities in their communities as well as for children with special needs also poses a significant challenge and will be addressed through programmes and activities promoting tolerance and respects and equal access to education for all.

Economic Recovery

Continued progress on community stabilization will increasingly be tied to economic progress resulting in tangible including income generation, training and skill development will complement legal reforms, micro-credit schemes and private sector investment to push forward economic recovery. Rehabilitation activities in the agricultural sector will continue to support resumption of crop and livestock production, while also aiming to upgrade farming practices and improve longer-term viability.

Decentralized Governance

An underlying premise of the Framework Agreement is to redress power imbalances through increased decentralization of government. Through this process, many responsibilities for public service delivery such as urban / rural planning, environmental protection, local economic development, etc. will be devolved to local authorities. To successfully manage this transition, important inputs include assessment of appropriate models, support for design of legislation, capacity building within municipal structures and direct community inputs to subsidize communities that are particularly vulnerable as a result of past inequities or conflict related hardships.” (OCHA 11 February 2003)

[Footnote 1] Macedonian Red Cross statistics, September 2002

[Footnote 2] UNMIK / UNHCR statistics, October 2002

For the current activities of the UN Country Team, see the [website of the UN in Macedonia](#)

UNHCR takes lead role in the return process (January 2001-2004)

- UNHCR was assigned the lead role in the return, confidence building and stabilisation process under Annex C of the 2001 Ohrid Framework Agreement
- In 2003, one of UNHCR’s main programme goals and principle objectives was assistance to and protection of IDPs, refugees and returnees in all aspects of return
- UNHCR planned to phase down returnee monitoring and related activities by the end of 2003

- In 2004, the agency will focus on strengthening asylum; durable solutions and assistance to asylum seekers and refugees; and prevention of statelessness
- UNHCR will continue to cooperate with other UN agencies within the UN country team and other international organisations, including those supporting IDPs

“The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has assumed the lead role in the return, confidence building and stabilisation process as outlined in Annex C of the Framework Agreement: *‘All parties will work to ensure the return of refugees who are citizens or legal residents of Macedonia and displaced persons to their homes within the shortest possible timeframe, and invite the international community and in particular UNHCR to assist in these efforts.’* Priority activities during this crucial period of transition are focused on a significant field presence to assess the security, protection and humanitarian needs in villages where people have expressed a desire to return. UNHCR along with other actors intends to maintain a level of contingency and preparedness in order to respond to any renewed displacement.” (UN OCHA 20 January 2002)

UNHCR’s Role 2003 and 2004

In 2003, one of UNHCR’s main programme goals and principle objectives was assistance and protection of IDPs, refugees and returnees from the 2001 crisis in all aspects of return

Programme Goals included:

- The response to address the protection and assistance needs of returnees is timely and effective;
- The protection and assistance needs of returnees are met;
- Durable solutions for the displaced are actively sought and included in the peace-building process, and implemented by parties to the conflict and international and local partners;
- Sustainable solutions are ensured for the longer term and further displacement is prevented;
- Public opinion be receptive and supportive of the assistance to, and solutions of, refugees, returnees, regardless of their respective ethnic background.

Principal Objectives

- To ensure that the right to return is respected and to facilitate the removal of obstacles to return

Related Outputs

- Maintain dialogue with government, local leaders, donors and other international organisations regarding obstacles to return, particularly in areas of mixed-ethnicity and in sensitive areas.” (UNHCR Country Operations Plan 2003)

“Under Annex C of the FA, UNHCR was tasked as the lead agency for the return of people uprooted as a result of the 2001 crisis, and co-ordinated assistance in all sectors related to return. This responsibility will have been largely concluded at the end of 2002.” (UNHCR Country Operations Plan 2003)

“UNHCR expects to phase down returnee monitoring and related activities under the Ohrid Framework Agreement by the end of 2003 and thereafter to focus towards core protection obligations in building asylum-systems, facilitation of voluntary repatriation and reduction of statelessness. Under its mandate UNHCR will continue to provide protection and material assistance to asylum seekers and refugees, most of whom were under the THAP regime. Its role also includes a pro-active approach and demarches with the authorities on issues ranging from right to asylum and protection to assistance and durable solutions. It is foreseen that in 2004 even a greater number of persons of concern to UNHCR will be in need of the legal and social assistance through the legal NGO network. As a phase out strategy, the office will work in close collaboration with development agencies, bilateral partners and through international funding initiatives, ensuring the resources are directed towards finding sustainable solutions for refugees and the returnee populations..

[...]

UNHCR will continue to work with other UN agencies within the UN Country Team (UNCT) as well as with other international organisations.

[...]

UNHCR's co-operation within the UNCT includes security monitoring, education, community services, health-care for refugees with UNICEF and efforts by WHO to assist in reinforcing the country's health-care system for vulnerable refugees and IDPs." (UNHCR Country Operations Plan 2004)

"In **FYR Macedonia**, the Government passed a Law on Asylum and Temporary Protection in August 2003. The drafting and adoption of appropriate by-laws for its implementation and the development of reception policies and facilities will be the focus of the Office's efforts in 2004. Some 2,500 refugees from Kosovo who were granted temporary protection by the Government will now be given individual access to the asylum procedure." (UNHCR Global Appeal 2004)

UNHCR's Main Programme Goals and Principle Objectives for 2004 include:

- 1) Strengthening Asylum, Beneficiary Population: Asylum seekers including THAPs and refugees*
- 2) Durable Solutions and Assistance, Beneficiary Population: Refugees from Kosovo in FYR Macedonia from 1999 crisis and Refugees from FYR Macedonia in Kosovo from 2001 crisis.*
- 3) Stateless Population: Reduction and Prevention of Statelessness, Beneficiary Population: Stateless Persons/ Persons Lacking Effective Citizenship*

UNHCR facilitated the return of displaced (August 2001-April 2002)

- UNHCR conducted emergency housing repairs, monitored return areas, adopted confidence-building measures, issued identity documents, and promoted inter-ethnic dialogue
- UNHCR was cautious not to encourage return to areas where security assessments were not carried out, and where conditions for safe return were not yet established
- In October 2001, UNHCR established bus routes and was part of its efforts to help build confidence in the peace process and allow the return of refugees and internally displaced people
- With the completion of the housing repair programme by the end of June 2002, the total number of houses repaired was thought to be 4,500
- In 2002, UNHCR continued with other activities to help the return displaced

August 2001

"UNHCR's planned activities in support of return include emergency housing repairs, monitoring of return areas, confidence-building measures, issuing identity documents, and promoting dialogue between ethnic communities in mixed villages. UNHCR's mobile teams are already working in areas where the security situation improved slightly over the past 48 hours, such as Aracinovo near Skopje, and Kumanovo.

At the same time, UNHCR will continue to be cautious not to encourage return to areas where security assessments have not been carried out, and where conditions for safe return have not yet been established." (UNHCR 17 August 2001)

October 2001

"UNHCR opened a new bus line today linking the ethnic Albanian village of Selce to the the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia's second largest town of Tetovo in a program to promote freedom of movement across volatile ethnic lines and checkpoints. The bus will transport workers and students from Selce, a village of 3,200 ethnic Albanians, to Tetovo, 60 km west of Skopje. Selce is located 10 kms northwest of Tetovo, where heavy fighting broke out during the six-month ethnic Albanian insurgency in the country.

“To facilitate freedom of movement, UNHCR has added three new bus routes this week to the six currently operating in the Skopje and Kumanovo areas. Evening buses for students run between Skopje and Radusa, as well as between Kumanovo and Lojane. Another new busline links the village of Grusino, near Kumanovo, and Skopje. UNHCR will operate these routes until commercial buses can resume normal operations.” (UNHCR 15 November 2001)

“The program is part of UNHCR's efforts to help build confidence in the peace process and allow the return of refugees and internally displaced people.” (UNHCR 26 October 2001)

April 2002:

“The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Skopje is currently carrying out the repair of 1,300 units in its emergency shelter repair programme for 2002, aiming at rehabilitating houses in damage category 1 and 2 (slight damage). In 2001, 3,167 houses were repaired by UNHCR and its partners under the emergency repair programme. With the completion of the programme by the end of June 2002, provided that donors are forthcoming, the total number of houses repaired will be brought to 4,500. This represents a clean balance sheet with practically no leftovers under category 1 and 2 (houses with slight damage).

This week, material for repair of slightly damaged houses was distributed to Lavce and Drenovec in the Tetovo region and to Aracinovo in the Skopje region. Distribution will be completed in 12 villages in the former crisis areas next week, providing necessary repair to 607 houses in damage category 1 and 2 by the end of April.

'UNHCR is anxious to see that also the remaining groups of displaced persons can return. Damage to their housing is one of several obstacles these people face, and we are calling for donors' support so that houses in categories 3 and 4 (heavy destruction) can be completed by specialised reconstruction agencies', says Amin Awad, UNHCR Representative in Macedonia.

UNHCR continues with other activities to help the return of people who became displaced as a result of last year's seven month-conflict in Macedonia. Family returnee kits are being distributed to returnees. With the aim to promote confidence building, and to help revitalise the communities affected by the conflict, a number of community based Quick Impact Projects (QIPs) are being implemented throughout the affected areas. Tailored assistance is given to vulnerable returnees and IDPs, in particular elderly, children and women, through psychosocial, educational, recreational, and vocational training activities. Special attention is given to disabled persons.” (UNHCR 12 April 2002)

See also, "F.Y.R. of Macedonia: shelter assistance programme successfully completed" UNHCR, November 2002 [Internet].

The United Nations-plans for 2002, general

- Emphasis will be given to groups who are a minority within their communities, mixed villages and, to isolated villages
- Food, accommodation and other assistance will be given to families who have not returned to their villages, followed by return assistance during the spring and summer of 2002
- Primary goal is to provide assistance and protection to the residual refugee caseload and to conflict-affected groups including internally displaced persons, host families and returnees
- Another goal is to sustain the reintegration of the displaced populations into the affected areas

“Humanitarian activities will focus on an estimated 100,000 IDPs and returnees and vulnerable families within conflict affected communities as well as the approximately 5,000 refugees remaining from the

Kosovo crisis while maintaining a high level of response preparedness for any new displacement. Approximately 260,000 inhabitants in the conflict affected villages will also indirectly benefit from community stabilisation [sic!] and confidence building activities.

Within conflict-affected areas, particular emphasis will be given to groups who are a minority within their communities, mixed villages and, as soon as security and movement permits, to isolated villages that have been cut off as a result of the conflict. Communities that have suffered significant conflict related damage and need urgent assistance to rebuild homes, public infrastructures such as health facilities and schools and to re-establish social support mechanisms will also be prioritised. Families who have not returned to their villages as a result of security concerns or whose homes have been significantly damaged or destroyed will continue to need accommodation, food and other basic assistance throughout the winter months, followed by return assistance during the spring and summer of 2002.

[...]

Goals of the UN with regard to the target population:

The primary goal of the UNCT [UN Country Team] in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia is to provide humanitarian assistance and protection to the residual refugee caseload and to conflict-affected groups including internally displaced persons, host families, returnees and remainees. [...]

Undertake confidence-building and stabilisation activities, in support of *the Framework Agreement* to promote inter-ethnic tolerance and the enactment of constitutional and other legislation, with corresponding enforcement mechanisms, to protect individual and minority rights. [...]

Facilitate the timely, safe and dignified return of refugees and displaced persons, as stipulated in *Annex C of the Framework Agreement*, through emergency assistance to returnees, mine and UXO clearance, basic support for essential public services and rehabilitation of infrastructures and private dwellings in the affected areas. [...]

Sustain the reintegration of the displaced populations into the affected areas through infrastructure rehabilitation, economic recovery, capacity building and empowerment of local government structures. [...]
(UN-OCHA November 2001, pp.13-15)

The UN responded actively to the needs of IDPs during the conflict, see UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA)/ 3 December 2001/ [Humanitarian Update OCHA Skopje Sept - Nov 2001](#)

UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA)/ November 2001/ [Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal for Southeastern Europe 2002 \[Internet\]](#).

The United Nations-plans for 2002, specified by sector

- WFP conducted a food needs assessment to determine the negative impact of the conflict on food security and livelihoods, and to plan for future food requirements after WFP assistance ends in December 2001
- FAO will help about 30,000 drought and conflict-affected farm families resume their livelihoods
- UNICEF and WFO will continue to support the health system and address the psychosocial effects among conflict affected populations
- UNHCR will continue to coordinate humanitarian shelter-repair activities in close collaboration with the EC, support host family structures, provide return kits to displaced, and provide firewood
- UNICEF will continue to ensure access to a safe learning environment and a quality education for all children, especially those affected by the conflict

- UNHCR will facilitate IDP and returnee access to legal and protection services through expanding the existing legal network and organising information campaigns

Food

WFP is conducting a food needs assessment to determine the negative impact of the conflict on food security and livelihoods, especially in rural areas, and to plan for future food requirements after WFP assistance ends in December 2001. Based on the results of this assessment, key partners are expected to formulate and support an integrated range of activities relevant to the changing context of the crisis. This will allow future food aid donors the flexibility to shift planned and resourced assistance for IDPs to support returnees and affected communities where needed.

[...]

Agriculture

FAO's proposed emergency agricultural assistance programme will help about 30,000 drought and conflict-affected farm families resume their livelihoods and thereby achieve self-reliance. To this end, FAO will: provide essential agricultural inputs to conflict and drought-affected farmers; repair tractors damaged by the conflict; build up the disaster mitigation and preparedness capacities of the Government and civil society; and provide coordination support and technical assistance to humanitarian partners engaged in emergency agricultural activities. Assistance will be provided in close collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management, UN agencies, NGOs, the private sector and other relevant humanitarian partners. In particular, FAO will work closely with UNDP, which will provide complementary support to employment generation, micro-enterprise development and area-based economic development in the affected rural areas.

Health

WHO leads emergency health coordination providing crucial links between the Ministry of Health and humanitarian health agencies and together with UNICEF will assist the national health services in coping with the additional needs that have arisen from the conflict. At the same time, WHO will continue to strengthen disease surveillance systems and outbreak controls and UNICEF will support and monitor immunisation coverage and the mother and child healthcare outreach networks such as the patronage nursing system. Finally, WHO's "Peace Through Health" initiative will serve as a neutral medium for reconciliation and confidence building, emphasising re-integration of health professionals into the national health system.

Another profound consequence of the conflict has been the dramatic increase in psychosocial effects among conflict affected populations, as highlighted in the UNICEF-led vulnerability assessment. In order to restore the psychosocial well being of children and their families, UNICEF has established a Psychosocial Working Group to coordinate urgent psychosocial response mechanisms including mobile outreach teams and an SOS telephone hotline. IOM will complement this support through the implementation of formal and informal activities and will facilitate access to psychosocial activities for interested youth by providing transport services in rural areas. Complementary to these direct inputs, UNICEF aims to strengthen the capacity of the network of 30 Centres for Social Work, which provide outreach counselling services to families with children at risk. At the same time, WHO support multi-disciplinary teams of professionals who have completed a yearlong WHO psychosocial training, to establish support groups for individuals suffering from trauma and stress." (UN-OCHA November 2001, pp.15-19)

"Assistance to the HIV/AIDS national prevention programme in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

IOM in cooperation with the National Committee for HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control, WHO and UNICEF will develop a programme targeting the mobile population. Activities include awareness raising

among returnees, refugees, IDPs and youth; training; establishment of anonymous counseling services; the establishment of voluntary, anonymous, free of charge HIV testing and pre and post testing counselling; implementation of school health education programme.” (UN OCHA 20 January 2002)

“Shelter / Non-Food Items

[...] UNHCR will continue to coordinate humanitarian shelter-repair activities in close collaboration with the EC, which will lead the reconstruction efforts. Working closely with local and international NGO partners activities in the shelter and host families sectors will aim to support host family structures through the provision of household and non-food items. At the same time, UNHCR will provide return kits comprised of household and shelter repair materials to support the return of families to areas that have been assessed as adequately safe. Kits will address the initial basic need of families returning to residences that have sustained damage or loss during the conflict, complemented by follow on housing repair inputs. Firewood will also be provided to assist vulnerable returnee families address their winter needs. Finally, UNHCR will provide funding for Quick Impact Projects (QIPs) to assist affected communities with minor infrastructure repair to speed the process of recovery.

Education

[...] To ensure access to a safe learning environment and a quality education for all children, especially those affected by the conflict, UNICEF will support the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology in assessment, coordination, planning and response, including reforms to improve education quality and relevance within a multi-ethnic environment. UNICEF interventions will include the provision of temporary spaces (tents/containers), school supplies and furnishings, support to youth programmes and community and family learning and empowerment programmes, peace-building and human rights curricula and inclusive learning practices. Advocacy for mine/UXO clearance will also be undertaken.

Urgent school rehabilitation/reconstruction needs are currently being assessed and as education is a primary concern for both communities, rapid rehabilitation or reconstruction of damaged facilities will continue to be undertaken to ensure access to education and also to build confidence and promote community stabilisation - not merely for the children who attend these schools - but for their parents and communities as a whole.” (UN-OCHA November 2001, pp.15-19)

“As the lead agency in the shelter sector, UNHCR will also continue to fund, coordinate and advocate the provision of community services to refugees, returnees and IDPs, with a view to assisting vulnerable individuals, especially children, youth, women and the elderly, through psychosocial, educational, recreational and vocational training activities.

[...]

To ensure equal access to quality education and to improve learning conditions for all children, UNICEF will continue to provide additional textbooks, school materials for students and teachers, furniture and teaching equipment for schools. Refurbishment of schools and temporary facilities will be supported to cope with additional placement needs for displaced children and those in conflict areas where school facilities have been damaged or destroyed.

