

NORDEM:

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Report
by
NORDEM

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NORDEM, the Norwegian Resource Bank for Democracy and Human Rights, is a programme of the Norwegian Centre for Human Rights (NCHR), and has as its main objective to actively promote international human rights. NORDEM is jointly administered by NCHR and the Norwegian Refugee Council. NORDEM works mainly in relation to multilateral institutions. The operative mandate of the programme is realised primarily through the recruitment and deployment of qualified Norwegian personnel to international assignments which promote democratisation and respect for human rights. The programme is responsible for the training of personnel before deployment, reporting on completed assignments, and plays a role in research related to areas of active involvement. The vast majority of assignments are channelled through the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

NORDEM Report is a series of reports documenting NORDEM activities and is published jointly by NORDEM and the Norwegian Centre for Human Rights.

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1. Introduction

NORDEM, the Norwegian Resource Bank for Democracy and Human Rights, has as its main objective to accommodate the needs of international organizations for qualified personnel on short notice, for assignments connected to the development of democracy and respect for human rights. NORDEM is operated by the Norwegian Centre for Human Rights (NCHR), in close collaboration with the Norwegian Refugee Council. Most requests for personnel are submitted through the Royal Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), which also finances the majority of NORDEM's assignments. Other requests may additionally derive from the international organizations themselves whereupon NORDEM secures funding from the MFA.

The secretariat of NORDEM consists of three positions at the NCHR, namely, Hege Mørk, Programme Director, Lisa Kirkengen Project Coordinator and Turid Wulff Knutsen Project Coordinator. These three positions are funded under the terms of the five-year agreement between the NCHR and the MFA, which was renewed in 2005. Additionally, several members of the Norwegian Refugee Council staff are involved in the daily running of NORDEM, funded by the 10% administration fee charged by NORDEM for its secondment work.

The primary focus in 2006 was directed towards NORDEM's core spheres of activity: responding to requests for personnel, providing courses and training, and further developing contacts with its network of partners abroad. NORDEM carried out recruitment to the roster in the beginning of January 2006, and additionally, SMR/NORDEM together with NRC/NORSTAFF, started a recruitment process for admittance to the stand-by roster at the end of 2006 which was completed in January 2007.

NORDEM seconded 88 persons on assignments for OSSE, the UN and the EU in 2006. Compared to 2005 this represents a slight decrease in the number of secondments, and is largely contributed to a reduction of election observers pr. Election Observation Mission. 50% of all secondments were men. 58 of all assignments were related to elections (65%) – either as experts, researchers or observers. 60% of these were women. 29 were seconded on long-term assignments to organizations such as OSCE, EUMM and UNMIK. 70% of all long-term secondments were men.

All assignments are documented through written reports, most of which are published in the series "NORDEM Reports". Nineteen "NORDEM Reports" were published in 2006. Reports are written for all assignments and unpublished reports are available on request.

2. Secondments

Long-term assignments (minimum duration 6 months)

Throughout the year NORDEM seconded 31 persons on long-term assignments, most of them exceeding 6 months duration. Out of these 11 were seconded to the OSCE, nine to EUMM, one to OHR (Office of the High Representative), five to UNMIK (UN Mission in Kosovo) and one to AMM (Aceh Monitoring Mission). Additionally four persons were assigned on individual NORDEM projects. (See below under “Other Projects)

Below follows a more detailed list of the long-term seconded personnel and types of positions in 2005:

- Bosnia and Herzegovina:
 - OSCE: one legal advisor
 - OHR: one political advisor
 - EUMM: three political analysts and one head of contingent
- Serbia:
 - OSCE: head of mission and one senior political officer
 - EUMM: one political analyst
- Kosovo:
 - UNMIK Housing and Property Directorate, HPD: five legal officers
 - OSCE: one director of democratization
 - EUMM: one political analyst as of December 2006
- Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM):
 - EUMM: one political analyst
- Albania:
 - EUMM: one political analyst until December 2006
- Moldova:
 - OSCE: one human dimension officer
 - OSCE: one border monitor
- Kazakhstan:
 - OSCE: one head of mission
- Tajikistan:
 - OSCE: one field officer

- Montenegro:
 - OSCE: one snr. political officer

- Austria, Vienna:
 - OSCE secretariat: one gender officer

Election Observation

Throughout the year, NORDEM recruited observers to various election observation missions in the OSCE region, co-ordinated through the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR):

- Ukraine: One long-term and four short-term observers to the Parliamentary election in February.
- Belarus : One long-term and two short-term observers to the Presidential elections in February.
- Montenegro: Two short-term observers to the referendum in May and two to the Presidential election in September.
- FYROM : Four short-term observers to the Parliamentary election in July.
- Bosnia: Four short-term observers to the Presidential and Parliamentary elections in November.
- Tajikistan: One long-term observer and two short-term observers to the Presidential elections in November.

