

**THE ROLE OF THE
INTERETHNIC FACTOR IN THE
DEVELOPMENT OF THE
KALININGRAD REGION**

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I. Introduction

On 29-30 November 2002, the City of Kaliningrad hosted an international conference “The Role of the Interethnic Factor in the Development of the Kaliningrad Region” organized by the Regional Strategy Foundation and the regional office of Mediasojuz with the financial support of the Council of Europe, the Institute for Peace Research (Kiel, Germany) and the European Centre for Minority Issues, the principal organizer.

The participants of the conference included representatives of the Russian Government’s Department for Regional Development, the Russian Foreign Ministry’s Office in Kaliningrad, the regional administration, the regional Duma, the Kaliningrad Mayor’s Office, the regional department of interior, the Kaliningrad Regional Department of the Federal Employment Service of the Russian Ministry of Labour, the Youth Parliamentarian Assembly, leaders of the national-cultural autonomies and associations of the Kaliningrad region, the Plenipotentiary for Human Rights in the Kaliningrad region, as well as representatives of non-governmental organizations and the mass media – altogether over 70 people.

Scholars from the Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology and the Institute of World Economy and International Relations of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Grenoble University, the Schleswig-Holstein Peace Research Institute and Kaliningrad State University participated in the conference, allowing a wide spectrum of theoretical and practical issues in relation to national policy in Russia and in the region in the context of European transformations to be covered.

Experts from the Council of Europe and the European Centre for Minority Issues shared their knowledge of the European experience in working with migrants and in the application of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities and other documents of the Council of Europe. Representatives of the regional and federal authorities presented the problems and perspectives of interethnic relations in the Kaliningrad region and of the legislative activity that affects the interests of national-cultural autonomies and associations. Leaders of national-cultural autonomies and

associations in the Kaliningrad region presented the activities of their respective organizations.

II. Opening of the Conference and Greetings

The conference started with greetings addressed to the organizers and participants. Ms **Olga Dubovaya**, Deputy Chairman of the Committee for Information and Public Relations of the Regional Administration, wished success to the conference and stressed that both general and specific problems of interethnic relations exist in the Kaliningrad Region, which the executive authorities of the region are trying to solve.

Mr **Piotr Walczak**, representative of the Department for Migration and Roma Problems of the Council of Europe, invited the participants in his greetings to also pay attention to the problems of migration, which are closely connected with the issue of interethnic relations. He underlined that people were always moving from one territory to another because of violence, economic problems, or other reasons. According to Mr **Walczak**, migrants are an integral part of modern European society and the status of a migrant should not influence the rights of these people.

The Deputy Director of the Schleswig-Holstein Institute for Peace Research, Mr **Christian Wellmann**, reminded the participants of the close and friendly ties that have been established between the land of Schleswig-Holstein and the Kaliningrad region. He pointed out that the list of questions related to interethnic relations is long and that he expects the conference to provide additional information and answers to many of these questions. Mr **Wellmann** discussed the activities of a joint group of experts from Russia, America, Great Britain, the Nordic and the Baltic states, which has prepared a document on migration that includes such problems as border crossing, the introduction of visas, the provision of security, etc.

Mr **Andrey Pozdnyakov**, consultant of the Department for Regional Development of the Russian Government, greeted the participants on behalf of the

Minister for Nationality Issues. In his opinion, the Kaliningrad region should become a model for maintaining peace and understanding in interethnic relations. He expressed his readiness to present the federal viewpoint on those problems that worry the conference participants. He also informed the audience that the Russian government is working intensively on the introduction of corrections into the state nationality policy and expressed his hope that representatives of national-cultural associations, the administration and the legislative body of the region will participate actively in this work.

Ms **Silvija Gurova**, Vice-Mayor for International Relations at the Mayor's Office of Kaliningrad, warmly welcomed the participants of the conference. She indicated that representatives of over one hundred different ethnic groups live and work successfully in Kaliningrad, actively taking part in the life of the city. Examples of cooperation between these organizations and the city authorities are numerous.

