CHAPTER TEN

THE HUMAN RIGHTS COMPONENTS OF UN PEACEKEEPING AND PEACEBUILDING OPERATIONS, AND THE FIELD OFFICES OF UNDP AND THE OFFICE OF HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

OHCHR Staff

Editor’s introduction

In order to give an idea of the experiments underway for the protection of human rights in the field we include below the gist of the principal human rights components of UN Peacekeeping Operations and of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. The information is compiled from materials obtained from the website of the Office of High Commissioner, with slight editing in places.

I. Abkhazia (Georgia) (OHCHR/OSCE)

Terms of Reference/Legal Authority

The Human Rights Office in Abkhazia, Georgia (HROAG) was established on 10 December 1996 following Security Council Resolution 1077 (1996) of 22 October 1996. As mandated by that resolution, the Office is jointly staffed by OHCHR and the OSCE, in accordance with a Memorandum of Understanding signed between the two organizations on 29 April 1997. The Human Rights Office forms part of the DPKO United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG), under the authority of the Head of Mission of UNOMIG.

Functions/Mandate

HROAG’s mandate was approved by the UN Security Council and spelled out in the Programme for the Protection and Promotion of Human Rights in Abkhazia (Annex 1 to the Secretary-General’s report to the Security Council regarding the situation in Abkhazia, Georgia dated 15 April 1999, S/1996/284).
The mandate of the Human Rights Office is to monitor the human rights situation in Abkhazia and to protect the human rights of the population of Abkhazia, Georgia, in the spirit of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, to promote the respect for human rights and to contribute to a safe and dignified return of refugees and internally displaced persons, to establish direct contacts in Abkhazia so as to improve the human rights situation and to report on human rights developments.

Main Activities

HROAG carries out monitoring of human rights in order to help strengthen the rule of law in Abkhazia, Georgia, and to support the return of internally displaced persons under safe and dignified conditions. Monitoring done by the Office includes collection of first-hand information directly from witnesses and other reliable sources, analysis of the development of the legal system, and key institutions for the protection and promotion of human rights.

In addition, monitoring of the human rights situation is carried out through HROAG’s office in mid-town Sukhumi and by regular visits of HROAG staff throughout Abkhazia, Georgia and in particular to the Gali district adjacent to the cease-fire line. The Office addresses the relevant authorities in order to redress the violations, whenever appropriate.

Donations of HR publications are made to libraries through Abkhazia, Georgia, as is distribution of publications identified for HR depository libraries.

Regular meetings are held with the Georgian authorities in Tbilisi as well as with the Abkhaz de facto authorities related to the human rights situation.

The work of the Office included the implementation of the OHCHR Technical Co-operation Project, which was completed in February 2002. Activities planned under the project included the translation of the International Bill of Human Rights into the Abkhaz language; training courses on UN human rights teaching in higher education; establishment of two human rights depository libraries; training courses on teaching in the area of administration of justice; training courses on human rights and capacity development for NGOs mass media; scholarships for officials, educators, NGO and mass media representatives for further in-depth study of human right.

Recent Activities

Since one of the major objectives of HROAG is to contribute to a safe and dignified return of internally displaced persons and refugees through