In collaboration with the Ministry of Education, UNICEF has introduced child rights, peace and conflict resolution lessons in primary schools. The programme aims to establish inter-ethnic dialogue and understanding among youth from different ethnic groups through the revision of curricula, training of teachers, and support to community-based children and youth centres. Tolerance and equal participation will further be promoted through continued support to inclusive education and interactive learning programmes.” (UN OCHA 20 January 2002)

“Protection/Human Rights/Rule of Law

To promote community stabilisation and confidence, aimed at facilitating return while also providing protection to ethnic minorities, the UNCT will maintain a robust presence in return and conflict-affected areas. The UNCT will also advocate for strengthening of existing human rights bodies particularly municipal-level Ombudsman offices. To facilitate IDP and returnee access to legal and protection services, UNHCR will expand the existing legal network, particularly in affected areas and will organise information campaigns to provide essential information on home communities and the availability of humanitarian assistance to assist displaced persons make informed decision regarding return. Complementary inputs will be provided through UNDP's local government reform project to support the decentralisation process and work to ensure equitable participation of all ethnic groups in order to promote the reintegration of refugees and IDPs into ethnic diverse communities." (UN-OCHA November 2001, pp.15-19)

“Child protection

To protect children from violence, abuse, exploitation, discrimination, deprivation and neglect, UNICEF will support community-based services at the local level aimed at strengthening the protective environment of the family as well as support government partners to improve policy and legal protection measures. UNICEF will increase its technical capacity to conduct vulnerability assessments of displaced, remainees, returnees, refugees and other conflict affected populations. To create a stabilizing, normal environment for children, youth and their parents and to ensure an appropriate psychosocial response, support will be provided to expand psychosocial mobile teams and establishment of psychosocial support services in UNICEF-supported family centres, schools and youth centres, training of professionals and support to recreational activities. Support will also be provided to build capacities within government, civil society and the Ombudsperson for Children to monitor child rights violations through further development of a database to collect and analyze information on vulnerability indicators for children and their families.” (UNICEF, 11 February 2002)

International response

NATO scales down presence in FYR Macedonia (2004)

- NATO drastically reduced its presence in the country, scaling down troops to 129
- Nearly three years since the 2001 conflict, the situation in Macedonia has been assessed as stable by Western security analysts, although NATO officials maintain that a number of security risks remain the region
- The NATO presence was largely replaced by the new EU police training mission in December 2003
- NATO troops have been present in Macedonia since September 2001 to supervise the implementation of the Ohrid peace agreement

“NATO drastically decreased its military presence in Macedonia on Wednesday, cutting down to 129 the number of soldiers and personnel deployed in the troubled Balkan country.

Almost three years after the start of the armed ethnic Albanian rebellion in 2001, western security analysts assessed the situation in Macedonia as stable and decided to downgrade to smaller reforms-related advisory team, NATO said.

However, NATO officials a number of security risks remained in the region, including the newly formed ethnic Albanian underground group in Montenegro and organized crime.

In December, the European Union launched a new police training mission in Macedonia, which replaced the military peacekeeping operation that had been in place in the country since 2001.

Meanwhile, officials in Skopje said Macedonia planned to submit its formal bid for E.U. entry at the end of February, only a few months after the end of the western military mission.

NATO troops moved into Macedonia in September 2001 to supervise the implementation of the Ohrid peace deal, which ended the seven-month conflict between ethnic Albanian rebels and government security forces.” (Deutsche Presse Agentur 14 January 2004)

For more information, see "NATO's Role in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia" , 14 May 2003 [Internet]

See also "EU takes over first peacekeeping mission in Macedonia", Agence France-Presse (AFP), 31 March 2003 [Internet]

EU launches new police mission to ensure stability in the region (2003-2004)

- The EU launched “EUPOL Proxima”, a new police mission in FYR Macedonia in December 2003
- The EUPOL police mission replaces the EU’s “Concordia” peacekeeping military mission which completed its operations in December 2003
- The mission is part of a wider EU strategy to promote reform in the Balkans and is to contribute to stability and the rule of law
- “Proxima” aims to assist local authorities in the development of their police forces at international and European standards
- The police force is being sent at the request of the Macedonian authorities, who requested EU help to fight organised crime
- The EU took over security in Macedonia on 31 March 2003 succeeding a NATO operation aimed at restoring peace and security in 2001

“On 15 December 2003, the EU launches a new police mission in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM). ‘EUPOL Proxima’ will succeed the EU’s ‘Concordia’ peacekeeping military mission, which expires that same day. It is the second EU police mission following the ‘EUPM’ that was launched in Bosnia and Herzegovina on 15 January 2003. “Proxima” demonstrates the EU’s continued commitment to the consolidation of stability and the rule of law in the Balkans, within the objectives of the Stabilisation and Association Process (SAP). The promotion of European standards of policing in FYROM is part of the EU’s wider strategy of supporting the process of reform, including institution building, administrative and judicial reforms and fight against organised crime and corruption, all of which are essential for the development of a stable and democratic state. The EU, the leading donor, will spend a total of € 54 million during 2000 2004 to support reforms in these areas. ‘Proxima’ is the third EU’s European Security and Defence Policy operation in the Balkans and the fourth globally when including the “ARTEMIS” peacekeeping military mission successfully carried out in Bunia (Congo) over the Summer of 2003.

Proxima aims to help the FYROM authorities develop their police forces to the highest European and international standards through monitoring, mentoring and inspecting the management and operations of the police. In particular, it will focus on supporting the government’s efforts to fight organised crime and to uphold the rule of law in the whole territory, with emphasis on the former crisis areas.

The total costs of the mission amount to €15 million for the first year, including set-up costs of €7.3 million, all funded through the Community budget. The EU's Member States will contribute in kind through the secondment of staff. EU police officers will wear their national police uniforms and an EU badge. They will not be armed and local police will remain responsible for executive tasks.” (EU 15 December 2003)

“The EU took over security in Macedonia on March 31, succeeding a NATO operation aimed at restoring peace and security to a country where tension between government forces and rebel ethnic Albanians in 2001 had threatened to spill over into civil war.

‘The current security situation in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia is stable but may deteriorate with potentially serious repercussions on international stability,’ the EU statement said.

‘A commitment of EU political effort and resources will help to embed stability in the region,’ it said.

The police force is being sent at the request of the Macedonian authorities, who want the EU's help to fight organised crime in lawless, mountainous regions straddling Albania and Kosovo.” (AFP 29 September 2003)

“Rule of Law in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

Proxima will complement the EU priority strategy to support and consolidate the rule of law in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia within the framework of the Stabilisation and Association Process. The EU is the leading donor in this field. In the period 2000 - 2004 a total of € 54 million will be spent from the Community budget in FYROM under the PHARE/CARDS programmes, supporting reforms in the following areas:

Administration of justice (€ 8.5 m.):

The EU is funding several projects, targeted at supporting justice and prosecution reforms. These include: support for the design and implementation of a computerised administrative support system within the Ministry of Justice, Public Prosecution Service and Courts; the development of the administrative and processing capacity of the courts and prosecutors; training of the judiciary and legal professions; and the strengthening of the legal and institutional framework for the provision of vocational and compulsory training.

Police reform (€ 8 m.):

The EU has provided technical assistance to the national authorities for the development of a strategy of reform by the Ministry of Interior. Further assistance will be directed at the implementation of the reform and to the establishment and implementation of a framework for institutionalised and systematic provision of police training, in accordance with EU standards.

Integrated Border Management (€ 24.2 m.)

The strengthening of border controls and trade facilitation are key elements of the SAp. The EU has provided technical assistance for the preparation of an Integrated Border Management Strategy and will continue to assist the national authorities in its implementation. In particular, it will contribute to the planned creation of a new Border Police service. Activities aim to improve the technical capacity of the professional services in the execution of their duties with regards to the management of the state border through the supply of equipment and the creation of an integrated communications network for border control points.

Customs (€ 7.3 m.):

EU is providing assistance to administrative capacity building to help the fight against fraud, corruption and organised crime. As a result the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia benefits from improved levels of compliance, revenue collection and exposure of large-scale customs fraud.

Asylum and migration (€ 3 m.):

The EU is supporting the national authorities in the development of a National Action Plan for Migration and Asylum as well as of amendments to primary and secondary legislation pertaining to the new Law on Asylum and the development of the new Law on the Movement and Residence of Foreigners. It will also contribute to the upgrading and modernisation of the existing transit centre for illegal migrants and asylum seekers.

Fight against crime (€ 3 m.)

The EU is providing assistance in developing strategies and the necessary capabilities to combat money-laundering and drug-related crimes. Planned activities aim to strengthen the capacity of the Directorate Against Money Laundering and of financial institutions to enforce the new law on Money Laundering. Technical assistance will also be provided to the Health, Interior and Justice Ministries and the Inter-ministerial Commission in preparation of the secondary legislation on precursors and narcotics and the development of a national strategy for the fight against drugs.” (EU 15 December 2003)

For further information see:

[EUPOL Proxima Website, 31 January 2004 \[Internet\]](#)

[The EU's Relations with Macedonia \[Internet\]](#)

[The Stabilisation and Association Process \[Internet\]](#)

OSCE presence contributes to stability and security in the country (1992 - 2004)

- The OSCE spillover mission to Skopje was established in 1992 to assist in conflict prevention
- The OSCE mandate expanded in 2001 in response to the conflict
- OSCE activities focus in three main areas: monitoring, police advising and training of a multi-ethnic force
- The mission also assists with the implementation of the peace agreement particularly in the area of inter-ethnic relations and redeployment of police in former crisis areas
- Other activities include strengthening the institutions of local self-government
- The OSCE Skopje Confidence Building Unit contributes to maintenance of stability, including reporting regularly on humanitarian and development needs and return of IDPs and refugees

“Background

The OSCE Spillover Monitor Mission to Skopje is the Organization's longest-serving field mission, having originally been established in September 1992 to help prevent the tension and conflicts - then spreading across the former Socialist Republic of Yugoslavia - from spilling south over the border. For almost a decade, the Mission operated under its [original mandate](#), with the number of international staff varying according to the external situation between four and a full complement of eight.

However, in 2001, during a seven-month conflict that occurred within the country, the strength of the Mission grew steadily in response to its increased role to over 50. Following the internationally brokered Ohrid Framework Agreement of August that year, which sealed the end of the fighting by ensuring the rights of all in the country, the OSCE took on an enhanced mandate which eventually more than quadrupled the size of the Mission.

Its subsequent role has involved almost 200 additional staff in confidence-building, monitoring, police advising and the training of a multi-ethnic force of more than 1,000 new cadets from non-majority sections of the population of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

Currently, the OSCE Spillover Monitor Mission to Skopje has three main areas of activity: monitoring; police training and development; and other political activities related to the implementation of the Ohrid Framework Agreement.

Since December 2003, the Head of Mission has been [Ambassador Carlos Pais](#) of Portugal.

Tasks

In addition to tasks outlined under the initial [mandate](#), the framework agreement outlined, and [decisions of the Permanent Council](#) tasked the Mission to assist in:

- [redeploying police](#) in the former crisis areas
- [training 1000 non-majority cadets](#) to be police officers by July 2003 (with a view towards ensuring that the -police services will generally reflect the composition and distribution of the country's population by 2004);
- strengthening the institutions of local self-government;
- developing projects in the areas of rule of law and media development
- implementation of the Framework Agreement in the area of inter-ethnic relations.

Activities

Since the successful completion of police redeployment, the mission has evolved to keep pace with the developments on the ground. The [Police Developing Unit](#) consolidated the policing activities of the mission to focus on community-based policing and training, and placed a greater focus on its mandate in the fields of media, rule of law, local self-government and inter-ethnic relations.

To tackle these tasks [Confidence-building](#), [Media Development](#) and [Rule of Law Units](#) were established, creating a clear division of labor in implementation of its expanded mandate" (OSCE 2004)

"The confidence-building officers of the OSCE Spillover Monitor Mission to Skopje contribute to the maintenance of stability and security in the country and to the building of general confidence amongst the population. They report regularly on issues impacting the security situation, as well as humanitarian and development needs, return of refugees and internally displaced persons and trafficking in human beings." (OSCE 2004)

For further information, see the [OSCE Spillover Monitor Mission to Skopje \[Internet\]](#).

USAID/IOM community confidence building initiative contributes to peace and democracy (2001-2003)

- The USAID Office of Transition Initiatives (OTI) launched the Macedonia programme in October 2001
- The programme is designed to mitigate political and ethnic tensions during the implementation of the peace agreement
- CBI objectives include support to positive, community based interaction among diverse groups of people and promotion of citizen participation in community decision-making
- The International Organisation for Migration (IOM) is OTI's implementing partner

"The U.S. Agency for International Development's Office of Transition Initiatives (OTI) began its Macedonia Program in October 2001, after a political settlement brought the country's armed conflict to an end. OTI's Confidence Building Initiative (CBI) is a two-year program designed to mitigate political and ethnic tensions during the implementation of the Framework Agreement. CBI supports the rapid

implementation of community-identified and prioritized projects as well as other confidence building activities to allow time for political reforms to take place.

CBI's objectives are fourfold: to support positive, community-based interaction among diverse groups of people; to promote citizen participation in community decision-making; to foster transparency, responsiveness and accountability in the relationship between citizens and local government; and to increase citizen access to balanced information and diverse points of view. CBI works at the local level to bring together diverse groups of citizens to identify shared priorities and to help their communities develop and implement confidence-building projects designed to reduce tensions.

The International Organization for Migration, OTI's implementing partner, manages five field offices in Bitola, Kicevo, Kocani, Skopje and Tetovo. In its first year, CBI funded 300 Confidence Building grants.

Program activities include:

Community Initiative Grants: CBI assists informal groups of citizens in identifying their community's shared priorities and finding constructive ways to address them. Community identified and implemented projects, such as rehabilitation of schools and community centers, are a means to encourage cooperation among diverse groups and promote more participatory decision-making at the local level.

Civil Society and Local Governance Grants: CBI works with locally elected leaders to facilitate more effective relationships between citizens and their local governments in order to address issues of common concern. CBI simultaneously supports formal civil society groups, such as local associations and non-governmental organizations, to promote participatory decision-making at the local level, improve citizen access to local government institutions and encourage constructive community engagement.

Media Grants: CBI supports a wide range of media activities including print and electronic news media, film, music, cultural performances and other artistic means of communication and expression. Media grants are designed to increase confidence and reduce tensions through the dissemination of balanced information and the promotion of positive examples of multicultural cooperation. Media coverage is also integrated into other CBI projects to amplify their scope and influence, both locally and nationally.

Other Confidence Building Measures: In order to reduce tensions, CBI remains flexible in the types of activities it can support. Its quickly disbursed grant funds and flexible programmatic approach permit the rapid re-targeting of resources to respond to emergency humanitarian needs, if necessary.” (USAID/OTI 16 May 2003)

For more information, see Macedonia Confidence Building Initiative, 2003, on the [website of the International Organisation for Migration in Macedonia \[Internet\]](#)

See also, “Community Confidence Building Mitigates Conflict in Macedonia”, USAID, 6 January 2003 [Internet]

EU supports families providing temporary accommodation to IDPs (2001-2003)

- The European Agency for Reconstruction continued to provide support in the form of monthly payments of 4,600 MKD to host families of internally displaced persons in 2003
- The cash assistance to host families providing temporary accommodation to IDPs form part of the EU Emergency Assistance Package 2001 of €26.5 million
- Around 2,730 IDP host families and 384 refugee host families have so far benefited from EAR support (January 2003)

- EAR has also contributed to housing reconstruction by repairing or rebuilding 965 houses in the 1st phase and another 200 in the 2nd phase, reducing the need for host families in some areas (January 2003)

“The European Agency for Reconstruction and the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy announce that a third support payment is about to begin for host families providing temporary accommodation to internally displaced persons. This payment will cover the last two quarters of the year 2002 from July to December 2002 and will start by the end of January 2003. The payments will be available through the Macedonian Post Office network. Beneficiaries will receive a monthly payment of 4,600 MKD.

[...]

The project is managed by the European Agency for Reconstruction responsible for the management of the main European Union assistance programmes in this country. The cash assistance to host families providing temporary accommodation to IDPs is part of the 2001 €26.5 million Emergency Assistance Package to support the implementation of the Ohrid Framework Agreement signed on 13 August 2001.” (EAR 15 January 2003)

“While 85% of internally displaced persons (IDPs) in the country have returned since the end of the conflict in 2001, the Agency continues to support an EU-funded programme to pay host families monthly cash payments of €75. [...] The project uses beneficiary lists drawn up by the Red Cross and UNHCR, while the financial disbursements to the host families are being administered by the Macedonian Post Office. Around 2,730 IDP host families and 384 refugee host families have so far benefited from the package and a total of €1.3 million has been disbursed to the beneficiaries. Ongoing housing reconstruction in the former conflict region, to which the Agency has contributed by repairing or rebuilding 965 houses in the first phase and an additional 200 in the second phase, has helped to reduce the need for host families in some areas. The country counted 75,000 IDPs by the end of August 2001, but according to the most recent Macedonian Red Cross statistics, most have returned with a caseload drop of 50% in the past year. Nevertheless, in order to support those IDPs whose houses are in the process of being re-built, the EU has extended the eligibility period during which families hosting IDPs can claim cash assistance until March 2003. However, families hosting refugees from the Kosovo crisis have been excluded from the assistance scheme as a result of a UNHCR decision to provide refugees a direct subsistence allowance. (EAR January 2003)

EU shifts from providing emergency assistance to support for european integration (2002-2004)

- The European Agency for Reconstruction (EAR) is responsible for the management of the key EU assistance programmes in FYR Macedonia
- EAR's Emergency Assistance Package had two main aims, namely to reconstruct conflict-affected areas, as well as support confidence-building measures
- Activities focus on rebuilding houses, rehabilitating electricity supply networks, cash support to host families, advice and training of the police, de-mining, and the water supply in Kumanovo
- The programme has helped to return 85% of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) to their pre-conflict residences
- By 2003, all projects within the €26.5 million emergency assistance package were completed
- Since 2002 the agency has also implemented programmes to assist FYR Macedonia in implementing the Stabilisation and Association Agreement
- Since 2003, EAR assumed responsibility for the majority of EC funded programmes, including support to democracy and rule of law; and strengthening inter-ethnic relations and civil society

“The **European Agency for Reconstruction** is responsible for the management of the main EU assistance programmes in the Federal Republic Yugoslavia (Republic of Serbia, Kosovo, Republic of Montenegro) and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. It was established in February 2000 and has its headquarters in Greece at Thessaloniki, and operational centers in Pristina, Belgrade, Podgorica and Skopje.