III. The Plenary Session

Ms **Olga Dubovaya**, Deputy Chairman of the Committee for Information and Public Relations of the Regional Administration, opened the plenary session of the conference. Her presentation was focused on the problems and perspectives of interethnic relations in the Kaliningrad region. In her opinion, the character of the region's ethno-social situation is related to the national-cultural heritage of the peoples living in it. The speaker underlined the importance of natural, geographic, socio-economic, and ethnocultural conditions in defining the role of the regional nationality policy, which should be based on the preservation of the region's historical memory and cultural heritage.

The administration of the Kaliningrad region cooperates closely with different ethnic groups and assists in the development of intercultural cooperation between the representatives of various nationalities on all levels, as well as in the fostering of mutual respect and tolerance. The multinational 'amber region' is characterized by the efforts the local peoples to develop their culture, preserve their identity and unique national traditions, customs and rituals, and respect the cultures of peoples of the neighbouring regions.

Multiethnic Kaliningrad is the western-most region of Russia. Subdivided by language family, the most numerous ethnic groups in the region are: Slavs (891,000 persons or 89 % of the regional population), Turkic peoples (9,100 persons, 0.9 %), Finno-Ugric peoples (7,800 persons, 0.8 %), and peoples belonging to the North-Caucasian language family (8,600 persons, 0.86 %). According to the population census of 1989, people of more than 100 nationalities lived in the Kaliningrad region at that point of time. Since 1992, a continuous growth of national self-consciousness can be observed, especially among such groups as the Armenians, Azeris, Jews, Lithuanians, Germans, Poles, Tajiks, Tatars, and Chechens.

The ethnodemographic situation in the region is dominated by the 742,900 ethnic Russians who constitute 78.0 % of the whole population. Belorussians and Ukrainians are occupying the second and third places, with 72,900 (7.7 %) and 70,400 persons (7.4 %) respectively. Lithuanians are in fourth with 17,700 persons (1.9 %). The fifth largest group are Armenians – 7,500 persons (0.8 %). The ten biggest diaspora also include Germans – 5,800 persons (0.6 %), Poles – 5,000 persons (0.5 %), Tartars – 4,900 persons (0.5 %), Mordva – 3,300 persons (0.2 %), Azeris – 2,800 persons (0.3 %), Chuvash – 2,700 persons (0.3 %), Jews – 2,300 persons (0.2 %), and Roma – 1,400 persons (0.1 %).

The Kaliningrad region is characterized by a dispersed settlement of many ethnic groups. Mononational cities and districts are practically absent. The peoples of the region use the Russian language in the main spheres of everyday life. At the same time, one can witness active attempts of the leaders of the Lithuanian, Polish and German ethnic communities to establish national educational institutions. In four secondary schools, Sunday schools at Catholic parishes and in two kindergartens 603 persons are learning Lithuanian. Around 50 persons are learning Polish at the Consulate of the Polish Republic, in the Russia-Poland society, and in one kindergarten at the House of Polish Culture in the city of Ozersk. Assisted by the German-Russian House, 11 adult and 3 youth groups (consisting of 15 to 20 persons each) study the German language. The ethnic groups from the Caucasus and Central Asia typically communicate in their national languages within their families and diaspora communities.

The Kaliningrad regional department of the Russian Ministry of Justice has registered the following efficient entities: six national-cultural autonomies (Russian, Belorussian, Lithuanian, German and two Ukrainian); 60 national-cultural societies (including four Azeri, three Armenian, three Byelorussian, nine Lithuanian, ten German, three Polish, three Russian, three Tartar, and six Ukrainian societies, as well as one Chechen-Ingush, one Roma, one Georgian, one Jewish, one Yiddish, one Ossetian, and one Tajik society); one association of societies that are active in the fields of culture and relations with foreign countries; and societies such as Kaliningrad-Swinouisce, Russia-Poland, the Russian-Spanish Centre, Kaliningrad-Turkmenistan, Kaliningrad-Sweden, Kaliningrad-Peru, Kaliningrad-Mali and the French Friendship Society. National-cultural associations represent the interests of more than 200,000 inhabitants of the region, or 21 per cent of its overall population.

