

SOUTH-EASTERN EUROPE

Albania
The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

Bosnia and Herzegovina
The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia

Croatia

Recent Developments

After a year overshadowed by the Kosovo refugee emergency – and continued limited progress towards full implementation of the humanitarian provisions of the 1995 Dayton and Erdut Agreements – the first months of 2000 witnessed a number of positive developments. The new administration in Croatia took steps to revitalise the stagnant minority return process, including an amendment to the Law on Reconstruction. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, hopes for speedy and full implementation of recent amendments to property laws, combined with improved security conditions, have accelerated inter- and intra-Entity minority returns of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees. By mid June, the number of minority returns was three times higher than at the same time last year. Spontaneous return movements are also occurring throughout the country, even to some municipalities in eastern Republika Srpska which had witnessed no or only token minority returns in five years.

In the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, where the Office continued a major protection and humanitarian assistance programme in Serbia and Montenegro, the country's continued political and economic isolation had a negative impact on close to half a million refugees from Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia and 210,000 IDPs from Kosovo. Constitutional reforms in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia heightened tension between Montenegro and Serbia. In Kosovo, substantial progress has been made to meet emergency shelter and humanitarian needs, but the security of non-Albanian minority groups and their continued ability to remain in the province is a major challenge. Many of the humanitarian community's relief activities have been handed over to the United Nations Interim Administration in Kosovo (UNMIK), and appropriate international organisations. In The former Yugoslav

Republic of Macedonia (FYR Macedonia) the Government tabled a new draft asylum law in Parliament on 27 June. In both Albania and FYR Macedonia, the number of refugees and persons of concern to the Office has diminished dramatically through voluntary repatriation and, in some cases, resettlement. Substantial progress has also been made in alleviating the environmental and social impact of hosting hundreds of thousands of refugees during 1999.

Strategic Objectives: Progress and Constraints

UNHCR continued its partnership with governments, other agencies and organisations, as well as NGOs, to facilitate returns and protect minority groups, while at the same time promoting durable solutions for those unwilling to return. UNHCR provided assistance to the most vulnerable refugees, IDPs and, in some cases, needy members of the local population, but continued to diminish its humanitarian assistance role. Notably in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Kosovo, the Office encouraged the relevant international organisations with long-term rehabilitation and development mandates to provide more sustainable support to build homes, infrastructure and local economies. While its impact has yet to be felt, UNHCR continued to support the Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe initiative as a means to encourage and sustain durable solutions in the region, especially sustainable minority return movements. UNHCR also encouraged and supported all countries in the region to pass or amend legislation with a direct bearing on the protection and welfare of asylum-seekers, refugees, returnees and IDPs, and encouraged them to provide services to the most deprived and vulnerable. Finally, through the Bosnian Women's Initiative and Kosovo Women's Initiative, UNHCR continued to support women to become agents of economic

and social change and to empower them to play new roles in their societies.

While recent developments have raised hopes for progress towards durable solutions, UNHCR is concerned that unmet large-scale needs for shelter, infrastructure and job opportunities will continue to place very real constraints on durable solutions, be they voluntary repatriation from abroad, return from areas of displacement or local integration. Just at a time when larger-scale minority returns appear in reach, diminishing humanitarian budgets have obliged a focus on the most vulnerable, whereas support to make return movements sustainable remains limited. Security concerns are on the decline in many parts of the region, but more substantial improvements in infrastructure, local services and the economy are needed to encourage larger numbers to return home. At the same time, the potential for fresh population displacement still exists.

Activities until 30 June

UNHCR's operations in **Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia** (including activities in Kosovo) and

FYR Macedonia are described in separate country chapters.

Outlook for July – December

UNHCR's overall objectives in the region remain unchanged. In the wake of the Kosovo emergency, UNHCR will continue to focus on longer-term protection activities in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and FYR Macedonia, by assisting the authorities to set in place asylum systems to protect asylum-seekers and refugees and build national and local capacity to meet their needs. In Kosovo, following successful completion of the winterisation programme, UNHCR's Special Envoy based in Pristina will focus the Office's efforts on protecting minorities remaining in the province and gradually facilitating the return of IDPs currently in other parts of Yugoslavia, when conditions permit. UNHCR will also cooperate closely with UNMIK in setting in place a viable social welfare system. In pursuing a region-wide approach to durable solutions for refugees and displaced persons, registration exercises which have been or will be conducted in virtually all countries of the sub-region will



tion from humanitarian amendments to legislation throughout the region. Staffing levels and profiles are being adjusted to facilitate the transition from humanitarian assistance activities to international protection and durable solutions. To this end, UNHCR will also continue to co-operate closely within the framework of the Stability Pact for South-Eastern

Europe, to contribute to making minority return movements sustainable. Should there be a significant shortfall in funding for the remainder of the year, or should support not be made available to sustain returnees and their communities to which they return, there is a risk that recent gains the current positive momentum will be lost.

FINANCIAL DATA (USD)

Countries	Initial Budget		Revised Budget		Total Funds Available*		Total Funds Obligated	
	AB and TF	SP	AB and TF	SP	AB and TF	SP	AB and TF	SP
Albania	12'046'446	0	7'951'485	0	4'049'315	0	3'921'500	0
Bosnia and Herzegovina	43'852'300	0	37'698'767	0	18'352'443	0	#####	0
Croatia	16'880'347	0	14'159'878	0	6'788'714	0	6'695'300	0
Macedonia (The Former Yugoslav Rep. of)	15'100'891	0	12'951'260	0	6'753'430	0	6'042'100	0
Yugoslavia (Federal Republic of) **	#####	0	#####	0	48'931'353	0	#####	0
Other Countries ***	692'684	0	523'791	0	2'508'699	0	214'400	0
Sub-total	210'444'076	0	#####	0	87'383'954	0	80'898'500	0
Coordinator's Office at Headquarters	2'589'300	0	2'234'998	0	1'429'300	0	1'229'300	0
TOTAL	213'033'376	0	189'003'992	0	88'813'254	0	82'127'800	0

*Includes income from unrestricted contributions, income from contributions restricted to the region and countries within the region, opening balance and adjustments.

**Includes costs related to the Office of the Special Envoy.

***Includes costs related to the South-Eastern Europe Operation in Austria, Germany and Italy as well as voluntary repatriation activities in the region.