The total sum of EC assistance funds newly delegated to the Agency for management in 2002 amounts to some 350 million, or 480 million when inherited programmes in FYR Macedonia are included. The Agency now oversees a total portfolio of over 1.6 billion across its four operational centers.

The objectives of new Ec funded programmes managed by the Agency are: (i) to support good governance, institution building and the rule of law; (ii) to continue supporting the development of a market economy while investing further in critical physical infrastructure and environmental actions; and (iii) to support social development and the strengthening of civil society. The Agency plays its part within the EU's process of 'Stabilisation and Association', which is currently launched with five countries in South Eastern Europe. Other EC-funded assistance includes macrofinancial, humanitarian, democratisation, customs and fiscal planning aid, as well as support for educational exchange programmes. All of the above are in addition to the bilateral contributions made by EU Member States.” (EAR January 2003)

“All of the projects within the €26.5 million emergency assistance package have been completed. The programme has helped to return 85% of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) to their pre-conflict residences. A concerted effort to focus on broken electricity supply and damaged houses assisted in the large-scale return of people to former conflict areas over the course of 2002. Electricity was reconnected to 150,000 consumers from 49 villages, and a total of 965 houses were repaired or reconstructed. An additional 200 houses are presently being built with reallocated funding from past EC projects. In Kumanovo, the rehabilitation of the water supply will help to reduce summer water shortages. The €2.9 million in EC funds for de-mining (including €1.9 million reallocated within CARDS 2002) has so far resulted in the clearance of 36 villages (an overall area of 1,900,000 m²) in the Tetovo, Aracinovo, Skopje, and Kumanovo areas. In addition, five demining teams were provided with ambulances. To improve security, nine interim police stations were built in the former conflict areas. A post confidence-building programme helped to promote tolerance, reconciliation and dialogue in 14 mixed villages affected by the crisis. A media support programme trained over 80 journalists and editors. Cash assistance is being provided to the hosts of the remaining IDPs.

[...]

Emergency assistance programme 2001 (€26.5 million)

Housing reconstruction - €4.12 million

In all, by the end of July 2002, some 965 houses had been repaired or reconstructed in the municipalities of Tearce, Kumanovo and Aracinovo.

Electricity network rehabilitation - €12.8 million

Works were completed in May 2002. An estimated 150,000 people in 49 villages in the Tetovo, Kumanovo and Aracinovo areas have benefited from the programme.

Cash assistance to families hosting IDPs and refugees - €3.23 million

Around 2,730 hosts of IDPs and 380 hosts of refugees received payments of €75 a month for the period from 1 January to 30 June 2002. The payments for the second half of the year 2002 are now starting. The cash assistance to the families hosting IDPs is extended until 31 March 2003.

Post-conflict confidence-building programme - €0.2 million

The project, promoting tolerance, cultural reconciliation, dialogue and mutual understanding in 14 mixed villages affected by last year's crisis, ended in August 2002. The field teams offered social, psycho-social legal advice and medical services and workshops to about 830 beneficiaries in the targeted villages. Some 140 people in total participated in seminars.

Kumanovo water supply rehabilitation - €0.58 million

An emergency waterworks improvement in Kumanovo was completed in August 2002. The enhancements to the system will help reduce the municipality's water shortages during the summer months.

Media support - €0.2 million

The media support programme drew to a close in June 2002, with more than 80 journalists and editors having received training, for beginners to advanced levels.

Police advice & training - €3.0 million

The project, implemented by EU Member States in coordination with the Agency, is assisting the local police and judiciary in developing comprehensive reform strategies. The experts are posted to the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Justice and the OSCE to provide technical assistance and training. The first phase of the project was concluded in the period from March to September 2002. The second phase (October 2002 – April 2003) continues selected actions initiated under phase 1.

Budgeting of the Framework Agreement (FA) - €0.2 million

A contract was signed in October 2001 to provide advice to the Ministry of Finance in preparing an Action Plan and budget for the implementation of the Ohrid FA. A Report on the costing of the implementation of the provisions of the Ohrid FA was produced in February 2002 and presented by the Government to the donors' conference in March 2002. Further assistance has been granted to the Ministry of Finance to proceed with the preparation of the project fiches and ToRs.

Demining - €0.96 million

Intersos NGO has performed house clearance for the 2001 housing reconstruction programme. In September 2002, five ambulances were delivered for the FYR Macedonia security forces to support demining activities.

Support to the reconstruction of religious buildings - €50,000

The National Institute for Preservation of Cultural Heritage performed studies for the reconstruction of the Orthodox Church in the village of Leshok. The church, classified as a nationally protected monument, was 80% destroyed during the last conflict." (EAR May 2003, Annex D)

"As of January 2002, the European Agency for Reconstruction has been given the task of managing the €26 million EU Emergency Assistance Programme for the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. The Programme itself was launched by the European Commission in September 2001. The Agency has opened an operational centre in Skopje, and will subsequently assume management responsibility for other current, previous and future EU assistance programmes, as from March 2002.

On 10th December 2001 the European Council extended the Agency's official mandate, to cover the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. On 28th December 2001 the European Commission conferred on the Agency the management responsibility for the Emergency Assistance Programme as from 1st January 2002, with other programmes (past, present and future) to follow on 1st March 2002.

[...]

The Emergency Assistance Package has two main aims. First, the reconstruction of conflict-affected areas; second, support to confidence-building measures to bolster the implementation of the Ohrid Framework Agreement of 13th August 2001. (EU 28 January 2002)

EU programmes in 2004 focus on democracy and rule of law, economic and social development, private & financial development. For further information, see the [website of the European Agency for Reconstruction \[Internet\]](#)

The Agency also issues quarterly reports on its activities, available on the [EAR website \[Internet\]](#)

European Commission humanitarian aid office winds down after ten years (1993-2003)

- Between 1993 and 2003, the Humanitarian Aid Office of the EC (ECHO) allocated more than €110 million in humanitarian aid spent in sectors such as health, water and sanitation and rehabilitation
- ECHO responded in 2001 by mobilizing funds to meet the immediate needs of the displaced
- In 2001, ECHO support included provision of food assistance to IDPs and returnees, hygiene parcels to host families, and emergency reconstruction of schools and health centres
- The EC donated funds for the distribution of food parcels to some 45,000 IDPs, as well as hygiene parcels for 6,000 families who were hosting displaced people (2001)
- In 2002, ECHO continued to assist the remaining caseload of refugees and IDPs while helping return to the areas most affected by the crisis.
- ECHO extended its food assistance programme to spring 2003 to support IDPs still in temporary accommodation

“The Humanitarian Aid Office of the European Commission (ECHO) is ending its activities in the FYR of Macedonia after almost ten years of activity. Between 1993 and 2003, ECHO allocated more than €110 million in humanitarian aid spent in sectors such as health, water and sanitation and rehabilitation. ‘ECHO has assisted the victims of various conflicts affecting FYROM over the past decade, always responding flexibly to developments in the humanitarian situation’, declared Poul Nielson, EU Commissioner for Development and Humanitarian Aid. ‘Thankfully, the emergency is now over and the people can look ahead to a brighter future’. The Commission is continuing to provide longer-term assistance to the FYR of Macedonia through other available instruments and services.

ECHO's first mission in FYROM took place between February 1993 and August 1996. Over €45 million of assistance was allocated to alleviate the humanitarian consequences of the war in the region. Actions ranged from assistance to Bosnian refugees and support to the local vulnerable population to the provision of fuel to public institutions.

ECHO returned to the country in 1999 to provide assistance to over 300,000 refugees who fled from neighbouring Kosovo. Help was also given to the local population to cope with this influx and with the consequences after the return of most of the refugees.

ECHO's overall exit strategy, initiated in June 2000, was postponed with the onset of the conflict that broke out in the Northern and Western parts of the country in February 2001. ECHO immediately responded to the crisis by mobilising additional funds to cover the urgent needs of the displaced population. Actions consisted of food assistance to IDPs and returnees, hygiene parcels for the host families, emergency reconstruction of schools and health centres and distribution of agricultural inputs, seeds and firewood.

Throughout 2002, ECHO continued assisting the remaining caseload of refugees and IDPs while helping return to the areas most affected by the crisis. In view of the substantial number of IDPs still in temporary

accommodation, ECHO's food assistance programme has been extended to spring 2003 when the IDP situation is expected to be resolved on completion of the housing reconstruction programme.

ECHO's support from 1999 until today amounts to €64 million. In total, after almost 10 years in the country, ECHO has implemented 105 projects with a value exceeding €110 million." (European Commission 31 January 2003)

Overview of aid to IDPs (2001-2002)

European Commission funds for aid to remaining displaced (February 2002)

"The European Commission has allocated €5.5 million for basic assistance to refugees, internally displaced people (IDPs) and other vulnerable groups in FYROM as well as to vulnerable minorities in Kosovo. In FYROM, following the signing of the Framework Agreement in August 2001, tens of thousands of displaced people were encouraged to return to their homes. However, an estimated 30,000 IDPs and refugees have yet to return and their numerous needs still have to be addressed. [...] In FYROM, the projects include continuing to provide further support for humanitarian actions in the fields of nutrition, water and sanitation, health and education. The continuation of food assistance will be carried out in close co-ordination with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and ECHO partners, targeting IDPs, returnees, residents in the conflict-affected areas and up to 5,500 social case families. This action is foreseen to continue until summer 2002.

Support will also be provided to the agricultural sector (livestock food) to facilitate a return to normal agricultural activities in the spring. Emergency rehabilitation of schools and health facilities will take place throughout the year." (ECHO 5 February 2002)

European Commission donated funds for emergency aid to IDPs (September 2001)

"The European Commission has earmarked an additional €1 million in emergency aid to help people who have been displaced as a result of the conflict in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM). This new decision will benefit 45,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) and 6,000 families hosting them. The aid will be channelled through the Humanitarian Aid Office (ECHO) which comes under the responsibility of Commissioner Poul Nielson.

Since the beginning of the crisis, ECHO has put in place programmes to help the victims of the crisis in FYROM, by providing food to 25,000 internally displaced people (IDPs) and undertaking emergency rehabilitation of communal services (such as schools) in areas affected by the conflict.

This new decision finances the distribution of food parcels to some 45,000 additional IDPs, as well as hygiene parcels for 6,000 families who are hosting displaced people in FYROM.

With this decision, ECHO's contribution to respond to the humanitarian needs in FYROM since the beginning of 2001 amounts to €4.9 million." (ECHO 11 September 2001)

For more information see the [European Humanitarian Aid Office \(ECHO\) website \[Internet\]](#)

European donors pledged funds for de-mining and reconstruction activities to enable the return of displaced (July 2002)

- European funds were earmarked to remove obstacles which were inhibiting return, such as the presence of unexploded ordnance and mines, as well as damage to houses

“The Ohrid Agreement ended seven months of escalating hostilities and set the agenda for political reform to enhance minority rights. Annex C of the Agreement also provided a commitment from the international community to work together with the Government to return all persons displaced as a result of the conflict to their homes in the shortest possible time period.

Recent pledges from European donors will push forward this commitment at a very crucial time. Funds have been earmarked to remove obstacles which are directly inhibiting return including the presence of unexploded ordnance (UXO) and mines and shelter needs as a result of severely damaged homes.

The European Commission (EC) through the European Agency for Reconstruction (EAR) will provide 1.9 million Euros, which will be complemented by 130,000 Euros from the Government of Norway to enable deployment of international de-mining teams under the guidance of the UN Mine Action Service (UNMAS). Intensive de-mining activity will be undertaken by experienced NGOs - Care International and Handicap International - to rid the country of the main UXO / mine threat during the next 5 months. At the same time, complementary capacity building support for the Civil Protection Unit will support the Government in assuming responsibility for residual UXO / mine information and clearance needs.

A total of 14.2 million Euros has also been committed by the EC (3.6 million), and the Dutch (4.5 million), German (3 million) Italian (3 million) and Austrian (100,000) governments to rebuild some 1,000 structurally damaged or destroyed homes. Reconstruction activities will be undertaken by the International Management Group (IMG) together with implementing partners identified by the EAR.

With this generous support now secured, focus will turn to ensuring timely implementation of de-mining and reconstruction activities to enable as many of the remaining 17,000 internally displaced persons and refugees to return to their homes before winter sets in.” (UN OCHA 22 July 2002)

Humanitarian agencies drew up a framework for the transition from relief to recovery (March 2002)

- The process of defining a transition framework for the change from relief to development was initiated on 29 January 2002
- Obstacles to stability and security were identified as structurally damaged homes, access to services, lack of basic infrastructure, presence of UXOs and mines, continued security concerns, freedom of movement, and loss of livelihood due to closure of small businesses
- Programme priorities during the transitional period will include physical security, human security, strengthening of national structures / institutions for the provision of social services, as well as the provision of basic infrastructure

“The situation in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) has changed dramatically over the past 12 months. Tenuous peace has replaced armed conflict. Emergency relief activities are phasing out and being replaced with rehabilitation initiatives. Development strategies are resuming.

Aware that new circumstances require new approaches, national and international stakeholders began a new collaboration in January 2002. Representatives of the United Nations, NGOs, donors, the central and municipal government, political and security monitoring missions, the European Union and professional and business associations met in one-on-one sessions to discuss the current critical period of transition and to identify ways to link short term humanitarian and rehabilitation assistance to longer term development priorities. The UN Humanitarian Coordinator then brought relevant stakeholders together in a series of roundtable discussions and committee meetings to cross-fertilize ideas identified in bilateral meetings. The aspirations of the local population were also incorporated through information gathered during rapid village assessments and field monitoring missions.

[...]

IV. Transition Process

The process of defining a framework to support the transition from relief to development was initiated on 29 January 2002 [...]. The proposed period for the transition will initially be to the end of 2002. Work will be ongoing, incorporating findings from the assessment and programme committees and taking account of developments within the country, particularly those concerning the implementation of the Framework Agreement. As such, the "Transitional Framework" is a living document that will be responsive to political developments such as the upcoming census, elections, implementation of the law on amnesty, and the decentralization process as well as to the changing needs of the people of FYROM.

[...]

VII. Transition Activities

To ensure that short term relief and rehabilitation activities are consistent with development priorities a logical starting point for prioritizing assistance during this critical transition phase has been the initial identification of the root causes of the conflict. While the underlying causes continue to be debated, ethnic grievances combined with severe economic dislocation that has occurred since the country obtained independence are widely viewed as key factors. The manifestation of this is illustrated in increasing unemployment, irregular trade activities and weak institutions.

To support return of the remaining displaced, transition activities must also work to overcome obstacles that continue to impede stabilization and security within the former conflict area. Through village profiles compiled by field monitoring teams the main obstacles have been identified as: 1) structurally damaged homes, (especially damage category 4 that requires reconstruction), 2) access to services, especially health and education; 3) lack of basic infrastructure (water, electricity, and sanitation); 4) presence of UXOs and mines; 5) continued security concerns; 6) freedom of movement; and 7) loss of livelihood due to closure of small businesses.

The significant progress that has been made on supporting the return of displaced persons and stabilizing communities must continue and be reinforced by activities that are directed at the underlying structural causes of the conflict as well as at ongoing sources of insecurity. With this in mind, programme priorities during the transitional period will include:

- 1) Physical security, including freedom of movement and governmental reform, particularly of the police and the judiciary;
- 2) Human security, including shelter, food and the means to earn a livelihood;
- 3) Strengthening of national structures / institutions for the provision of social services, especially in the area of health and education; and
- 4) The provision of basic infrastructure such as water, electricity, and sanitation facilities." (UN OCHA 9 March 2002)

See also "Annex A" of the Interagency Framework Document indicating past, present, and future humanitarian actions in the Transition Framework, OCHA, March 2002 [Internet].

WFP highlighted main problems of food distribution to IDPs (January 2002)

“During the [Food Sector Coordination] meeting, the following problems were identified and discussed:

Some beneficiaries have been double-registered

Some beneficiaries are not registered but should qualify to receive food aid
Some IDPs who have returned home continue to receive food aid
Local NGOs (most notably El Hilal) do not coordinate their occasional food distributions with the Food Aid Coordination Committee.

The attendees agreed that the criteria and procedure to de-register IDPs must be defined and implemented as soon as possible.” (Aidmacedonia 31 January 2002)

Selected activities of the Red Cross movement

ICRC income-generating projects help vulnerable displaced civilians to become more self-reliant (2004)

- The ICRC has assisted IDPs with regular delivery of food and non-food items, as well as, assisted populations in the areas of conflict since 2001
- The income-generating projects (IGP) are designed to take into account the current needs of the displaced population
- The IGP programme will provide support to IDPs to secure their livelihoods
- Criteria for eligibility include, displacement due to the 2001 conflict and vulnerability assessed by a number of factors, including income, number of dependants, elderly, etc.

“In June 2003, almost two years after the end of Macedonia's internal strife, the ICRC ended its food and non-food distribution programmes for the country's internally displaced person (IDPs). As a follow-up in 2004, the ICRC supports the most vulnerable among the remaining IDPs, who cannot return home in the foreseeable future.

[...]

ICRC's assistance in the past

Until June 2003 and regardless of the reasons for the conflict-related displacement, the ICRC assisted the IDPs with a regular delivery of food and non-food items. Until June 2002 it also assisted the resident population in the areas of conflict. At the time of the conflict itself, the ICRC was often the only organisation with access to these areas. The assistance to IDPs differed according to their type of residence. IDPs in host families received donations within a three-month period after the registration; a support programme for some borderline-cases of displacement in host families, the "Micro/Series Displacement Winter Programme" for Tetovo municipality, lasted from January to March 2002, and the distribution programme for IDPs in collective centres continued until August 2003.