Most people living in the region are Christians, more than 90 per cent of which are Russian Orthodox. Almost all Lithuanian and Polish believers, and a part of the German believers are Catholics. A considerable number of the believers consider themselves members of various Protestant groups. The second largest group are Muslims (over 10,000 persons), the absolute majority of which are Sunni Muslims. Another Muslim group, the Shiites, comprise only a small number of persons of Azerbaijani origin. The majority of the Jewish believers follow Judaism. There are also some unorthodox Buddhists. Some 40 people of Slavic origin interested in oriental religions also live in the region. In recent years the spread of networks of unorthodox religious schools and sects (Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormons, Moonites, Scientologists, Krishnaitis, and others) has been witnessed. Despite the large variety of ethnic groups belonging to different language families and diverse cultures and following dissimilar religions, the inhabitants of Kaliningrad who have been living in the region since 1945 represent a historically unified national entity.

Demographic processes in the region are characterized by a decreasing birth rate. Depopulation among the inhabitants of the region is the most acute demographic, social-economic and geopolitical problem. In this respect, the situation among Russians, Ukrainians and Belorussians is the worst. Accordingly, the share of some other nationalities in the total population is increasing. These include mainly peoples of the Northern Caucasus, Lithuanians, Germans, and Poles. From 1991 to 2002, migration

was among the most important factors influencing the demographic situation in the region. Between 1990 and 2001, the population grew by 126,000 persons as a consequence of immigration.

In the process of implementing the Russian federal law “On Citizenship” (since 6 February 1992) the authorities in Kaliningrad have processed (by registration) the documents of 41,148 persons who had applied for obtaining the citizenship of the Russian Federation; 854 decrees of the Russian President have been issued on granting the Russian citizenship: 78 appeals for granting citizenship have been postponed until the requirements of Part 2 of Article 19 of the Law (on the continuous five years of residence on the territory of Russia) are fulfilled.

The major flow of immigrants to the Kaliningrad region comes from Kazakhstan (16,034, 39 %), Ukraine (6,684, 16.2 %), Belarus (2,638, 6.5 %), Uzbekistan (2,543, 6 %), Kyrgyzstan (2170, 5.3 %), Latvia (2,074, 5 %), Azerbaijan (1,951, 5 %), Lithuania (1,810, 4.4 %), and Tajikistan (1,549, 3.8 %). The immigrants are ethnic Russians (25,060, 61 %), Ukrainians (5,217, 13 %), Germans (2,814, 7 %), Byelorussians (2,238, 5.4 %), Armenians (2,109, 5.1 %), Tartars (550, 1.4 %), Azeris (435, 1.1 %), and Chechens (20, 0.1 %). The interests of the migrants are represented by 20 non-governmental organizations (NGOs). However, these NGOs have no coordinating centre and do not take into account the whole variety of the migrants’ interests in their practical activities.

The solution of the complicated socio-economic, cultural and linguistic problems of the region’s different ethnic groups require constant and targeted efforts by the federal and regional authorities. A regional nationality policy will be successful only if it is not imposed from above, but is able to integrate the aspirations of all different nationalities and will result in a genuine agreement between them, Ms **Dobovaya** concluded.

The plenary session was continued by a presentation by Mr **Priit Järve**, Senior Research Associate at the European Centre for Minority Issues, about the international experience of minority protection. The main focus of his presentation was on the Council of Europe’s Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities

and its implementation procedures. The Council of Europe adopted the Framework Convention in 1994. By November 2002, 34 out of 44 member states of the Council of Europe had signed and ratified the Convention while seven more had signed, but not yet ratified it.

The Convention recognizes the right of a person belonging to a national minority to choose freely whether or not he or she wants to be treated as belonging to a national minority. The Convention does not provide states with concrete recipes, but points to fields in which the national legislation can be amended in order to ensure better protection of minorities. These fields include: prohibition of discrimination, preservation and development of the distinct culture of national minorities, encouragement of a spirit of tolerance and intercultural dialogue, freedom to profess one's religion, dissemination of information and access of minorities to media, use of minority language in dealing with administrative authorities, teaching of minority language and education in minority language, participation of minorities in public affairs and in economic and social life, etc.