Seconded to the EU's election observation operations were:

- Palestine: Two long-term and four short-term observers to the Legislative Council elections in January
- Haiti: Two long-term and two short-term observers to the Presidential and Parliamentary elections in March.
- DR Congo:
 - First round: Two long-term observers and four short-term observers to the Presidential election in July
 - Second round: Two long-term observers and two short-term observers
- Zambia: Two long-term observers to the tripartite elections in September.
- Venezuela: Two short-term observers to the presidential elections in December.
- Aceh: Three short-term observers to local elections in December.
- Madagascar: Three short-term observers to the Presidential elections in December.

Additionally, two short-term observers were seconded to the OAS observation Mission in Nicaragua for the Presidential elections in November.

Promotion of candidates to regular UN positions

NORDEM receives on a regular basis requests directly from the United Nations.

During 2006 we received requests from the United Nations Operation in Cote d'Ivoire (UNOCI) and from the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). Six candidates were promoted to UNOCI. These applications are still under consideration by DPKO in New York. As regards OHCHR in Lebanon, NORDEM in collaboration with the Norwegian MFA decided not to promote any candidate.

3. Other activities

A study on housing and return of minorities to Bosnia and Herzegovina was conducted and finalised in March. The study was initiated by The Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) in order to obtain an overview over the Norwegian assistance provided to returning refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH). The study was also aimed at providing an assessment of the effects of this assistance and recommendations for further engagement with return. The study was not meant to evaluate the projects, but rather to study the sustainability and sociopolitical effects of the return resulting from the projects.

The study was later presented at the Norwegian Embassy in Sarajevo in September, and at the Norwegian Centre for Human Rights in November. The study is published as a NORDEM Report and is also available at our website.

The evaluation of the Housing and Property Directorate (HPD) was equally finalised during the first half of 2006. HPD has for a number of years received Norwegian support both in terms of core support and through NORDEM by providing personnel. The purpose of the evaluation was to analyse to what extent HPD had served its purpose according to the initial goal that was set out for the organisation, namely, to be a fair and effective instrument for property restitution in a post-conflict area, and equally to see what lessons could be learned from this experience. The evaluation was presented at the Norwegian Centre for Human Rights, and the report has been published as a NORDEM Report also available at our website.

For the election processes in Palestine, NORDEM has been involved together with researchers from NCHR in publishing a report on the election processes in the West Bank and Gaza. The study has been supported by the Norwegian MFA and was initially meant to be finalised in 2005, but because of unforeseen developments on the occupied territories beyond the control of the authors, and postponement of the election to the Legislative Council to January 2006, the report was completed by the end of 2006. The report has been published as a NORDEM Special Report and a presentation is foreseen early in 2007.

A study as regards the party political situation in Kosovo has also been undertaken. The study was finalised in December 2006.

4. Contact with NORDEM members;

Information dissemination

In order to maintain current information about NORDEM members, an annual review of the database is performed, wherein people are asked to renew their intention agreements with employers regarding stand-by preparedness for NORDEM. In addition, NORDEM members will at all times keep the secretariat informed with regard to availability, in the event changes should occur during the year.

To maintain regular contact with members of the roster, a quarterly NORDEM-newsletter is distributed to everyone in the database. All NORDEM members also receive the newsletter published four times a year by the NCHR.

NORDEM does also perform regular updates about the programme on the NCHR's website www.humanrights.uio.no.

5. Recruitment

Recruitment to the NORDEM roster was announced together with NORSTAFF this year. The vacancy was published widely in the main newspapers, on the web and through professional journals. Screening and some of the interviews took place in the middle of December while the remaining ones will take place during the first half of January 2007. Final decisions on the outcome of the interviews will be communicated to the candidates by the end January 2007.