IG projects – meeting the current needs

The IGP Programme for 2004 provides the beneficiaries with a form of support that takes their current needs into account. The needs of present-day IDPs, who have not yet found a way to secure their livelihood, can best be described as in transition between humanitarian assistance and development. On the one hand their long-term displacement has rendered assistance such as ICRC's food and non-food distributions inappropriate. On the other hand it hindered them to develop coping mechanisms that could be the basis for more development-orientated programmes such as micro-credit schemes. In that sense, an IGP programme at this stage might as well be labelled as "livelihood support".

Each IGP consists of a productive input from the ICRC to a selected participant household. The input will enable the beneficiary to start or to improve an activity that will provide him or her with a previously

insufficient income for his or her household, and will ultimately make the household economically more self-reliant. At the same time the input and the resulting activity will have a psychologically supportive impact on the beneficiary and his or her family. Due to its business-like character, the IGP not only meets the eminent economical needs of today, but also decreases dependency on assistance in the future and raises dignity by providing the beneficiary with an elementary human need, to be creative by working.

Criteria of eligibility for IGPs: 1. Displacement due to the conflict in 2001 – In cases of doubt, the IDP-status will be determined in a field assessment, i.e. an official IDP-card is not a prerequisite sine qua non. 2. Vulnerability – Possible indicators are income and expenses, living conditions such as housing, furniture or technical equipment, the number of dependants, pregnancies, elderly, handicapped, etc. 3. Resources such as land, stables, workshops, tools, etc. 4. Basic skills and knowledge related to the project so as to assure the marketability of the project 5. Motivation for a long-term continuation of the project after its implementation

The programme will enable the ICRC to be present in the field so as to remain fully informed on the general situation and to react quickly should the situation deteriorate suddenly.

The ICRC launched a campaign to inform the IDPs on the programme. Posters and leaflets explain the selection and application procedure, and good contacts were established with other agents in the IGP sector (Mercy Corps, CARE International, Danish Refugee Council) as well as with the government.

IDPs can apply for projects by filling an application form, of which copies are available at the local branches of the Macedonian Red Cross (MRC).

The programme is open for all project types. Limits are set only by the selection criteria. Field Officers of the ICRC assess the applicant's situation and project proposal in an interview at his or her temporary residence and then decide on the eligibility of each project.” (ICRC January 2004)

IFRC support to IDPs: health and disaster management (2003)

- The IFRC provided social/welfare support to internally displaced persons, refugees and social cases through an information centre in 2003
- The programme was handed over to the Macedonian Red Cross end 2003
- The IFRC also continued to support vulnerable groups (IDPs, refugees, and social cases) through the provision of relief items
- The Norwegian Embassy in Skopje covered the costs of the October food distribution for IDPs
- For November and December Red Cross branches, in cooperation with City Red Cross, provided food parcels
- As of 2004 the Macedonian Government will be responsible for the IDPs

“Health and care

Goal: Reduce the vulnerability of refugees, social cases and internally displaced persons through an effective social welfare programme

Objective: To use the information centre to strengthen the capacity of the National Society to increase the well-being of vulnerable groups and to respond effectively to their basic needs

Expected results

- The information centre will be fully operational in 2003, beneficiary needs will have been registered for follow-up at a later date and, when necessary, referred to relevant aid agencies and institutions
- Access to medical assistance activities by beneficiaries will have been easy and satisfactory, especially for those with no previous access to medical services
- Psycho-social support will have been provided to those in need by trained local staff resulting in decreased stress among beneficiaries. Support will have been provided in collective centres, local Red Cross branches and collective or private accommodation. Activities for re-socialization of the beneficiaries through libraries and social clubs will have been organized
- Counselling of beneficiaries regarding their legal status will have been provided
- Coordination with other aid agencies will have been effective to avoid duplication of activities. Contacts will have been established with relevant ministries to increase cooperation and assist integration of beneficiaries in the local community.
- Full handover of the programme to the Macedonian Red Cross will have been accomplished by the end of 2003

Progress/Achievements

The Info-Centre continued its regular activities in Social Welfare and Health area during this reporting period. All the activities mentioned in the previous programme updates continued and in numbers it is as follows:

	August	September	October	November	December
Interviews	392	481	607	596	527
Telephone calls	318	376	719	614	512
Psycho social support	9	12	16	19	12
Medical support	201	216	216	302	327
Other	116	101	101	212	196
Education	82	82	82	46	46

The UNHCR funded project for Provision of Health Assistance to refugees that is coordinated by the Info-Centre, continued to be the major activity. Three doctors and three nurses provided primary health care for refugees and transport for patients to the public health institutions when needed. Federation staff assisted in referring refugees to health institutions and intermediated in resolving any problems (follow up of patients) in secondary and tertiary health institutions. The Federation, UNHCR and the Ministry of Internal Affairs organized a seminar for treatment and psychosocial support of asylum seekers. Other activities that were organized in this period included:

- Lectures in the collective centres for refugees and IDP's on HIV/AIDS prevention and distribution of brochures on this topic.
- For the New Year, the Federation distributed New Year parcels to the children of IDP's in collective centres (217 parcels), in host families (419 parcels) and children of refugees in collective centres (175 parcels). The distribution was assisted by donations from the Norwegian Embassy in Skopje and Kosmofon- Skopje.

[...]

Disaster Management

Goal: Improve the living conditions of vulnerable groups in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and to reinforce Macedonian Red Cross' effectiveness in responding to any man-made or natural disaster

Objective: To continue supporting the vulnerable groups (refugees, IDPs and social cases) through provision of relief items and to prepare the Macedonian Red Cross to respond in a timely, effective and focused manner to any disaster in the country and in nearby countries

Expected Results:

- The supply and distribution of hygiene and baby parcels to refugees, also IDPs and social cases, as needed, will have been carried out, in coordination with ICRC, Red Cross partners, and other agencies (UNHCR, WFP, InterSOS, ECHO)
- Basic emergency stock will have been established as a back-up for natural or man-made disasters in Macedonia or neighbouring countries, and staff will have been trained accordingly. Training curriculum will have been developed and facilities created to regularly train volunteers throughout the country and mobilise them in time of disasters. In addition there will be increased knowledge and understanding of disaster preparedness by volunteers, and disaster preparedness policies and related public information will have been disseminated
- Macedonian Red Cross staff, both at local and central level, will have been trained; interaction and partnerships with other National Society disaster preparedness (DP) coordinators in the region will have been increased.

[...]

Internally Displaced People (IDPs)

The number of IDPs is decreasing, but there are still 2,678 people that feel insecure about going back to their homes. Norwegian Embassy in Skopje covered the costs of the October food distribution for IDPs. For November and December distributions Red Cross branches, in cooperation with City Red Cross, provided food parcels. This was the last food distribution Red Cross supported. From 2004 the Macedonian Government will be responsible for this category.

A wide range of activities in Disaster Preparedness area continued. Swedish Red Cross donation covered salaries and operational costs of the disaster preparedness team that has served in different areas of disaster preparedness and disaster response activities.

The CD Database of disaster prone areas and disaster capacities in Macedonia has started to become a useful tool for institutions in Macedonia that can benefit from the information stored. In this period the database was presented at the Congress of Seismologist in Macedonia.

Participation of Macedonian RC representative at meetings of the Ministry of Defence on the topic of civil-military cooperation in the event of disasters, once more emphasized the role of RC in the national disaster preparedness.

However, this year the top activity in disaster preparedness area was a Regional Disaster Response Team (RDRT) workshop in Struga at the beginning of November. The participants of this seminar were from the fifteen countries of Central Europe. The Macedonian RC Disaster Preparedness team, for this workshop, staged a scenario "earthquake" where participants from the Ministry of Defence, Internal Affairs, five Red Cross branches and local municipality representatives were engaged." (IFRC 5 February 2004)

See also, "Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia" Appeal, IFRC 17 September 2003 [Internet]

American Red Cross (ARC) distributed hygiene and baby parcels to IDPs and families (2001-2003)

- The ARC supported the Macedonian RC in providing hygiene and baby parcels to IDPs and host families
- The project supported 10,000 IDPs, their babies less than 18 months old and 6,000 host families
- The ARC also provided health and psychosocial support to refugees and IDPs
- The ARC has been in Macedonia since 1999, it oversaw the distribution of relief parcels to IDPS following the 2001 conflict

2002 – 2003

“ARC is able to make a unique contribution to the return and reintegration of internally displaced persons in Macedonia through its community services programming in the areas of preventive health and psychosocial support, which is provided through mobile outreach teams in the former conflict regions. In addition, ARC legal programs are enabling refugees from Kosovo to obtain documentation as a crucial step towards finding durable solutions to their problems. As the number of refugees and internally displaced persons in Macedonia is declining, ARC is also giving important inputs to the capacity building of local structures that will continue to provide services to these and other vulnerable groups after its departure from the country. This includes training for local NGOs.” (ARC 2003)

Distribution of hygiene and baby parcels to the displaced (2002)

“Working with the Macedonian Red Cross, the American Red Cross is providing hygiene and baby parcels to internally displaced families and the households in Macedonia that are hosting them. This project helps 10,000 internally displaced families, their babies less than 18 months old and 6,000 host families. By providing the beneficiaries with interactive health education sessions, the project also increases awareness of healthy behaviors. Also, the American Red Cross is assisting the Macedonian Red Cross with its response to disasters by teaching the latest humanitarian standards for relief and translating trainers' materials in Macedonian to support the training of future trainers.” (ARC January 2004)

Health Lessons to the displaced (2001)

"The American Red Cross holds separate weekly women's and men's preventative health sessions in a center in Arachinovo where newly arriving families are registered daily by the Macedonian Red Cross. The medical staff was originally hired to run a Red Cross clinic in the village of Malina Mala and serve five villages near the Kosovo border. Just as it was opening fighting broke out, and mined roads have made it unsafe for workers or patients to return. The doctors and nurses instead opened the preventative health education program, which helps the same intended clientele, but in Arichinovo where they have migrated.

The women arrive at their health session cloaked in pastel scarves and thick polyester coats buttoned to the ground on this 80-degree Fahrenheit day. They can't read, and lessons are taught with pictograms drawn by the nurses and doctors. Animated, the health workers begin with a story of Hatique who takes good care of herself, and Miruche who smokes, drinks too much coffee, watches a lot of TV and doesn't bathe. Both women are pregnant. The story ensues, followed by suggestions for following Hatique's routine of daily self-care.

A recent lesson was about healthy pregnancy and family planning. Most of the women have several children already and don't want to have more, at least not now when their future is so uncertain. None had heard of pregnancy tests, and few could afford to buy them." (ARC 13 June 2001)

Background on the American Red Cross in Macedonia

"The American Red Cross came to Macedonia in April 1999 in response to the civil unrest in Kosovo. At the peak of the crisis in early June, there were an estimated 250,000 Kosovar refugees in the country—150,000 were hosted by families, mainly in rural areas, the remainder were in refugee camps. To help deal with the enormous challenges facing the Macedonian Red Cross, the American Red Cross implemented a series of emergency food distribution projects to meet the most urgent food needs. The Emergency Supplemental Feeding Project assisted 991 host families in 17 villages. Addressing long-term food

availability, the American Red Cross started the Potato Seed Distribution Project which benefited 325 host families.

The American Red Cross has supported the Macedonian Red Cross with promoting health and maternal nutrition information and internally displaced persons. Throughout, the American Red Cross has assisted the Macedonian Red Cross with building its own capacities and operational effectiveness. When hostilities broke out in Macedonia in spring 2001, the American Red Cross was well placed to resume emergency operations in partnership with its partner society. The American Red Cross regional delegation based in Skopje oversaw the distribution of relief parcels to internally displaced persons residing with host families while assisting the already strained Macedonian Red Cross to continue operations.” (ARC January 2004)

Overview of ICRC activities (2001-2003)

- Between January and May 2003 the ICRC ended all food assistance programmes to IDPs
- The ICRC completed large-scale assistance activities to IDPs by the end of 2002 although the organization continued to provide aid to IDPs in collective centres
- The ICRC launched a new distribution programme in the Skopska Crna Gora region, enabling reconstruction to take place in 2002
- Between July and November 2002 the ICRC conducted a re-registration of IDPs
- Re-registration was based on three criteria, IDPs with damaged houses deemed uninhabitable; IDPs with individual security concerns, and IDPs with serious medical problems and no access to adequate medical facilities
- ICRC, being the main humanitarian actor, provided relief to 120,000 IDPs, evacuated some 1,200 reunited around 200 families and supplied medical items
- In September 2001, the ICRC decided to stop the registration and subsequent assistance for newly displaced and to focus on a needs-based approach

“Operational Highlights

Between January and May 2003, the ICRC

- ended food assistance for people displaced as result of the internal conflict in 2001
- in cooperation with national Red Cross, continued awareness-raising activities about the risks of mines and unexploded ordnance
- maintained support to the “Promotion of Human Values” programme, which seeks to foster closer links between young people from different ethnic backgrounds” (ICRC 31 October 2003)

Overview 2002

“The ICRC ended its assistance programme for IDPs and resident populations in March. However, it continued to assist IDPs living in collective centres. In addition, returnees were provided with a one-month supply of food. Owing to the particularly difficult situation in three mountainous villages of Skopska Crna Gora, the ICRC, in consultation with UNHCR, also provided food rations for refugees returning from Kosovo.

[...]

Assistance

Although the bulk of the programme providing food and other aid for IDPs and civilians in areas affected by conflict ended in March, the ICRC continued to provide food for IDPs still in collective centres, while

ECHO assisted those living with host families. By June 2002, most of the 70,000 people displaced by the conflict of 2001 had returned to their villages. Between July and November, the ICRC carried out an entirely new registration of IDPs. By late December, it had registered 8,441 IDPs, of whom 2,071 were in collective centres and 6,370 lived with host families. Deregistered IDPs received a one-month supply of food to help them resettle. The following three criteria were used for the re-registration of IDPs: people with damaged houses deemed uninhabitable; IDPs with individual security concerns preventing them from returning to their villages, and people with serious medical problems and no access to adequate medical facilities (protection cases); minorities from regions with security problems.

- food parcels: 30,814 and 482 tonnes wheat flour
- hygiene parcels: 10,599
- baby hygiene parcels: 8,021 ” (ICRC 19 June 2003)

"The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) was the main humanitarian actor during the six-month conflict between the FYROM security forces and the NLA. Its activities included [inter alia]:

1. providing relief mainly on a monthly basis to more than 120,000 displaced and resident populations.
2. evacuating more than 1,200 vulnerable people to safety from the conflict-affected areas
3. reuniting around 200 separated families from the Tetovo area after the sudden population movement in July
4. supplying more than 26 hospitals and clinics with basic medical and surgical supplies.

[...]

In the immediate aftermath of the signing of the Orhid peace agreement which brought a formal end to the fighting, the ICRC has been committed to responding to humanitarian needs which still prevailed as a direct result of the conflict. These included bringing food supplies to communities which were still cut off because of the erecting of either police/army checkpoints or the continuing presence of NLA fighters in the conflict-affected regions, continuing to assist displaced people, trying to establish the fate of missing people and warning affected civilians about the dangers of unexploded ordnance and mines.

Relief activities

Through its constant presence in the conflict affected regions the ICRC has been able to observe a steady stabilisation of the situation following the end of the fighting - especially in terms of access to food supplies. For this reason it has scaled down its relief activities. This is in line with its world-wide mandate to assist and protect people **directly affected by conflict**.

Last autumn, once the emergency was over, the ICRC carried out a comprehensive re-registration process to establish who exactly was still genuinely displaced. It proceeded to handover to ECHO-funded humanitarian organisations who now assist the remaining 13'000 displaced people still in host families. ICRC continues to assist 3'000 displaced people hosted in collective centres and for the winter period, 5'000 conflict affected persons mostly from sensitive areas in and around Tetovo.

During the last quarter of 2001, the ICRC also ran a major programme for the resident populations of conflict-affected villages - either those who never left or recently returned to their homes. Around 50,000 people, both ethnic Macedonians and ethnic Albanians, have benefited from monthly food assistance because of the disruption of their regular supply routes. The constant presence of ICRC delegates in these areas - especially to particularly isolated communities - was also an important reassuring factor for these people.

This programme ceased at the end of November as the negative effects of the conflict have considerably improved. However, recognising the fact that many vulnerable groups are facing difficulties this winter, the ICRC has worked closely with other humanitarian actors, specifically Action Against Hunger, which have begun assistance programmes. This is to try to ensure a dovetailing of assistance. As part of an effort to prepare people for winter, the ICRC also distributed around 40,000 blankets to displaced and resident

populations. It stands ready to provide ad-hoc emergency assistance in case of any new population movement.” (ICRC 1 February 2002)

For more information see [ICRC activities and related documents on the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia](#)

ICRC is key humanitarian actor- activities on behalf of IDPs in 2001

- Throughout 2001, the ICRC aimed to provide assistance to up to 30,000 IDPs living in host families and 7,000 in collective centres
- The ICRC delivered food aid to civilians in Lipkovo, for up to 10,000 villagers (August 2001)
- Displaced families received full food rations, hygiene parcels, baby parcels and a blanket when they registered with the MRC (July 2001)
- Since March 2001, the ICRC/MRC assisted around 60,000 IDPs
- The ICRC gave food and other emergency aid to displaced fleeing the Tetovo area (July 2001)
- ICRC distributed food and baby kits in the Skopska Crna Gora region (March – May 2001)
- During the Tetovo crisis, the ICRC distributed emergency relief items to displaced and evacuated trapped villagers (March – May 2001)
- During the Kumanovo crisis, the ICRC evacuated civilians from Slupcane, Vaksince, Lipkovo, Lojane, Otlja and Orizari, delivered surgical supplies, brought relief supplies, and supplied the MRC with relief items (March – May 2001)

“The ICRC is the main humanitarian actor involved in supporting IDPs in FYRoM. All assistance is currently provided through the registration and distribution process, mainly through the Macedonian Red Cross (MRC). Displaced families receive full food rations (individual food parcels plus 12 kg of flour), hygiene parcels, baby parcels and a blanket when they register with the MRC. In subsequent months they receive half-ration food parcels, as they have had time to develop their own coping mechanisms.