The country in which the convention has been in force for one year submits a national report to the Council of Europe on the implementation of the convention. This report is studied by the Advisory Committee, a body of experts in minority protection appointed for that purpose by the Council of Europe. The Advisory Committee forms its opinion and sends it to the government of the implementing country for comments. Upon receiving the comments, the Advisory Committee works out proposals for the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, which adopts recommendations for the country concerned. Such communication takes a long time; this is why the Council of Europe has proposed to institutionalize the dialogue after the first report has been processed in order to considerably shorten all necessary procedures. The speaker noted that Russia ratified the Convention in 1998 and presented the state report in 2000. In March 2002, the Advisory Committee of the Council of Europe expounded its opinion on the report, but by November 2002 it has not yet been made public.¹ This opinion is of considerable interest as it opens the dialogue between the Council of Europe and Russia. The national minorities residing in the Kaliningrad region can join this dialogue.

¹ On 10 July 2003, the Council of Europe Committee of Ministers adopted its Resolution ResCMN(2003)9 on the implementation of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities by the Russian Federation.

Mr **Järve** pointed out that the majority of the remarks of the Advisory Committee's experts have been addressed to the former socialist countries. Another serious minority problem in Europe pertains to the Roma minority - according to many criteria this ethnic group is being discriminated against.

The legislative branch of the Kaliningrad region was represented at the conference by **Vladimir Bagalin**, chairman of the regional parliament's Committee on Law Enforcement, Security, International, and Interregional Relations. Mr **Bagalin** mentioned in his presentation the businesslike dialogue about the problems of interethnic relations taking place in the region and drew attention to the region's multiethnic character: "We all have come out from the international system of the Soviet Union," Mr **Bagalin** stressed. According to him, the main task of the regional Duma is to ensure that the laws drafted and adopted in the region do not contain norms that establish differences between people based on their ethnicity. Furthermore, in the lawmaking process the deputies of the regional Duma take into account not only the norms of the federal legal system, but also those of international treaties, including the European conventions.

Ms **Zoya Tsyrenova**, consultant at the Department for Regional Development of the Russian government, tied in with the topic touched upon by Mr. **Järve**. She noted that Russia approached the ratification of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities with great responsibility. A large-scale awareness-raising campaign was carried out in the country; inter-governmental meetings, conferences and seminars took place. The opinions of national-cultural organizations and ethnic groups were taken into account. A census sample, taken in 1994, exposed the existence of 176 peoples and ethnic groups. Russia has taken responsibility for all of these ethnic groups. To date, the Russian Federation has adopted a system of normative acts that serve as the legal basis for the ratification of the Convention for the Protection of Ethnic Minorities. In addition to the basic law – the constitution – these acts include the Concept of the State Nationality Policy (adopted in 1996), one of the main laws dealing with problems of national minorities – "On the Languages in the Russian Federation", laws on education, culture, and national-cultural autonomies of the Russian Federation, and the law "On Small Indigenous Peoples". By 1998, Russia had obtained regional experience

in the resolution of problems of national minorities (in the Kama River area and the Orenburg region). The adoption of the Concept of the State Nationality Policy has resulted in the development of concepts of regional nationality policies. The concept's aim is the realization of the goals of the state nationality policy by the majority of the subjects of the Russian Federation. Many regional budgets now contain a separate budget line for the realization of the state nationality policy.

According to Ms **Tsyrenova**, the report of the Advisory Committee of the Council of Europe was a disappointment because it focussed on the negative aspects of minority-majority relations, while important positive changes were not reflected or only briefly mentioned. In her opinion, such a position of the Advisory Committee is not entirely fair. One gets the impression that the report is based exclusively on the materials of human rights activists without taking into account the point of view of the state authorities. As a positive example for the solution of minority problems Ms Cyrenova pointed to the Samara region with its 224 non-Russian schools (including 6 Bashkirian, 51 Mordovan, 26 Tartar, 87 Chuvash), where lessons are conducted in five or six national languages and six more languages are taught as separate subjects. Other examples are the Russian Ministry of Mass Communication, which in 2002 financed 95 publications in the languages of the Russian Federation as well as the establishment of special consultative bodies – councils on nationality issues - at the offices of regional governors.