In addition NORDEM finalised the interview and recruitment process which was commenced late 2005 by the end of January 2006.

Initiatives in relation to The Norwegian Government's Action Plan for the Implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security.

In accordance with the Norwegian Government's Action Plan for the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325, NORDEM elaborated a plan of action concerning gender aspects of our work. Out of the different initiatives listed, NORDEM should maintain a conscious attitude towards documenting statistics on recruitment and promotion of candidates divided by gender. It is a goal that the number of women on NORDEM assignments should equal the number of men. Likewise, a conscious attitude towards promotion of women to male-dominated positions is strongly upheld. NORDEM has additionally incorporated the gender aspect in our courses and parts of the reporting. NORDEM will however continue to further elaborate the gender aspect in the reporting as well as in our courses.

Since NORDEM started to document gender statistics concerning requests and promotions to various positions in september 2006, 80 persons have received requests in connection with 53 assignments. 53 candidates were promoted out of which 70 % were women. During the same time period 34 persons were seconded out which 23 were women (68%).

Co-operation agreement with the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC)

A new co-operation agreement between NCHR/NORDEM and NRC was signed 08.06.2006. The agreement regulates the division of labour between NCHR/NORDEM and NRC and does also reflect the increased focus on the UN by specifically mention the aim of signing tri-partite agreements with respectively three different UN organisations.

6. Courses and training activities

Basic Course on Democratisation and Human Rights-related Fieldwork:

The six days NORDEM Basic Course on Democratisation and Human Rights Field Work were held twice during 2006 given that no courses were offered in 2005. The first course took place in June and the second in November 2006. The course covers subjects such as human rights law, human rights monitoring, international humanitarian law, cultural awareness, health and safety, and gender issues in peacekeeping operations etc. The participants were also introduced to different actors and organisations they will meet while working in the field, such as the OSCE, OHCHR, CIMIC, CivPol etc. Equally, former and present secondees from the NORDEM stand-by force gave examples of different types of jobs that a NORDEM assignment can entail. Examples of different positions from the OSCE, EUMM and UNMIK were introduced.

The course is inter-active and requires active participation through working groups, role-plays and discussions. Altogether 43 persons participated, and 34 different speakers recruited both internationally and nationally contributed to these two courses.

The Election Observation Training Course:

NORDEM did also arrange a three day course in election observation. A total of 27 newly recruited candidates from the NORDEM roster participated, and speakers included key actors within the election observation field representing organisations like Electoral Reform International Services (ERIS), ODIHR, EU and NCHR. The course focused on subjects such as election methodology, international and regional election standards, election institutions, the role of LTOs/STOs, electronic voting and systems of representation in transition and post-conflict democracies etc. The course is also inter-active providing for participation in working groups and discussions.

Basic Training Course and Fieldwork Preparations for Rule of Law Personnel:

Additionally, NORDEM arranged the training course for the Rule of Law personnel, a roster administrated by the Ministry of Justice. The roster contains professionals like judges, district attorneys, lawyers and prison personnel. The idea is to assign a group of persons representing all of these professions in order to have a systematic and coherent approach when handling justice reform in a given country. The course took place from 5 – 10 March 2006 and included an introduction to peace support operations, international human rights and humanitarian law, mandates of typical Rule of Law assignments, prison conditions, cultural awareness etc. Altogether 30 persons participated in the course and 18 different speakers contributed to the various sessions.

The Network of Europeans for Electoral and Democracy Support (NEEDS):

NEEDS has as an aim to increase the capacity of both the European Union and civil society organisations to conduct credible and effective election observation missions, and arranges every year a variety of election observation courses both of a general character as well as courses aimed at elections specialists. NORDEM sent three candidates to respectively two of NEEDS' courses in 2006. Two candidates participated in a course for LTO coordinators and one in a seminar for media experts.

7. Briefing and follow-up

Briefing prior to deployment of personnel

NORDEM arranges briefings prior to all new assignments for seconded personell. The aim is to prepare the candidates for the work in the mission/organisation and the work environment that can be expected in the field or country in question. A standard briefing consists of the following components:

- update on the political and human rights situation
- information about the requesting organisation and its work
- orientation on working methods and the assignment itself
- personal security in the field
- contract, insurance policy, etc.
- reporting routines in relation to NORDEM

Field visits

Field visits constitute an important part of NORDEM's follow-up routines. The NORDEM secretariat meets the secondee in the field and conducts separate meetings with the receiving organization, and the seondees main interlocutors in order to assess

the working situation for the secondees. In 2006, field visits were conducted to Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Kosovo, Tadjikistan and Moldova.