Since March 2001, the ICRC/MRC relief programme has assisted around 60,000 IDPs (22,000 from the first phase of the conflict around Tetovo in March, and 38,000 from the second phase of the conflict around Kumanovo).

The internally displaced are predominantly ethnic Albanians, who generally receive strong support from their community and are housed with host families. Meanwhile, the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (MLSP) has identified social institutions and hotel facilities sufficient for 7,000 IDPs. At present, there are around 1,000 ethnic Macedonian IDPs living in such collective centres.

Over the next six months the ICRC aims to provide adapted food assistance to up to 30,000 IDPs living in host families and 7,000 in collective centres each month. The IDPs will also receive individual hygiene parcels, and baby parcels on a quarterly basis.

The organization will also closely monitor and follow the situation so as to be able to react to a new crisis giving rise to further population movements. An additional contingency stock will be prepared for 60,000 persons, comprising full food rations, individual hygiene parcels, baby parcels, blankets, candles, jerrycans, buckets, and mattresses.” (ICRC 27 July 2001)

August 2001

"This week the ICRC delivered much-needed food aid to civilians in the village of Lipkovo who have been in a precarious situation for many weeks now since being cut off from their regular supply lines.

Four trucks carrying wheat flour, baby parcels, candles and family parcels containing additional food and basic emergency supplies arrived in the village Tuesday morning after the ICRC received security guarantees from both sides. During the same visit, the team evacuated 16 vulnerable people who were to be reunited with their families in Kumanovo.

While the ICRC had visited Lipkovo on a number of occasions since the outbreak of fighting in the Kumanovo region to deliver medical supplies to the clinics and evacuate people, it had not previously received direct requests to bring food to the area. During recent visits, however, local representatives of the civilian population, who estimate that between 10,000 and 15,000 people could still be in Lipkovo, asked the ICRC for help after warning that their food stocks were running dangerously low.

The ICRC remains concerned about the plight of residents of other villages which are similarly cut off. A trip is planned this week to the village of Sipkovic, in the hills above Tetovo, where civilians have been isolated for months now. The ICRC also plans to bring food assistance to Vratnica, in the Tetovo area, where supplies are reportedly having difficulty getting through following recent clashes in the area." (ICRC 9 August 2001)

July 2001

"On 25 July the ICRC distributed food and other emergency aid to civilians who had fled their homes in the Tetovo area following the recent upsurge in fighting between Macedonian forces and ethnic Albanian armed groups.

In Skopje, the ICRC made two relief deliveries during the day to about 450 displaced people from the villages of Tearce, Lesok and Neprosteni who are housed in a temporary shelter in the city. In a separate mission an ICRC team, together with workers of the Macedonian Red Cross, travelled to Zilce to take food, hygiene and baby parcels to some 500 people from the same villages near Tetovo. This follows an assessment mission carried out the previous day, when delegates who arrived in Zilce within hours of the new influx found the displaced families in a state of distress, many of them having left all their belongings behind.

Around 1,800 people from the Tetovo area were registered by the Macedonian Red Cross in the first 48 hours following the outbreak of fighting and all of them will soon receive relief supplies donated by the ICRC and distributed by the National Society.

The ICRC office in Tetovo continues to receive urgent requests from civilians wishing to be evacuated from villages affected by the clashes. Several attempts were made to reach the area on Tuesday 24 July, but the team had to turn back for security reasons. Later in the day delegates were able to evacuate five people from Tearce, including one who was seriously injured. The ICRC will continue to try, as a matter of urgency, to reach trapped civilians as soon as the security situation allows." (ICRC 25 July 2001)

"Skopska Crna Gora

When the first clashes occurred in Skopska Crna Gora, the ICRC was immediately on-the-spot in Aracinovo and Lipkovo and Kumanovo municipalities, where several hundreds of people who had fled the fighting had gathered. Distributions of individual food parcels and baby kits were distributed by the ICRC with the support of Macedonian Red Cross (MRC).

Tetovo Crisis

As fighting broke out, thousands of people fled the town as a preventive measure fearing an escalation of the hostilities. The Macedonian Red Cross eventually registered around 22,000 people displaced from Tetovo who were scattered in the locations of all 28 branches of the MRC. Every single registered person received emergency relief, including food parcels, blankets, hygiene parcels and wheat flour donated by the ICRC.

The ICRC was the first international humanitarian organisation to gain access to the villages above Tetovo where thousands of civilians, both displaced from neighbouring villages or inhabitants, were facing difficulties after being stranded without electricity and cut off from their supplies for more than two weeks whilst the fighting took place around them.

In the space of two weeks, ICRC visited extensively the hills above Tetovo, bringing food and basic relief items to those people in need - eventually 300 baby parcels, 2300 food parcels, 100 hygiene parcels, 70 metric tonnes of wheat flour and 2400 candles. At the same time, around 50 vulnerable persons, mainly women, children and elderly were evacuated by the ICRC to Tetovo to be with their relatives or admitted to hospital. The resident population of Tetovo who were directly affected by the fighting also received help from the ICRC

[...]

As a result of the Tetovo events, the following items were distributed by the ICRC with support from the Macedonian Red Cross:

- 29,000 food parcels, 2,000 baby parcels, 25,000 blankets, 6,500 hygiene parcels, 10,000 mattresses
- 2,800 kitchen sets, 2,500 candles, 500 meals ready to eat, 220 metric tonnes wheat flour

Kumanovo events

The ICRC is currently the only international humanitarian organisation to be able to access the affected villages in the Kumanovo region. Every visit is done only after obtaining firm security guarantees from both sides.

Sunday's visit was the eighth time the ICRC has entered the affected area. So far, since the crisis began more than two weeks ago it has:

- Evacuated 336 civilians from Slupcane, Vaksince, Lipkovo, Lojane, Otlja and Orizari.
- Delivered substantial surgical supplies to Kumanovo Hospital, enough for 100 wounded, as a precautionary measure. Distributed surgical equipment for war wounds, water purification tablets as well as essential drugs (on behalf of UNICEF*) to clinics in Vaksince, Slupcane, Lipkovo, Otlja and Lojane
- Brought relief supplies, including 100 baby parcels, 170 (one per family of five) hygiene kits and 1000 litres of water to Vaksince, Slupcane, Llojane and Lipkovo

Supplied the Macedonian Red Cross with relief items including food parcels, blankets, mattresses and hygiene parcels for the around 2000 displaced people in Kumanovo - both for people still in the town following the first events, and for newly displaced persons from villages close to the affected area." (ICRC 23 May 2001)

ICRC conducted mine/uxo awareness programme benefiting displaced wanting to return (December 2001)

- Unexploded ordnance and mines posed a serious threat to potential returnees
- In August 2001, the ICRC launched the UXO/Mine Awareness Programme targeting civilians most affected by the threat - that is the resident, refugee and displaced populations from villages in the former conflict areas
- Around 50,000 leaflets were distributed to refugees and displaced as they came to collect their monthly ICRC food assistance at the Macedonian Red Cross, while the ICRC also visited all the directly affected villages and gave presentations in all of the collective centres

"The significant amount of unexploded ordnance (UXO) and to a lesser extent, mines, left behind in the wake of the conflict between the Macedonian security forces and the NLA poses a serious threat to thousands of civilians living in or planning to return to their villages.

After fighting broke out in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia between Macedonian security forces and the National Liberation Army, the ICRC decided to assess the threat posed by mines and unexploded ordnance (UXO) and to define an appropriate strategy for dealing with it. The assessment, which was carried out by the ICRC's regional mine/UXO-awareness specialist in April and July 2001, was initially limited to the Tetovo region but was later extended to other conflict areas. Subsequently, the ICRC decided to launch a mine/UXO-awareness programme for the communities most at risk.

Through its UXO/Mine Awareness Programme launched in August, the ICRC has targeted civilians most affected by the threat - that is the resident, refugee and displaced populations from villages in the former conflict areas. This was done through the distribution of leaflets and posters as well as a series of presentations conducted by ICRC UXO/Mine Awareness Instructors. In a second phase, the ICRC has trained a network of around 35 MAIs from the Macedonian Red Cross and the local communities who are continuing to conduct UXO/Mine Awareness presentations.

The ICRC's programme is considered complementary to those conducted by the authorities and other organisations which focus on UXO/Mine clearance and assistance to UXO/Mine victims. Information on locations and incidences is systematically gathered by the ICRC and shared with the UN Mine Action Office (UNMAO). Meetings are also regularly held with the actors involved in other aspects of the issue to try to ensure a holistic approach to the problem. The ICRC's programme is acknowledged by the authorities and the UN as fully covering the needs in the area of UXO/Mine awareness.

The Problem

A wide range of ammunition was used during the recent conflict. Due to the reported use of old or low quality ammunition, it is estimated that the ratio of unexploded ordnance is higher than the average in other theatres of conflict.

Assessments conducted by ICRC experts have revealed that the biggest threat to the population lies in unexploded ordnance - both in terms of quantity and because their exact locations are largely unknown. Whilst there have been incidents and sightings of antitank mines, they present less of a threat to civilians because their locations are known and thus precautions can be taken to minimise incidences. Whilst there is no documented evidence yet of the widespread laying of antipersonnel mines, this cannot be entirely excluded. The threat is confined to people living or about to return to areas where the fighting took place - namely the areas of Tetovo, Kumanovo and surroundings of Skopje.

The threat thus differs significantly from that facing post-conflict communities in other parts of the Balkans where antipersonnel land mines, unexploded ordnance and cluster bombs are the main problem. It was therefore important that the message and material developed in Macedonia reflects the reality of the situation here.

The ICRC Response

In order to avoid generating unnecessary alarm among the general population, the ICRC decided to develop a community-based approach, targeting the populations *directly affected* by the threat, meaning the **resident** population who had decided to stay as well as the **refugee** and **displaced** populations who had left the conflict zones.

A geographical priority list was established by the ICRC in order to ensure that those most at risk, or about to return to risk areas were the first to be reached.

The first UXO/Mine presentations, for example, were given for the resident and displaced population from Aracinovo and Brnjarci. The Lipkovo region was also considered an important priority because of the significant amount of unexploded ordnance left behind from the fierce fighting which took place there.

The programme, which was launched at the end of August, aims at conveying a message which goes beyond simply raising awareness about the *existence* of the threat, but to equip civilians with the knowledge that will enable them to *adapt their behaviour* and learn to live with the threat until the relevant clearing operations have been conducted.

Essentially, civilians, including importantly children, who are often most at threat because of their natural curiosity, are taught how to **recognise** UXO and mines, **warned** against approaching or touching them and encouraged to **notify** them immediately to the competent authorities.

In the **first phase**, around 50,000 leaflets, designed in-country to adapt to the Macedonia context, were distributed to both the **refugee population** in Kosovo (through the ICRC in Kosovo) and the **displaced population** as they came to collect their monthly ICRC food assistance at the Macedonian Red Cross. The ICRC also visited all the directly affected villages, helping community officials to identify local instructors (MAIs) and at the same time conducting presentations to the **resident populations** most at risk. The ICRC UXO/Mine team also gave presentations in all of the collective centres where displaced people are accommodated.

The **second phase**, the training of a network of MAIs from the Macedonian Red Cross and local community representatives has also been completed, and the programme is currently in its **third phase** - the conducting of presentations by the MAIs, with monitoring and support from the ICRC.

How each target group was reached

[...]

Displaced population - There were more than 70,000 internally displaced people inside Macedonia at the end of the conflict. All collective centres were visited MAIs, whilst those staying with host families received a leaflet when arriving at the Macedonian Red Cross to collect their monthly ICRC relief assistance. MRC instructors are also conducting presentations in their respective branches for displaced persons in host families." (ICRC 7 December 2001)

NGO response

International Rescue Committee (IRC) provides social, legal and health assistance to IDPs (2002 – 2003)

- The IRC supported the provision of accessible and appropriate health care to 5000 IDPs of Kumanovo and Skopje regions through the provision of four health teams
- The main goal of IRC assistance was to facilitate the return and permanent reintegration of IDPs and refugees

“To provide accessible and appropriate health care to 17,000 returnees, and 5,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees of regions of Kumanovo and Skopje, through provision of four health teams, each simultaneously helping governmental health institutions manage the current situation while re-establishing health services in war-impacted areas. The goal is to facilitate reestablishment of stable multi-ethnic communities in Macedonia, and the return and permanent reintegration of IDPs and refugees by offering social, legal and health assistance.

Activities

- Support and improve capacity of four medical teams that provide primary health care for the large numbers of returnee patients and IDPs.
- Standardize health procedures and support distribution and monitoring of basic medicines to IDPs and/or returnees.
- Provide referrals to secondary and tertiary care services for patients who require them, while developing mechanisms to gauge success of referral assessments.
- Register and collect data/patient information through monthly updates from all IRC supported facilities and activities.
- Network with health institutions, local health providers and local NGOs to advocate for a more just and accessible health system for Macedonia” (IRC June 2003)

MCIC implemented rehabilitation program for displaced and other vulnerable groups (July 2002)

- Focusing on displaced and returnees, MCIC undertook activities on water supply and sanitation in rural areas, reconstruction of public infrastructure
- MCIC also planned activities including re-vitalisation of agriculture, distribution of food and (non)food items, and confidence building through co-ordination and information sharing

"The main **goal** is to contribute to maintaining the peace in the country by supporting communities in their return to “normal life”. They need assistance to regain their livelihoods and become self sufficient. Special priority will be given to supporting the return of persons who are still displaced.

The **objectives** of the programme are the following:

- to support communities by improving public infrastructure;
- to enable restoration of individual agricultural production;
- to contribute to the provision of food and non food products;
- to provide relevant information in order to assist the return of IDP's.

Target region includes the regions of Kumanovo, Skopje and Tetovo, or the north western part of Macedonia. The assistance will be directed to rural or marginalized places/villages in and around conflict areas, which are not sufficiently covered by regular assistance; as well as collective centres.

For access to returnees and internally displaced persons, regular co-ordination will be established with local and foreign NGOs, UN agencies and the Government. The activities will be implemented through local NGO partners in the respective regions.

[...]

The beneficiaries will be selected according to the following priorities:

- internally displaced persons who want to return to their homes;
- returnees to the conflict areas, according to the level of vulnerability;
- internally displaced persons in the collective centres.

[...]

Within the framework of this application, MCIC will undertake activities in the following sectors:

- water supply and sanitation in rural areas;
- reconstruction of public infrastructure;
- re-vitalisation of agriculture;
- distribution of food and (non)food items;
- confidence building through co-ordination and information sharing.

Water supply and sanitation in rural areas

This project is a part of the larger MCIC program "Water supply for communities". It entails provision of financial and technical support towards construction of water systems, which improve the water supplies in the communities. Financial support will be provided for:

- reconstruction of already existing, old water supply/sanitation systems.
- completion of the construction of new, already started water supply/sanitation systems.
- completion of the construction of existing water supply/sanitation systems.
- construction of new water supply/sanitation systems.

This project will focus on the crisis areas and up to 10 applications will be reviewed. The table below indicates possible target locations:

TARGET AREA					
Community	Municipality	Partner	No. of beneficiar.	Nationality	Status
1. Village of Bukovic	Saraj (Skopje)	Major and village committee	1,622	Albanians	Identification
2. Village of Ratae	Jegunovce (Tetovo)	Major and village committee	451	Macedonians	Formulation
3. Village of Tudence	Jegunovce (Tetovo)	Major and village committee	437	Macedonians	Formulation
4. Village of Beloviste	Vratnica (Tetovo)	Major and village committee	600	Macedonians	Identification
5. Village of Matejce	Lipkovo (Kumanovo)	Village committee	4,906	Alban. 88% Serbs. 10,5% Macedon. 1,5%	Identification
6. Village of Pobožje	Cucer Sandevo (Skopje)	Major and village committee	800	Serbs 50% Maced. 50%	Formulation
TOTAL:			8,816		

Reconstruction of infrastructure

MCIC will work on the renewing of public infrastructure in the target regions - where they were active during 2001, through repair/reconstruction of schools, ambulances, etc, which are in the interest of the community (e.g. municipal and NGO).

MCIC received a number of requests for repairs to infrastructure from the crisis areas - Tetovo area: villages of Jegunovce, Tearce, Ratae, Beloviste; Skopje area: villages of Laskarce, Bukovich, Blace; Kumanovo area: villages of Otlja, Lopate, Orizare.[...]

Agriculture revitalisation

The second area of intervention will be revival of agriculture, aimed at reducing the unemployment and poverty rates in the country.

The activities will be as it follows:

- distribution of livestock feed (FAO had a program during the winter, but funds were not provided for half of the planned needs);

- distribution of seeds and fertilisers;

- provision of egg-laying hens;

- compensation for livestock losses by providing a cow per family;

MCIC will undertake the distributions of livestock feed, seeds and fertiliser, chickens and cows, as well as the food parcels, where needed. MCIC has previous experience of these activities, mostly from the work in Kosovo during 1999-2001.

Livestock feed

MCIC will distribute livestock feed to the families returning to their original homes. Families with at least one cow/horse or 5 sheep and less than 5 cows/horses or 20 sheep will be eligible for assistance. Focus will be on the most vulnerable families (poor, social cases, single mothers, families with many children and families with disabled people) who have very little support if any from other humanitarian organisations.

[...]

Seeds and fertilizer

A similar approach will be used for the fodder distribution. While the livestock distribution is planned for the summer period, assistance with seed materials and fertiliser, will be related to the autumn planting season.