Responding to the presentation of Ms **Tsyrenova**, Mr **Järve** pointed out that the reports of the Council of Europe's experts always cover the positive developments very briefly whereas the negative aspects get a much more detailed analysis. This is true for all state reports without exception. While the experts of the Advisory Committee are well aware of all positive aspects and appreciate them, they suggest that governments concentrate their efforts on removing the remaining negative aspects.

Ms **Litt Woon Long**, an expert of the Council of Europe currently living in Norway, opened her presentation with personal reflections on the experience of integration into Norwegian society. The main part of her presentation focused on three reports of the Council of Europe that she regarded as relevant for the Kaliningrad region: the "Community Relations Report" (1991), the "Diversity and Cohesion Report"

(2000), and a recent report named “Towards a Migration Management Strategy” (2002). She pointed out that the experience of the Council of Europe has proved that good and sound interethnic policies should address both illegal and legal migrants, immigration and integration in a coordinated manner, embracing all partners: governmental and non-governmental, public and private sectors, national and international actors. The focus also should be on social cohesion and on the securing of a firm legal status for vulnerable minority groups. In conclusion, Ms **Long** emphasized that the Council of Europe with its strong values and history can play a special role as a guiding light, demonstrating that we do not only talk but are able to join forces in Eastern and Western European countries to make sure that Europe will continue to stand for the principles of rule of law, human rights and human dignity.

Answering a question from the audience about how the non-governmental organizations are financed, Ms **Long** said that the Council of Europe allocates funds for this purpose. Another source is the relevant national ministries, which, as a rule, have a special budget for the implementation of interethnic programmes.

The plenary session continued with the presentation of Ms **Irina Vershinina**, Plenipotentiary for Human Rights in the Kaliningrad region. Ms **Vershinina** pointed out that so far she had received no complaints related to interethnic discord and expressed the hope that the future would bring no changes in that respect. According to her, this depends on all the participants of the conference, including the national-cultural autonomies of the Kaliningrad region, which strive to preserve their traditions, organize various events and disseminate their culture. She stressed that every nation is rich in tradition and that this common cultural heritage has to be preserved. Ms **Vershinina** expressed the wish that all participants of the conference continued their cooperation and the hope that tolerance and respect would prevail in the dealing with all ethnic groups in the Kaliningrad region.

Mr **Sergej Cheshko**, Doctor of History and deputy director of the Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology of the Russian Academy of Sciences, noted in his presentation that the Kaliningrad region happened to be at the junction of controversial processes in European development. In his opinion, the temptation to isolate and cut off Kaliningrad from the rest of Russia is deceptive. An attempt to pursue this goal will

bring Europe more problems than benefits, even more so considering that the European states are far from united in their political and economic orientations. Thanks to Peter the Great the expulsion of Russia from Europe is not possible anymore. Instead, it is necessary that Europe and Russia make a common effort to find the optimum place of the region in the changing political and economic configuration of the continent.

According to Mr **Cheshko**, an important aspect of the cooperation of Russia and the rest of Europe is the protection of human rights and the rights of ethnic minorities. Complex processes are presently taking place in Russia and Europe related to mass migration, which result in the formation of a new ethnic 'face' in many of the continent's countries, as well as in a dramatic increase of the scattered settlement pattern of ethnic groups. As the main flows of migrants are coming from Asia and Africa, this often results in a collision of cultures, civilizations, different social and cultural norms, traditions and values. Such a collision is mainly conditioned by the migrants' problems of adaptation, competition on the labour market and in business and the inclusion of migrants in political life. For Russia, unregulated internal migration and migration from the former republics of the USSR are no less problematic. The most acute confrontations are developing in the regions most attractive for migrants, such as the South of Russia and big cities.