Performance evaluation

The performance of all personnel seconded by NORDEM is always evaluated, also by the receiving organisations. The secondee's immediate superior is given a separate performance evaluation form to be completed at the end of the contract period and submitted directly to the NORDEM secretariat.

Before a contract of employment can be extended, a mid-term performance evaluation form has to be completed by the secondee's superior in the field. The feedback will be of vital importance in determining whether an extension will be granted.

Debriefing and Reports

All personnel recruited by NORDEM are debriefed after completion of the field assignment. They are then expected to prepare a final written report. Several of these reports are published as NORDEM reports and made available on the Internet (see separate list, annex). Non-published reports are available upon request from NCHR/NORDEM.

8. Training and information material

NORDEM manual

The main component in the training of NORDEM personnel is the *NORDEM Manual on Human Rights Monitoring*, which has been widely distributed and is also available on our website. The manual is used in a training context and provides an introduction to human rights, the UN's involvement in human rights, the various tools and mechanisms for promoting and protecting human rights, and the agencies and bodies involved in human rights work. It further discusses how to conduct human rights monitoring in the field, monitoring of prosecuting and judicial authorities, trial monitoring, election observation, preparation of cases to the ICTY and, finally, practical aspects of working in the field, such as personal security and health. The manual is intended as a tool for those who will be working for international organizations.

The manual was however last updated in 2001, which is now close to six years ago. Given the long time that has elapsed, NORDEM did at the end of November initiate preparatory work with the aim to update the manual during 2007. Costs related to the publishing of the manual were collected and one person was hired to do a pre-assessment as regards chapters that would need revision as well as assessed the need for new chapters and thereby authors. Pending a formal approval from the MFA, NORDEM anticipates continued work on the updating of the manual in 2007 with a view to have a fully updated version finalised by the end of 2007.

Information material for specific assignments

In conjunction with each new assignment, NORDEM compiles information relevant to the assignment in question, the receiving organisation and the country. This material – articles, country information, human rights reports, previous NORDEM reports, reports from the receiving organisation, etc. – is distributed to the personnel recruited for the assignment. In connection with election observation missions, documentation on the relevant legal framework and provisions is also provided.

9. Networking

It is important to share information about NORDEM and its extensive experience in recruiting, training and seconding personnel in order to attract new secondment possibilities and ways to improve the mechanism. Contact with other institutions is therefore of vital importance in relation to NORDEM's operations.

NORDEM has during 2006 had an increased focus towards the UN. The aim is to conclude a three partite-agreement concerning secondment of personell between NCHR/NRC and respectively OHCHR and UNDP, and further to explore possibilities for a stronger collaboration with other relevant UN bodies. Visits to Geneva have therefore been conducted, and are expected to continue in 2007.

Event though the NORDEM mechanism works well, it is both important and useful to be in contact with similar mechanisms and institutions, in particular in relation to further developing our own concept. Throughout 2006 the secretariat participated in meetings, in seminars and conferences, such as a conference on Canada's democracy support where NORDEM's experiences were particularly requested. NORDEM also participated on the International Meeting on Implementation of the Declaration of Principles for International Election Observation in London, and at the annual ODIHR Human Dimension Implementation Meeting in Warsaw.

NORDEM did also conduct meetings with EU in Brussels and the Mission of Norway to the EU in connection with participation of Norwegian election observers in EU's EOMs. The primary aim was to seek possibilities to improve routines of cooperation related to secondments of Norwegian observers. In this relation, an initiative to establish a MOU between Norway and EU was raised in an attempt to further improve and simplify the secondment process for Norwegian election observers to the EU.

In addition, members of the NORDEM secretariat and the Director of NCHR have participated as short-term observers in EOMs in respectively, Palestine, Montenegro and Tajikistan.

As mentioned above, field visits have been conducted to Bosnia, Moldova, Kosovo and Tajikistan. Field visits are deemed as an important source of information both in terms of providing information concerning the work situation of the secondee but also in providing useful information concerning the respective organisation and the challenges it faces on a professional level.

Annex:

List of publications (not published in the web edition)