Poultry

A set of 5 egg-laying hens and 50 kg. of concentrated food, will be distributed to each selected family. This should provide 4-5 eggs/family/day.

As for the fodder, beneficiaries will be returnee families and priority will be given to social cases in the villages (families without livestock will also be covered by this assistance).

Cows

Selected families will receive 1 cow and 500 kg. concentrate feed. The focus of this activity will be the poor mountainous villages in the Tetovo and Skopska Crna Gora area. Villages will be selected on the basis of ethnic balance (e.g. two with predominant ethnic Albanian population and two with Macedonian population).

Beneficiaries, besides the social criteria (priority to poor families, social cases, single mothers, families with many children and families with disabled people), will be selected if they meet the following conditions:

- they have kept cows before and
- they have adequate shelter to keep cows.

Provision of food and non food items

MCIC will distribute food and non-food items according to the needs of the target group. Food will be provided through the following forms:

basic food items (flour, milk, sugar, meat, etc), which will be distributed in areas where greatest needs are identified. MCIC does not aim at satisfying all beneficiaries; the aim is to identify those who do not have access to other assistance (Macedonian Red Cross);

fresh food (oranges). In co-operation with "Solidarity" an NGO from Greece, MCIC will provide assistance for socially endangered persons in Macedonia. The aid consists of fresh fruit - oranges, donation of the Greek Government. The aid will be distributed to persons who do not have access to fresh fruit: IDPs, (in host families and collective centres), families in crisis areas, social institutions, pensioners' homes, students' dormitories, prisons and socially endangered persons assisted through local partner NGOs.

Depending on needs, MCIC will also engage in distribution of non-food items especially for persons who are still displaced but have the intention of returning to their homes. These items include:- mattresses, blankets, bed sheets, small repair tools, hygiene parcels and kitchen sets amongst others. This activity is important for supporting the return of IDPs - not only have houses been destroyed but all the contents have been looted or destroyed.

Confidence building through co-ordination and information sharing

MCIC will devote more attention to gathering, producing and distributing information pertaining to the situation in the country.

[...]

(ACT 25 July 2002)

References to the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement

Known reference to the Guiding Principles (as of February 2004)

Reference to the Guiding Principles in the national legislation

None

Other References to the Guiding Principles (in chronological order)

None

Availability of the Guiding Principle in local languages

The Guiding Principles have been translated into Macedonian
Documents: · GP in Macedonian [Please click on the Internal Link provided in the Sources Section Below]

Training on the Guiding Principles

A lecture series “Exodus within Borders: The Global Crisis of Internal Displacement” was organised by the Center for Refugees and Forced Migration Studies, Skopje in collaboration with Brookings Institution
Date: 31st May to 3rd June 2001, Skopje, Macedonia
Documents: See the website of the Brookings Institution

LIST OF SOURCES USED

(alphabetical order)

Action by Churches Together (ACT), 17 January 2003, Floods in Macedonia, Macedonia ACT Alert 01/2003
Internet : http://act-intl.org/alerts/Alerts_2003/AIMacFl-1-03.html , accessed 16 February 2004

Action by Churches Together (ACT), 25 July 2002, ACT Appeal FYR Macedonia: Rehabilitation EUMC-21
Internet : http://www.reliefweb.int/library/ACT_appeals/act-mkd-25jul.pdf , accessed 30 July 2002

Action by Churches Together (ACT), 5 July 2001, ACT Appeal FYR of Macedonia: Macedonia crisis - Assistance to internally displaced EUMC11
Internet : <http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/6686f45896f15dbc852567ae00530132/ea4727e825e59bc1c1256a810033fle8?OpenDocument> , accessed 28 September 2001

Agence France-Presse (AFP), 14 August 2001, "Macedonian rebels sign deal with NATO to disarm"
Internet : <http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/6686f45896f15dbc852567ae00530132/16829885f370f5bf85256aa800665853?OpenDocument> , accessed 3 October 2001

Agence France-Presse (AFP), 14 January 2002, "Shadowy Albanian group warns of further conflict in Macedonia"
Internet : <http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/6686f45896f15dbc852567ae00530132/f4ee4f484d297217c1256b41005f9fba?OpenDocument> , accessed 10 July 2002

Agence France-Presse (AFP), 19 November 2001, "New Macedonian rebel groups threatening peace plan: Trajkovski"
Internet : <http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/6686f45896f15dbc852567ae00530132/e3648c07703cceb785256b0900726acd?OpenDocument> , accessed 7 January 2002

Agence France-Presse (AFP), 19 September 2003, Macedonia braces for increase in ethnic Albanian separatism
Internet : <http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/6686f45896f15dbc852567ae00530132/dd458013cf53aa6fc1256da60045105b?OpenDocument> , accessed 19 February 2004

Agence France-Presse (AFP), 25 December 2001, "After conflict with Albanian rebels, peace is yet to settle in Macedonia"

Internet :
<http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/6686f45896f15dbc852567ae00530132/58c080536bbc446749256b2e0003da6b?OpenDocument> , accessed 7 January 2002

Agence France-Presse (AFP), 27 July 2001, "Displaced Macedonian villagers seethe as they queue for food"

Internet :
<http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/6686f45896f15dbc852567ae00530132/3deb800184f09afa85256a9600716d18?OpenDocument> , accessed 3 October 2001

Agence France-Presse (AFP), 27 May 2001, "Civilians flee homes after new clashes in northern Macedonia"

Internet :
<http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/6686f45896f15dbc852567ae00530132/55f18b480dad279ec1256a5a0047e0ee?OpenDocument> , accessed 28 September 2001

Agence France-Presse (AFP), 29 September 2003, EU approves police force for Macedonia

Internet :
<http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/6686f45896f15dbc852567ae00530132/543612f60b4e1b0fc1256db0003d5755?OpenDocument> , accessed 16 February 2004

Agence France-Presse (AFP), 3 September 2003, Macedonia faces new risk of ethnic conflict

Internet :
<http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/6686f45896f15dbc852567ae00530132/4a0cdc1080831123c1256d9600463e61?OpenDocument> , accessed 16 February 2004

Agence France-Presse (AFP), 30 May 2001, "More than 10,000 villagers fear to leave Macedonian homes: mayor"

Internet :
<http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/6686f45896f15dbc852567ae00530132/a10db0a7b07e9a26c1256a5c00455f6f?OpenDocument> , accessed 7 September 2001

Agence France-Presse (AFP), 31 March 2003, EU takes over first peacekeeping mission in Macedonia

Internet :
<http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/6686f45896f15dbc852567ae00530132/8e16584d44100cd585256cfa00722a8d?OpenDocument> , accessed 16 February 2004

Agence France-Presse (AFP), 4 July 2002, "Macedonia to hold parliamentary elections on September 15"

Internet :
<http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/6686f45896f15dbc852567ae00530132/ec1745a3d63ccbd9c1256bec005a511e?OpenDocument> , accessed 10 July 2002

Agence France-Presse (AFP), 5 July 2002, "Macedonian mixed police enter last ex-rebel stronghold"

Internet :
<http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/6686f45896f15dbc852567ae00530132/27607648d4d420e0c1256bed00601645?OpenDocument> , accessed 10 July 2002

Agence France-Presse (AFP), 7 December 2001, "More ethnic Albanian rebels amnestied in Macedonia"

Internet :
<http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/6686f45896f15dbc852567ae00530132/52b420f37eed6cd1c1256b1b005c0e84?OpenDocument> , accessed 7 January 2002

Agence France-Presse (AFP), 8 May 2001, "Timetable of troubles in Macedonia"

Internet :
<http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/6686f45896f15dbc852567ae00530132/8dedd6aaeb5c1a6c1256a4700420044?OpenDocument> , accessed 27 September 2001

AidMacedonia.org.mk, 15 April 2002, MCIC Situation report no. 11/2002, April 8-April 14 2002, Security and political situation

Internet : http://www.aidmacedonia.org.mk/back/izv2002_11.htm , accessed 12 July 2002

AidMacedonia.org.mk, 31 January 2002, Food Sector Coordination Meeting

Internet : <http://www.aidmacedonia.org.mk/aid/food01.htm> , accessed 12 July 2002

AidMacedonia.org.mk, 4 April 2002, National Humanitarian Coordination meeting no. 26

Internet : <http://www.aidmacedonia.org.mk/humaninf/nhk26.htm> , accessed 11 July 2002

AidMacedonia.org.mk, 9 May 2002, National Humanitarian Coordination meeting no. 28

Internet : <http://www.aidmacedonia.org.mk/humaninf/nhk28.htm> , accessed 11 July 2002

AidMacedonia.org.mk, November 2001, National Humanitarian Coordination meeting no.15

Internet : <http://www.aidmacedonia.org.mk/humaninf/nhk15.htm> , accessed 8 January 2002

American Red Cross (ARC), 13 June 2001, "Red Cross brings healthy lessons to Macedonia's displaced"

Internet :
<http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/6686f45896f15dbc852567ae00530132/9b1b7507e1e7308685256a6f00534add?OpenDocument> , accessed 28 September 2001

American Red Cross (ARC), 15 May 2001, "Trapped by crossfire, Macedonians need humanitarian aid"

Internet : <http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/6686f45896f15dbc852567ae00530132/aecd4b029b0c46b85256a4d004ca28f?OpenDocument> , accessed 27 September 2001

American Red Cross (ARC), 16 August 2002, Email sent to NRC Geneva

American Red Cross (ARC), 2003, 2003 ARC Programming Highlights
Internet : <http://www.archq.org/pdfs/2003highlights.PDF> , accessed 17 February 2004

American Red Cross (ARC), 2003, Macedonia Current Projects
Internet : http://www.redcross.org/services/intl/0,1082,0_63_,00.html , accessed 17 February 2004

American Red Cross (ARC), 2004, ARC Current Projects
Internet : http://www.redcross.org/services/intl/0,1082,0_63_,00.html , accessed 17 February 2004

Amnesty International (AI), 15 August 2002, "Dark days in Tetovo"
Internet : <http://web.amnesty.org/library/Index/engEUR650072002> , accessed 20 August 2003

Amnesty International (AI), 15 August 2002, "Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia: Impunity threatens lasting peace"
Internet : <http://web.amnesty.org/library/Index/engEUR650172002!Open> , accessed 20 August 2003

Amnesty International (AI), 22 January 2003, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia: Police Allegedly ill-treat members of ethnic minorities
Internet : <http://web.amnesty.org/library/Index/ENGEUR650012003?open&of=ENG-MKD> , accessed 20 February 2004

Amnesty International (AI), 30 May 2002, Amnesty International Concerns in Europe (July - December 2001) AI INDEX: EUR 01/002/2002
Internet : <http://web.amnesty.org/library/Index/ENGEUR010022002?open&of=ENG-MKD> , accessed 25 February 2004

Amnesty International (AI), October 2003, Concerns in Europe and Central Asia
Internet : <http://web.amnesty.org/library/Index/ENGEUR010162003?open&of=ENG-MKD> , accessed 16 February 2004

Amnesty International (AI), September 2001, Amnesty International Concerns in Europe (January - June 2001) AI INDEX: EUR 01/003/2001
Internet : <http://web.amnesty.org/library/Index/ENGEUR010032001?open&of=ENG-MKD> , accessed 25 February 2004

Balkantimes, 2 June 2003, Internally Displaced Persons in Macedonia reaches 5,548

Internet : <http://www.balkantimes.com/html2/english/030603-WMI-001.htm> , accessed 17 February 2004

BBC News, July 2003, Macedonian Assembly adopts asylum law, BBC Monitoring International Reports
Internet

Council of Europe (COE) Secretary General, 14 April 2003, Reports form the Council of Europe Field Offices February 2003, SG/INF (2003) 17 14 April 2003
Internet : <http://www.coe.int/t/e/SG/Secretary-General/Information/Documents/Field-office-reports/> , accessed 18 February 2004

Council of Europe (COE) Secretary General, 23 July 2003, Reports form the Council of Europe Field Offices June 2003, SG/INF (2003) 30 23 July 2003
Internet : <http://www.coe.int/t/e/SG/Secretary-General/Information/Documents/Field-office-reports/> , accessed 19 February 2004

Deutsche Presse Agentur (DPA), 14 January 2004, NATO cuts down presence in Macedonia, press release
Internet : <http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/6686f45896f15dbc852567ae00530132/fc0eb552a7142e2985256e1b00684e35?OpenDocument> , accessed 17 February 2004

Deutsche Presse Agentur (DPA), 16 December 2003, Macedonia collects 7,500 weapons during amnesty programme
Internet : <http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/0/34d3d86ee24a713d49256dff0016e3b2?OpenDocument> , accessed 25 February 2004

Deutsche Presse Agentur (DPA), September 2003, Refugees flee northern Macedonia as police clamp down on militants
Internet : <http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/6686f45896f15dbc852567ae00530132/832133710de2b8d8c1256d940056193f?OpenDocument> , accessed 19 February 2004

EU Delegation of the European Commission to the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia/International Management Group (IMG), 12 December 2003, Reconstruction Coordination: Conflict Affected Areas in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
Internet : http://www.delmkd.cec.eu.int/en/broshures_and_campaigns/housing.htm , accessed 17 February 2004

EU Delegation of the European Commission to the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia/International Management Group (IMG), 2003, Who is responsible for fixing your house ?

Internet :
http://www.delmkd.cec.eu.int/en/broshures_and_campaigns/Shelter%20Leaflet%20English%20version.pdf , accessed 20 February 2004

EU Delegation of the European Commission to the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia/International Management Group (IMG), 21 January 2003, Damages by Category /Actual & Reduced Budget

Internet :
http://www.delmkd.cec.eu.int/en/broshures_and_campaigns/Damage%20by%20Cat.%20-%20Actual%20&%20Reduced%20Rehab.%20Budget.pdf , accessed 16 February 2004

EU Delegation of the European Commission to the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia/International Management Group (IMG), 21 January 2003, Housing Sector: Donations/Housing Sector – Category I, II, III, IV

Internet : http://www.delmkd.cec.eu.int/en/broshures_and_campaigns/Donations%20-%20Housing%20units%20-%20Category%20I,%20II,%20III%20&%20IV.pdf , accessed 16 February 2004

EU Delegation of the European Commission to the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia/International Management Group (IMG), 7 November 2003, Implementation Schedules – Category I, II, III & IV

Internet :
http://www.delmkd.cec.eu.int/en/broshures_and_campaigns/Housing%20Sector%20-%20Imple.%20Sche.%20-%20Cat.%20I,%20II,III%20&%20IV.pdf , accessed 16 February 2004

EU Delegation of the European Commission to the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia/International Management Group (IMG), 7 November 2003, Outstanding Houses – Category I, II, III & IV

Internet :
http://www.delmkd.cec.eu.int/en/broshures_and_campaigns/Housing%20Sector%20-%20Outstanding%20Houses%20-%20Category%20I,%20II,%20III%20&%20IV.pdf , accessed 16 February 2004

EU Delegation of the European Commission to the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia/International Management Group (IMG), 7 November 2003, Reconstruction Coordination; Housing Sector Reports of Burned/Vandalized/Demolished/Looted Houses

Internet :
http://www.delmkd.cec.eu.int/en/broshures_and_campaigns/Housing%20Sector%20-%20Reports%20of%20Burned%20%20Vandalized%20%20Demolished%20%20Looted%20Houses.pdf , accessed 16 February 2004

EU Delegation of the European Commission to the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia/International Management Group (IMG), November 2003, Conflict Affected Areas, map

Internet : http://www.delmkd.cec.eu.int/en/broshures_and_campaigns/Map%20-%20Conflict%20affected%20areas.pdf , accessed 16 February 2004

EU Proxima Police Mission (FYROM), 31 January 2004, EU Proxima Police Mission website

Internet : <http://www.eupol-proxima.org/index.html> , accessed 17 February 2004

European Agency for Reconstruction (EAR), 15 January 2003, Support to host families of internally displaced persons continues until March 2003

Internet : <http://www.ear.eu.int/publications/news-a1a2e3ea4.htm> , accessed 16 February 2004

European Agency for Reconstruction (EAR), 2003, The European Agency for Reconstruction in FYR Macedonia News Bulletin

Internet : http://www.ear.eu.int/publications/FYROM_2003_01.pdf , accessed 18 February 2004

European Agency for Reconstruction (EAR), 25 April 2003, FYR Macedonia Annual Programme 2003

Internet : <http://www.ear.eu.int/macedonia/fyrom-a1c2f3.htm> , accessed 16 February 2004

European Agency for Reconstruction (EAR), May 2003, Annual Report 2002

Internet : <http://www.ear.eu.int/publications/news-a1c2m3.htm> , accessed 16 February 2004

European Commission, 15 December 2003, EU launches Police Mission in the Former Yugoslavia Republic of Macedonia, IP/03/1727

Internet : http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/see/news/ip03_1727.htm , accessed 17 February 2004

European Commission, 2003, The EU's Relations with the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

Internet : http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/see/fyrom/index.htm , accessed 17 February 2004

European Commission, 26 March 2003, Commission Staff Working Paper: Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia Stabilisation and Association Report 2003, COM(2003) 139 final

Internet : http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/see/sap/rep2/com03_342_en.pdf , accessed 17 February 2004

European Commission, 31 January 2003, Mission accomplished – Commission winds up humanitarian operations in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia FYROM, IP/03/157

Internet : http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/see/news/ip03_157.htm , accessed 17 February 2004

European Commission's Delegation to the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia , December 2003, International Census Observation Mission (ICOM) Conclusions of the international monitoring of the 2002 population and housing census in FYR Macedonia

Internet : http://www.delmkd.cec.eu.int/en/whatsnew/Census_2002/Census_2002.htm , accessed 19 February 2004

European Commission - Humanitarian Aid Office (ECHO), 11 September 2001, "Commission sends an extra 1 million in emergency aid for the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia"