Mr **Cheshko** stressed that the change in the situation of the Kaliningrad region conditioned by the European enlargement will not automatically lead to the deterioration of interethnic relations in the region and in the whole Baltic area unless forces appear that aim to make the situation worse. Such forces already exist. This is testified by the hints of nationalistic organizations in the neighbouring countries about the necessity to reconsider the post-war borders, which in practice would mean separating the region from the Russian Federation. The stability in the region is neither enhanced through the factual rehabilitation of Nazism, demonstrations of which can be observed in Latvia and Estonia (legal cases against the former employees of NKVD and the Soviet Ministry of State Security, the celebrations of the former SS units, etc.), nor by the protracted discrimination of so-called 'non-citizens' in Latvia.

In order to establish mutual understanding and develop cooperation, it is important to develop general principles and norms of ethnopolitics, of course taking into

consideration the specifics of particular countries. In the case of Russia, for example, it is practically impossible to put together a fixed and comprehensive list of national minorities as recommended by the experts of the Council of Europe. It is necessary to get rid of the 'double standards' syndrome in the evaluation of the internal policy of sovereign states. It might be that Russia has not always been consistent in this matter, but this syndrome is also sometimes apparent in Europe, for example in the evaluation of the Chechen conflict and the actions of the Russian federal authorities. It is important to understand and recognize that the Chechen conflict, for which the then leaders of the country are to blame, has developed into a military rebellion and has become in its essence an attack of international terrorist organizations against Russia.

The speaker noted that Russia itself has a lot to think about. A serious problem is that despite the efforts of the state to improve its ethnopolitics, racism, ethnonationalism and religious intolerance are on the rise and extremist organizations are becoming more active. It often happens that the authorities of some subjects of the Russian Federation adopt an ethnonationalist stance or attempt to solve ethnic problems by using inconsiderate and bureaucratic methods. Ethnopolitical problems in modern Russia and the ideology and psychology of ethnonationalism are conditioned to a large extent by the shocks and consequences of the disintegration of the Soviet Union, as well as by radical transformations in the post-Soviet Russian society. This includes the decrease in the living standards of a considerable part of the population, competition on the labour market and in business, a division of the 'spheres of interest' between different ethnic criminal structures, the disintegration of the previous system of ideological and moral values and the disorientation of many people in the new circumstances. Such disturbances are easily associated by the human mind with ethnic markers and thus stimulate ethnic prejudices. As a result of all these factors, a strong syndrome of ethnonationalism is still alive in present-day Russia. The official ethnic status of certain subjects of the Russian Federation and the lack of such a status in others creates political and economic advantages for certain nationalities (or, to be more exact, ethnic elites).

Ethnopolitical and ethnocultural problems in present-day Russia have made it necessary to amend, as ordered by the President of the Russian Federation V. Putin, the Concept of the State Nationality Policy. Of course, a concept alone cannot solve

problems, especially in a country that is not used to even obeying laws. However, such a concept is meant to provide politics with an ideological basis, to reveal to society the authorities' strategy in the sphere of managing ethnopolitical processes. Recent years have witnessed a positive evolution in the attitudes of many politicians and officials at the federal level. At least in words the emphasis on state-building has shifted from the rights of 'nations and ethnicities', a traditional terminology inherited from Soviet times, to human rights. The growing awareness of ideas on which the Concept of State Nationality Policy is based has played a certain role in this. The development of these ideas and their introduction into practical politics is of utter necessity in order to prevent ethnic conflicts and to build a peaceful multiethnic and multicultural society.

The ethnic policy of a state should not be selective, depending on some theoretical constructions and on the capabilities of ethnic elites to lobby their own interests. The principles of such a policy should be universal and should not depend on the relative size of a people. There can be exceptions, but in the opinion of the speaker, one should not be too excessive in granting a special status to particular nationalities, as has happened in the case of the Russian law "On the Indigenous Small Peoples. It is also important to take into account the efforts of the federal authorities in recent years to eliminate inequality among seemingly equal – according to the constitution – subjects of the Federation. The apologists of the existing inequality usually argue that it is created by some specific conditions in Russia. However, Russia as a multiethnic state is not unique. Ethnicity is not considered as the basis of federalism in other multiethnic federal states (and there are no monoethnic states).