Internet : <http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/6686f45896f15dbc852567ae00530132/40c14927d57975e5c1256ac400517882?OpenDocument> , accessed 3 October 2001

European Commission - Humanitarian Aid Office (ECHO), 5 February 2002, "Commission gives € 5.5 million in humanitarian assistance for the victims of the conflict in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) and Kosovo"

Internet : <http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/6686f45896f15dbc852567ae00530132/07f51f43ffaefc9785256b58006d176e?OpenDocument> , accessed 10 June 200

European Union (EU), 15 April 2002, "Cash assistance for IDP and refugee host families"

Internet : <http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/6686f45896f15dbc852567ae00530132/e3cb1ef086e4ef9fc1256ba3002c20c0?OpenDocument> , accessed 10 July 2002

European Union (EU), 15 December 2003, EU launches Police Mission in the FYR of Macedonia

Internet : http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/see/news/ip03_1727.htm , accessed 17 February 2004

European Union (EU), 2003, FYROM Stabilisation and Association Process

Internet : http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/see/actions/index.htm , accessed 17 February 2004

European Union (EU), 28 January 2002, "European Agency for Reconstruction to manage the main EU assistance programmes in the FYR of Macedonia"

Internet : <http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/6686f45896f15dbc852567ae00530132/8821fda352c4021cc1256b9c003d10da?OpenDocument> , accessed 10 July 2002

Government of Germany (GoG), 22 June 2001, Federal Foreign Office humanitarian assistance for internally displaced persons and evacuees in Macedonia

Internet :

<http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/6686f45896f15dbc852567ae00530132/35b4d1be2545bb58c1256a7900331f28?OpenDocument> , accessed 28 September 2001

Government of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (GovFYRoM), 13 August 2001, Ohrid Framework Agreement 13.08.2001

Internet : <http://www.president.gov.mk/eng/info/dogovor.htm> , accessed 17 February 2004

Government of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (GovFYRoM), 17 February 2003, Program Activities for 2003 Adopted, Skopje

Internet :

<http://www.sinf.gov.mk/StaraArhiva/Aktivnosti/sessions/2003/0106/ses0217.htm> , accessed 17 February 2004

Government of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (GovFYRoM), 22 January 2003, Fyr of Macedonia: Finances for reconstruction of all houses in Matejce provided

Internet :

<http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/6686f45896f15dbc852567ae00530132/8212a3224ea23adfc1256cbd003cc58a?OpenDocument> , accessed 17 February 2004

Government of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (GovFYRoM), 30 May 2001, Macedonia - Security: Appeal for evacuation of population from Lipkovo

Internet :

<http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/6686f45896f15dbc852567ae00530132/b6f7df7068f58589c1256a5c0044f567?OpenDocument> , accessed 28 September 2001

Government of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (GovFYRoM), 4 September 2003, Weapons Amnesty and Legalization in Macedonia, Press Release, National Coordination body for implementation of the law on voluntary surrender and collection of weapons, ammunition and explosive materials and for the legalization of weapons

Internet : <http://www.smallarms.org.mk/eng/law1.htm> , accessed 25 February 2004

Government of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (GovFYRoM), September 2003, Incidents aimed against the Framework Agreement, Statement by the Macedonian Government

Internet :

http://www.inf.gov.mk/english/arhiva/prikaz.asp?kategorija_id=4&sodrzina_id=406 , accessed 19 February 2004

Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in the Republic of Macedonia (HCHR FYROM), 15 January 2004, Annual report for year 2003, Republic of Macedonia
Internet : http://www.mhc.org.mk/eng/a_izveshtai/a_2003gi.htm , accessed 20 February 2004

Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in the Republic of Macedonia (HCHR FYROM), 7 March 2003, Press Release on the Coercive Attitude towards the Displaced Persons, press release
Internet : http://www.mhc.org.mk/eng/a_soopshtenija/a_20030307.htm , accessed 17 February 2004

Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in the Republic of Macedonia (HCHR FYROM), June 2003, Monthly Report for June 2003
Internet : http://www.mhc.org.mk/eng/a_izveshtai/a_2003-06mi.htm , accessed 20 February 2004

Human Rights Watch (HRW), 14 January 2003, World Report 2003: Europe & Central Asia: Macedonia
Internet : <http://www.hrw.org/wr2k3/europe10.html> , accessed 17 February 2004

Human Rights Watch (HRW), 31 May 2001, "Macedonian police abuses documented ethnic Albanian men separated, tortured at police stations"
Internet : <http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/6686f45896f15dbc852567ae00530132/099258be4e2e75ce85256a6100577d6c?OpenDocument> , accessed 28 September 2001

IFRC Information Centre for Refugees, 17 January 2002, E-mail from the IFRC Information Centre for Refugees to NRC Geneva

IFRC Macedonia, 15 August 2002, Email sent to NRC Geneva

IFRC Macedonia, 7 December 2001, E-mail IFRC Macedonia to NRC Geneva

Institute for War & Peace Reporting (IWPR), 11 December 2003, Macedonia: Inquiry into missing deadlocked
Internet : <http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/6686f45896f15dbc852567ae00530132/e09c452f0f838f4ac1256dfa00458612?OpenDocument> , accessed 23 February 2004

Institute for War & Peace Reporting (IWPR), 16 October 2001, "Macedonian aid row"
Internet : <http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/6686f45896f15dbc852567ae00530132/fdc988d9416f63c7c1256ae8004669f9?OpenDocument> , accessed 6 November 2001

Institute for War & Peace Reporting (IWPR), 19 August 2003, Macedonia: Ohrid two years on

Internet : http://www.iwpr.net/index.pl?archive/bcr3/bcr3_200308_454_2_eng.txt , accessed 17 February 2004

Institute for War & Peace Reporting (IWPR), 28 February 2003, 'Extremists' target Macedonian homes, press release

Internet : http://www.iwpr.net/index.pl?archive/bcr3/bcr3_200302_410_4_eng.txt , accessed 17 February 2004

Institute for War & Peace Reporting (IWPR), 3 May 2001, "Albanian fighters on the warpath"

Internet : <http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/6686f45896f15dbc852567ae00530132/2704f01ecd0e6adc1256a41004e7e2b?OpenDocument> , accessed 27 September 2001

Institute for War & Peace Reporting (IWPR), 30 January 2002, "Macedonia: New law clears way for aid"

Internet : <http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/6686f45896f15dbc852567ae00530132/117772d7c109b42cc1256b520046e852?OpenDocument> , accessed 10 July 2002

Institute for War & Peace Reporting (IWPR), 9 January 2003, Macedonia: Ohrid Accord Breakthrough

Internet : <http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/6686f45896f15dbc852567ae00530132/5bc4828f212f49a0c1256caa00587f30?OpenDocument> , accessed 18 February 2004

International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), 10 May 2001, Crisis in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. Update 10.05.01

Internet : <http://www.icrc.org/Web/eng/siteeng0.nsf/iwpList346/81654164516443F9C1256B66005FACEF> , accessed 17 January 2003

International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), 11 April 2001, Crisis in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia: Update No. 5

Internet : <http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/6686f45896f15dbc852567ae00530132/a0e0b2b0132b1724c1256a2c004155bd?OpenDocument> , accessed 27 September 2001

International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), 11 February 2004, NRC Interview with ICRC, Geneva, Switzerland, 11 February 2004

International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), 14 March 2002, "Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia: ICRC delivers aid to remote villages"

Internet :
<http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/6686f45896f15dbc852567ae00530132/fb29628c944585bfc1256b7c004a5da5?OpenDocument> , accessed 10 July 2002

International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), 15 June 2001, Crisis in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia Update No. 10

Internet :
<http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/6686f45896f15dbc852567ae00530132/e52263886f651367c1256a6c004bc459?OpenDocument> , accessed 28 September 2001

International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), 18 May 2001, Crisis in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia: Update No. 6

Internet :
<http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/6686f45896f15dbc852567ae00530132/cc8acc2e003ca753c1256a50006247a7?OpenDocument> , accessed 27 September 2001

International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), 18 May 2001, Crisis in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia: Update No. 7

Internet :
<http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/6686f45896f15dbc852567ae00530132/39881866d9e5f9f5c1256a500062ef46?OpenDocument> , accessed 27 September 2001

International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), 19 June 2003, Annual Report 2002

Internet :
[http://www.icrc.org/Web/Eng/siteeng0.nsf/htmlall/0620F763629A841FC1256D43002FC0E/\\$File/icrc_ar_02_macedonia.pdf?OpenElement](http://www.icrc.org/Web/Eng/siteeng0.nsf/htmlall/0620F763629A841FC1256D43002FC0E/$File/icrc_ar_02_macedonia.pdf?OpenElement) , accessed 16 February 2004

International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), 19 September 2001, Update 19.09.01 - Crisis in FYROM

Internet :
<http://www.icrc.org/Web/eng/siteeng0.nsf/iwpList346/757F1A845717051BC1256B66006054D8> , accessed 17 January 2003

International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), 2004, Livelihood support for the displaced, Income-generating projects (IGP) for 2004: The International Committee of the Red Cross helps vulnerable displaced civilians in Macedonia become more self-reliant, Fact sheet

International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), 23 May 2001, Crisis in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia: Update No. 8

Internet :
<http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/6686f45896f15dbc852567ae00530132/7a63b8953b80f514c1256a550060a247?OpenDocument> , accessed 28 September 2001

International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), 24 March 2001, Crisis in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. Update 24.03.01 Red Cross/Red Crescent response

Internet :
<http://www.icrc.org/Web/eng/siteeng0.nsf/iwpList346/AE2E45C47F1F0CDFC1256B66005F7966> , accessed 17 January 2003

International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), 25 July 2001, "FYR of Macedonia: ICRC aid for civilians fleeing renewed clashes"

Internet :
<http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/6686f45896f15dbc852567ae00530132/d5d5c2eb815eff54c1256a9500509a20?OpenDocument> , accessed 3 October 2001

International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), 27 July 2001, "Crisis in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia"

Internet :
<http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/6686f45896f15dbc852567ae00530132/c0d3777b33153c51c1256a99004a884c?OpenDocument> , accessed 3 October 2001

International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), 28 August 2001, "Crisis in the FYR of Macedonia: Humanitarian issues and ICRC response"

Internet :
<http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/6686f45896f15dbc852567ae00530132/601b8dc2bc268514c1256ab60051e907?OpenDocument> , accessed 3 October 2001

International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), 30 March 2001, "Crisis in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia: Update No. 3"

Internet :
<http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/6686f45896f15dbc852567ae00530132/f7324ec1bd1aef21c1256a260030f3a8?OpenDocument> , accessed 27 September 2001

International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), 31 October 2003, The ICRC in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Operational Highlights

Internet : <http://www.icrc.org/Web/eng/siteeng0.nsf/htmlall/macedonia?OpenDocument> , accessed 18 February 2004

International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), 7 December 2001, Mine/UXO awareness programme in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), 9 August 2001, "Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia: ICRC brings food to civilians in Lipkovo"

Internet :
<http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/6686f45896f15dbc852567ae00530132/c738cda6520db77185256aa30066d45a?OpenDocument> , accessed 3 October 2001

International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), 9 March 2001, "Macedonia: ICRC action for people fleeing clashes in north"

Internet :
<http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/6686f45896f15dbc852567ae00530132/f0fda33035ad603185256a0a005c2476?OpenDocument> , accessed 14 September 2001

International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), February 2002, The ICRC in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia: covering the period from February 2001-2002

Internet :
<http://www.icrc.org/Web/Eng/siteeng0.nsf/html/57JRKX?OpenDocument&style=custofinal> , accessed 11 July 2002

International Crisis Group (ICG), 15 November 2002, Moving Macedonia Toward Self-Sufficiency: A New Security Approach for NATO and the EU

Internet :
http://www.crisisweb.org/library/documents/report_archive/A400823_15112002.pdf , accessed 17 February 2004

International Crisis Group (ICG), 23 October 2003, Macedonia: No room for complacency

Internet :
http://www.crisisweb.org/library/documents/europe/49_macedonia_no_room_for_complacency.pdf , accessed 17 February 2004

International Crisis Group (ICG), 5 April 2001, "The Macedonian Question: Reform or Rebellion"

Internet :
<http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/6686f45896f15dbc852567ae00530132/abdabdbf810223e385256a250078fd87?OpenDocument> , accessed 27 September 2001

International Federation of the Red Cross (IFRC), 17 September 2003, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia Annual Appeal No. 01.74/2003, Programme Update No. 2 May – August 2003

Internet : http://www.ifrc.org/cgi/pdf_appeals.pl?annual03/01740302.pdf , accessed 17 February 2004

International Federation of the Red Cross (IFRC), 2002, IFRC Appeal 2002-2003

Internet : http://www.ifrc.org/cgi/pdf_appeals.pl?annual02/014502.pdf , accessed 8 January 2002

International Federation of the Red Cross (IFRC), 23 June 2003, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia Appeal No. 01.74/2003, Programme Update No.1 January – April 2003

Internet : http://www.ifrc.org/cgi/pdf_appeals.pl?annual03/01740301.pdf , accessed 17 February 2004

International Federation of the Red Cross (IFRC), 25 May 2001, "Macedonian Red Cross helps displaced"

Internet : <http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/6686f45896f15dbc852567ae00530132/bf5562a79bcad472c1256a5a003214ee?OpenDocument> , accessed 28 September 2001

International Federation of the Red Cross (IFRC), 4 July 2002, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Programme Update

Internet : <http://www.reliefweb.int/library/documents/2002/ifrc/ifrc-mac-04jul.pdf> , accessed 10 July 2002

International Federation of the Red Cross (IFRC), 5 February 2004, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia Annual Appeal No. 01.74/2003, Programme Update No. 3 September-December 2003

Internet : http://www.ifrc.org/cgi/pdf_appeals.pl?annual03/01740303.pdf , accessed 17 February 2004

International Federation of the Red Cross (IFRC), 6 August 2001, "Preparedness in Macedonia"

Internet : <http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/6686f45896f15dbc852567ae00530132/2ace07a3af7e9d09c1256aa10054f05f?OpenDocument> , accessed 3 October 2001

International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights (IHF), 24 June 2003, Human Rights in the OSCE Region: Europe, Central Asia and North America, Report 2003 (Events of 2002), FYR of Macedonia

Internet : http://www.ihf-hr.org/documents/doc_summary.php?sec_id=3&d_id=1322 , accessed 17 February 2004

International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights (IHF), 8 June 2001, Report: Fact-finding missions regarding the ongoing crisis and human rights violations in the Republic of Macedonia

Internet : <http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/6686f45896f15dbc852567ae00530132/123700d4ca95bac1256a6b005b3b6f?OpenDocument> , accessed 28 September 2001

International Management Group, 10 February 2004, Email to NRC from the International Management Group regarding IFRC/ICRC/MRC Statistics on Registered Internally Displaced People

International Management Group, 26 February 2004, Email to NRC from the International Management Group regarding Reconstruction Agreements in FYROM

International Management Group, December 2001, Bipartite Contract for Assistance in Materials and/or Repair of Dwellings

International Management Group, December 2001, Tripartite Contract for Assistance in Materials and/or Rehabilitation/Rebuilding of the space for living

International Organization for Migration (IOM), 2003, Macedonia Confidence Building Initiative

Internet : <http://www.iomskopje.org.mk/cbi/index.html> , accessed 17 February 2004

International Rescue Committee (IRC), June 2003, IRC Health Programs in Macedonia

Internet : <http://www.theirc.org/index.cfm/programs/show/wwwID/1755/locationID/23/topicID/0> , accessed 18 February 2004

Landmine Monitor Core Group, August 2002, Landmine Monitor Report 2002 Macedonia (Former Yugoslav Republic of)

Internet : <http://www.icbl.org/lm/2002/macedonia.html> , accessed 17 February 2004

Landmine Monitor Core Group, August 2003, Landmine Monitor Report 2003 Macedonia (Former Yugoslav Republic of)

Internet : <http://www.icbl.org/lm/2003/macedonia.html> , accessed 17 February 2004

Macedonian Agency of Information, 4 June 2003, The Demolition of Houses in Jelosnik and Opae Condemned

Internet : <http://www.inf.gov.mk/StaraArhiva/Frames/vestiEn.htm> , accessed 25 February 2004

Macedonian Center for International Cooperation (MCIC), 12 August 2002, MCIC Macedonia, email sent to NRC Geneva

Macedonian Red Cross (MRC), 14 May 2002, IDP Statistics

Internet : http://www.aidmacedonia.org.mk/humaninf/0107_10.htm , accessed 11 July 2002

North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), 14 May 2003, NATO's Role in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

Internet : <http://www.nato.int/fyrom/home.htm> , accessed 23 February 2004

North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), 19 May 2003, Minister Popovski Met Displaced Persons from Lipkovo, Press Review

Internet : <http://www.afsouth.nato.int/organization/NHOSKOPJE/PRESS%20REVIEW/2003/May/PressReview-19May03.htm> , accessed 19 February 2004

North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), 4 April 2003, Government Wants DPs from Aracinovo to Sign Agreements Before Returning Home, Press Review

Internet :
<http://www.afsouth.nato.int/organization/NHQSKOPJE/PRESS%20REVIEW/2003/April/PressReview-04Apr03.htm> , accessed 19 February 2004

North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), 7 April 2003, DPs and Government remain on their positions, Press Review

Internet :
<http://www.afsouth.nato.int/organization/NHQSKOPJE/PRESS%20REVIEW/2003/April/PressReview-07Apr03.htm> , accessed 19 February 2004

North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), 8 April 2003, 6.3 Million Euros to be used for Afghanistan and Iraq, not for Matejce Reconstruction, Press Review

Internet :
<http://www.afsouth.nato.int/organization/NHQSKOPJE/PRESS%20REVIEW/2003/April/PressReview-08Apr03.htm> , accessed 19 February 2004

Ombudsman of the Republic of Macedonia, 13 October 2003, Report about the conditions of the dislocated persons and measures for improvement of their conditions

Internet : <http://www.zoramk.org/E/nastani/From%20the%20Ombudsman.htm> , accessed 19 February 2004

One World South East Europe, 30 December 2002, Some return, some do not: refugees and IDPs in Macedonia, by Dejan Georgievski

Internet : <http://see.oneworld.net/article/view/33861/1/> , accessed 17 February 2004

Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Spillover Monitor Mission to Skopje, 2004, 2004 Overview

Internet : <http://www.osce.org/skopje/overview/> , accessed 17 February 2004

Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Spillover Monitor Mission to Skopje, 2004, Confidence Building Unit

Internet : <http://www.osce.org/skopje/cbu/> , accessed 17 February 2004

Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), 16 September 2002, Macedonian Parliamentary elections largely in line with international standards

Internet : http://www.osce.org/news/show_news.php?id=2732 , accessed 19 February 2004

Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), 20 November 2002, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia Parliamentary Elections 15 September 2002, OSCE/ODIHR Election Observation Mission

Internet :
<http://www.osce.org/odihr/index.php?page=elections&div=reports&country=mk> ,
accessed 17 February 2004

Pax Christi (PC), 11 July 2001, "Disarmament in Macedonia: a delicate job for NATO"
Internet :
<http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/6686f45896f15dbc852567ae00530132/cdb879568115d4c085256a8b00506f65?OpenDocument> , accessed 3 October 2001

Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL), 13 August 2001, "Macedonia: Political Accord clears way for NATO disarmament deal"
Internet :
<http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/6686f45896f15dbc852567ae00530132/8891a237d494287bc1256aa7005c99a8?OpenDocument> , accessed 3 October 2001

Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL), 14 May 2001, "Macedonia: New unity government unlikely to bring peace"
Internet :
<http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/6686f45896f15dbc852567ae00530132/d3ba6f1101f9da21c1256a4d005d0d30?OpenDocument> , accessed 27 September 2001

Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL), 23 May 2001, "Red Cross says 10,000 people remain in villages"
Internet :
<http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/6686f45896f15dbc852567ae00530132/23e179f3b23a3f5785256a5700594f7b?OpenDocument> , accessed 28 September 2001

Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL), 26 July 2002, "Still some 5,800 internally displaced persons in Macedonia"
Internet :
<http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/6686f45896f15dbc852567ae00530132/b6e0f1856507903685256c02006c565e?OpenDocument> , accessed 30 July 2002

Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL), 28 June 2002, "Is the language issue resolved in Macedonia?"
Internet : <http://www.rferl.org/balkan-report/2002/06/24-280602.html> , accessed 23 July 2002

Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL), 3 June 2003, Still more than 5,500 displaced persons in Macedonia, Volume 7 Number 103
Internet : <http://www.rferl.org/newsline/2003/06/4-SEE/see-030603.asp> , accessed 17 February 2004

Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL), 31 May 2001, "Macedonian Government offers Albanians key concessions on status"
Internet :
<http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/6686f45896f15dbc852567ae00530132/cad98dfa00e8d723c1256a5d0054d22b?OpenDocument> , accessed 28 September 2001

Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL), 6 September 2001, "Red Cross tallies displaced persons in Macedonia"

Internet

:
<http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/6686f45896f15dbc852567ae00530132/cea41907f7ec87a285256abf0057009a?OpenDocument> , accessed 3 October 2001

Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL), 7 March 2003, Macedonian deadline expires for displaced persons to return home, Volume 7 Number 44

Internet : <http://www.rferl.org/newsline/2003/03/4-SEE/see-070303.asp> , accessed 17 February 2004

Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL), 9 August 2002, "Macedonia: Authorities Allege Existence Of New Albanian Rebel Group"

Internet : <http://www.rferl.org/nca/features/2002/08/09082002163323.asp> , accessed 12 August 2002

Reality Macedonia, 28 May 2003, 48 Renewed Macedonian Houses Looted and Demolished in Opae Village, AP World News via Reality Macedonia

Internet : http://www.realitymacedonia.org.mk/web/news_page.asp?nid=2595 , accessed 17 February 2004

Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board, Ottawa Canada, July 2003, Macedonia: Implementation of the Framework (Ohrid) Agreement – July 2003, 18 July 2003

Reuters, 18 May 2001, "Macedonian conflict zone still full of civilians"

Internet

:
<http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/6686f45896f15dbc852567ae00530132/ea9d7bb47dc28c0ec1256a50004ce22e?OpenDocument> , accessed 27 September 2001

Reuters, 5 December 2001, "Macedonia pardons 11 guerrillas to launch amnesty"

Internet

:
<http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/6686f45896f15dbc852567ae00530132/1c35873553afb942c1256b19005599df?OpenDocument> , accessed 7 January 2002

Southeast European Times, 14 March 2003, Macedonia's Manasievski Says Displaced Persons can return to Tetovo Villages

Internet : <http://www.setimes.com/html2/english/030314-WMI-007.htm> , accessed 17 February 2004

The Center for Refugees and Forced Migration Studies, Skopje in collaboration with Brookings Institution, 31 May 2001, "Exodus within Borders: The Global Crisis of

Internal Displacement” organised by the Center for Refugees and Forced Migration Studies, Skopje in collaboration with Brookings Institution, 31st May to 3rd June 2001, Skopje, Macedonia

Internet : <http://www.brookings.edu/views/speeches/cohenr/20010531.htm> , accessed 18 February 2004

UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA), 2 May 2002, Outstanding humanitarian priorities: FYR of Macedonia

Internet :
<http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/6686f45896f15dbc852567ae00530132/429f39134a1907f9c1256bae002b8373?OpenDocument> , accessed 10 July 2002

UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA), 20 January 2002, Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal 2002 (updated 20 January 2002)

UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA), 22 July 2002, "Donor pledges push forward progress on addressing humanitarian priorities in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia"

Internet :
<http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/6686f45896f15dbc852567ae00530132/c1e32a29769bafc1c1256bff00497b9e?OpenDocument> , accessed 30 July 2002

UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA), 3 December 2001, Humanitarian Update OCHA Skopje Sept - Nov 2001

Internet :
<http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/6686f45896f15dbc852567ae00530132/93bca7e97095281cc1256b1a00358aa9?OpenDocument> , accessed 7 January 2002

UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA), 31 December 2002, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia Humanitarian Strategy - 2003

Internet :
<http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/vID/0381869994D28030C1256CC5004F0566?OpenDocument> , accessed 17 February 2004

UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA), 31 December 2002, Humanitarian Priorities for 2003 in FYROM, Annex

Internet : <http://www.reliefweb.int/library/documents/2003/ocha-fyrom-31dec.pdf> , accessed 17 February 2004

UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA), 8 March 2002, Humanitarian situation and issues in South Eastern Europe Jan - Feb 2002

Internet :
<http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/6686f45896f15dbc852567ae00530132/971b7c642ca5145fc1256b76004dad62?OpenDocument> , accessed 10 July 2002

UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA), 9 March 2002, Inter-agency transition framework from relief assistance to recovery and sustainable development for the FYR of Macedonia

Internet :
<http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/6686f45896f15dbc852567ae00530132/222700b149719d08c1256b7c004d54f9?OpenDocument> , accessed 10 July 2002

UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA), February 2004, The Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement (Macedonian)

UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA), March 2002, United Nations Humanitarian Update Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

Internet :
http://www.seerecon.org/macedonia/documents/macedonia_humanitarian_update.pdf ,
accessed 17 February 2004

UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA), November 2001, Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal for Southeastern Europe 2002

Internet : <http://www.reliefweb.int/appeals/2002/files/bal02.pdf> , accessed 8 January 2002

United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), 11 February 2002, UNICEF humanitarian appeal for children and women Jan - Dec 2002

Internet :
<http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/6686f45896f15dbc852567ae00530132/eea7845e4b276b6e85256b60006d5a36?OpenDocument> , accessed 10 July 2002

United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), 29 May 2002, UNICEF Humanitarian Action, Southeastern Europe, Donor Update

Internet :
http://www.unicef.org/emerg/Emergencies_Southern_Eastern_Europe_Donor_Update_290502.pdf , accessed 20 August 2003

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in FYR Macedonia, April 2003, Early Warning Report, FYR Macedonia, No.1, 2003

Internet : <http://www.undp.org.mk/crisis/ewr1.pdf> , accessed 20 February 2004

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), 11 September 2001, UNHCR Briefing Notes: DR Congo, Australia/"Tampa", Pakistan/Afghans, Greece/boat arrival, FYR of Macedonia

Internet :
<http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/6686f45896f15dbc852567ae00530132/e1fd7501f50014b2c1256ac400447ec0?OpenDocument> , accessed 3 January 2002

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), 12 April 2002, "UNHCR emergency shelter repair programme continues with full speed"

Internet : <http://www.unhcr.org/news>
, accessed 11 July 2002

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), 12 October 2001,
UNHCR briefing notes: FYR of Macedonia

Internet :
<http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/6686f45896f15dbc852567ae00530132/51464a3d28948118c1256ae300443417?OpenDocument> , accessed 6 November 2001

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), 14 August 2001,
UNHCR Briefing Notes: FYR of Macedonia, Angola/DR Congo, Afghanistan/Pakistan

Internet :
<http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/6686f45896f15dbc852567ae00530132/a6a19c8ed928de1cc1256aa8003b7b19?OpenDocument> , accessed 3 October 2001

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), 14 September 2001,
UNHCR Briefing Notes: USA, Timor, FYR of Macedonia

Internet :
<http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/6686f45896f15dbc852567ae00530132/94f164560a5d907ec1256ac70042524a?OpenDocument> , accessed 3 October 2001

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), 15 November 2001,
"UNHCR warns of further population displacement in the FYR of Macedonia"

Internet :
<http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/6686f45896f15dbc852567ae00530132/6b0404fc075d8d4885256b05005c916b?OpenDocument> , accessed 19 November 2001

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), 16 February 2004, NRC
Interview with UNHCR, Geneva 16 February 2004

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), 16 November 2001,
UNHCR briefing notes: Afghanistan, FYR of Macedonia, Kenya, Global consultations

Internet :
<http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/6686f45896f15dbc852567ae00530132/1bed84257c8c650ec1256b06004833ce?OpenDocument> , accessed 19 November 2001

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), 17 August 2001,
UNHCR Briefing Notes: FYR of Macedonia, Russian Fed./Ingushetia, Angola/DR Congo, Iran floods, Pakistan/Afghanistan

Internet :
<http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/6686f45896f15dbc852567ae00530132/48240e29f88975a3c1256aab003f0b33?OpenDocument> , accessed 3 October 2001

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), 18 July 2003, Decree for
Proclaiming the Law on Amnesty of Citizens of the Republic of Macedonia who did not
complete their military obligation, 18th July 2003 (unofficial translation)

Internet : <http://www.unhcr.org/>
n
, accessed 23 February 2004

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), 18 September 2001,
UNHCR Briefing Notes: Afghanistan, Timor, FYR of Macedonia
Internet :
<http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/6686f45896f15dbc852567ae00530132/f52ed49d55005439c1256acb0043fca7?OpenDocument> , accessed 3 October 2001

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), 19 October 2001,
UNHCR briefing notes: Afghanistan, Angola/Zambia, Eritrea/Sudan, FYR of Macedonia
Internet :
<http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/6686f45896f15dbc852567ae00530132/a31d979bb729d280c1256aea00411e64?OpenDocument> , accessed 6 November 2001

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), 22 August 2003,
UNHCR informaton on IDPs in Macedonia provided to NRC via email

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), 24 July 2001, "Ethnic
separation in FYR of Macedonia deeply disturbing"
Internet :
<http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/6686f45896f15dbc852567ae00530132/57cb0d42e6014b4c85256a9300584ef2?OpenDocument> , accessed 3 October 2001

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), 25 September 2001,
UNHCR Briefing Notes: Afghanistan, fYR of Macedonia, UNHCR Staff Memorial
Internet :
<http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/6686f45896f15dbc852567ae00530132/82951c1ba00f6386c1256ad2004c3dcd?OpenDocument> , accessed 3 October 2001

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), 26 October 2001,
UNHCR briefing notes: Afghanistan, FYR of Macedonia, Namibia/Zambia/Angolans, DR
Congo/CAR
Internet :
<http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/6686f45896f15dbc852567ae00530132/d9cfb8aae77d5272c1256af100486436?OpenDocument> , accessed 6 November 2001

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), 28 August 2001,
UNHCR Briefing Notes: FYR of Macedonia, Angolan refugees/DRC, Pakistan,
Colombia, Ingushetia
Internet :
<http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/6686f45896f15dbc852567ae00530132/1760ef1c2fb91b13c1256ab600458b83?OpenDocument> , accessed 3 October 2001

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), 3 August 2001, UNHCR Briefing Notes: FYR of Macedonia, Southern Africa refugee statistics, CAR/Congo
Internet : <http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/6686f45896f15dbc852567ae00530132/c6d2c32004e094f085256a9d005db2b5?OpenDocument> , accessed 3 October 2001

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), 7 August 2001, "UNHCR's Lubbers urges NATO, E.U. to help reverse FYROM displacement, improve security"
Internet : <http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/6686f45896f15dbc852567ae00530132/6f2d8b17b97caa82c1256aa1004fc19a?OpenDocument> , accessed 3 October 2001

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), 8 March 2002, Decree for Proclaiming the Law on Amnesty, Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia No.18 (UNHCR unofficial translation)
Internet : <http://www.unhcr.org>

, accessed 23 February 2004

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), December 2002, UNHCR Country Operations Plan 2003
Internet : <http://www.unhcr.org/cops>
, accessed 17 February 2004

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), December 2003, Global Appeal 2004
Internet : <http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/home?page=PUBL&id=3b7b87e14&ID=3b7b87e14&PUBLISHER=TWO> ,
accessed 17 February 2004

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), December 2003, UNHCR Country Operations Plan 2004
Internet : <http://www.unhcr.org/cops>
, accessed 17 February 2004

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), November 2002, F.Y.R. of Macedonia: shelter assistance programme successfully completed, news
Internet : <http://www.unhcr.org/>

accessed 20 February 2004

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Office of the Chief of Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2004, Estimate of Refugees and Displaced Persons still in need of a durable solution in South-Eastern Europe

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Office of the Chief of Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina, December 2003, Estimate of refugees and displaced persons still in need of a durable solution in South-Eastern Europe (map)

United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), 18 October 2001, UNMIK-OSCE-EU-UNHCR Press Briefing, 18 Oct 2001

Internet :
<http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/6686f45896f15dbc852567ae00530132/8c7de8e86c18a97985256aea007194e1?OpenDocument> , accessed 6 November 2001

United States Institute of Peace (USIP), 30 November 2002, Special Report: Putting Peace into Practice - Can Macedonia's New Government Meet the Challenge (Pearson, Brenda)

Internet :
<http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/6686f45896f15dbc852567ae00530132/c6664fd8d3c180aa85256cc6005dedc0?OpenDocument> , accessed 23 February 2004

US AID Bureau for Democracy, Conflict and Humanitarian Assistance, Office of Transition Initiatives, 16 January 2003, Community Confidence Building Mitigates Conflict in Macedonia

Internet : http://www.usaid.gov/hum_response/oti/country/macedon/macarticle1.pdf , accessed 17 February 2004

US AID Bureau for Democracy, Conflict and Humanitarian Assistance, Office of Transition Initiatives, 16 May 2003, USAID/OTI Programme Description,

Internet : http://www.usaid.gov/hum_response/oti/country/macedon/progdesc.html , accessed 17 February 2004

US AID Bureau for Democracy, Conflict and Humanitarian Assistance, Office of Transition Initiatives, March 2003, USAID Field Report

Internet : http://www.usaid.gov/hum_response/oti/country/macedon/rpt0303.html , accessed 17 February 2004

U.S. Committee for Refugees (USCR), September 2001, Mid-Year Country Report: Macedonia

Internet :
http://www.refugees.org/world/countryrpt/europe/mid_countryrpt01/macedonia.htm ,
accessed 11 January 2002

World Food Programme (WFP), 10 August 2001, WFP Emergency Report No. 32 of 2001

Internet :
<http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/6686f45896f15dbc852567ae00530132/0fa946f2e3c51ad085256aa4005b2dcf?OpenDocument> , accessed 3 October 2001

World Food Programme (WFP), 14 December 2001, WFP Emergency Report No. 50 of 2001

Internet :
<http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/6686f45896f15dbc852567ae00530132/2d1a265e349aed9785256b2200698a09?OpenDocument> , accessed 7 January 2002

World Food Programme (WFP), 21 September 2001, WFP Emergency Report No. 38 of 2001

Internet :
<http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/6686f45896f15dbc852567ae00530132/c358b429c4e8b588c1256ad40044e8a5?OpenDocument> , accessed 3 October 2001

World Food Programme (WFP), 24 August 2001, WFP Emergency Report No. 34 of 2001

Internet :
<http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/6686f45896f15dbc852567ae00530132/5377c8ac6e25478c85256ab2005a2d1b?OpenDocument> , accessed 3 January 2002

World Food Programme (WFP), 27 July 2001, WFP Emergency Report No. 30 of 2001

Internet :
<http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/6686f45896f15dbc852567ae00530132/f61f515c0edfcee485256a96005878bd?OpenDocument> , accessed 3 October 2001

World Food Programme (WFP), 28 December 2001, WFP Emergency Report No. 52 of 2001

Internet :
<http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/6686f45896f15dbc852567ae00530132/fa45423f29a0cc4ac1256b3500325597?OpenDocument> , accessed 7 January 2002

World Food Programme (WFP), 5 October 2001, WFP Emergency Report No. 40 of 2001

Internet :
<http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/6686f45896f15dbc852567ae00530132/92d1631f76f55abe85256adc00683acd?OpenDocument> , accessed 6 November 2001

ZORA, organisation for the displaced, December 2003, ZORA, organisation for the displaced web site

Internet : <http://www.zoramk.org/E/index1.htm> , accessed 17 February 2004