A state's strategy in the sphere of ethnic policy should be based neither on paternalism, nor on the complete abandonment of a regulation of ethnic problems nor on a 'museum-type' ideology aiming at "the preservation and restoration of ethnic cultures and languages" or on artificial assimilation. The state, just like science, has no right to compel society to follow some particular model of ethnocultural development – development should take its normal course influenced by natural tendencies. The state's task is in granting its citizens freedom and the real possibility of choice in their ethnocultural and linguistic orientations, their ethnic identity, as well as the right to create organizations with a view to satisfying their ethnocultural needs. This has to be enabled by the establishment of a necessary legal foundation (which already exists in

Russia: the constitution, laws on non-governmental organizations, on national-cultural autonomies, etc.) for the encouragement and support of cultural initiatives.

The topic of the presentation of Mr **Alvidas Muliuolis**, Chairman of the Lithuanian National-Cultural Autonomy in the Kaliningrad region, was the participation of national-cultural entities in the formation of civil society in the region. He described the situation in the Lithuanian community and made several proposals that could improve the situation of the whole national-cultural movement in the region.

Mr **Muliuolis** presented statistical data that gave a picture of the national-cultural movement in the Kaliningrad region, including the Lithuanian one. By 2002, the national-cultural movement in the Kaliningrad region had existed for ten years. Since 1992, it had gained both in quantity and in quality to comprise over 130 national and confessional associations, including five regional and local national-cultural autonomies. In 2002, the Lithuanian regional national-cultural autonomy united practically all national-cultural, educational and youth organizations – 18 all in all – in the region. In addition, there were 21 Catholic religious communities.

The Lithuanian community in the Kaliningrad region (about twenty thousand people) is the largest group of Lithuanians that compactly lives in a single subject of the Russian Federation. Sixty thousand Lithuanians are living all over Russia. There are 38 national-cultural organizations of Lithuanians in Russia, almost half of them – 18 – in the Kaliningrad region. This is why the city of Kaliningrad was chosen as the venue for the establishment of the Federal National-Cultural Autonomy of Lithuanians in the Russian Federation with headquarters in Kaliningrad.

The speaker pointed out that Russia has a very good and useful federal law on national-cultural autonomy, which covers the basic aspects of the life and activities of national minorities. The principles and mechanisms to solve various nationality problems established by this law are similar to those of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities of the Council of Europe. The law allowed the Lithuanian community in the Kaliningrad region to tackle its problems at the federal level. This included the preservation and development of the national-cultural heritage, education in the national language, the possibility to partially utilize the mass media in

the national language and many other opportunities. The establishment of the Lithuanian national-cultural autonomy in the Kaliningrad region completed the unification process and the Lithuanian movement in the region acquired a higher official status. The national-cultural autonomy seeks to work closely and fruitfully with other national associations, the regional administration and Duma, as well as with other institutions of the region. In 2001, the Lithuanian national-cultural movement in the Kaliningrad region joined the *obschestvennaya palata* (Public Chamber), the umbrella organization of voluntary associations in the Kaliningrad region.

In the Kaliningrad region there are 23 Lithuanian language centres, among them three Sunday schools, 15 ‘optional subjects’ schools and five schools where one or more subjects are taught in Lithuanian. 39 teachers of Lithuanian language and culture are educating around 800 pupils. The regional newsletter of the autonomy “Gintaras” is being published in Lithuanian and Russian for the second year. Each year seminars are organized for the leaders of Lithuanian song and dance groups (there are ten such adult and children groups in the region). The annual regional children’s singing festival has become a tradition. The Lithuanian national-cultural autonomy proclaimed 2001 the year of Liudvikas Reza, the first publisher of a famous poem of Kristijonas Donelaitis, a Lithuanian writer who had lived in Königsberg. Many events devoted to this topic took place throughout the year. The year 2002 was called the year of Jonas Bretkunas, the man responsible for translating the Bible into Lithuanian, to commemorate his 400th anniversary.

Mr **Muliolis** referred to several other examples of Lithuanian activities staged in Kaliningrad. However, he also noted that overcoming negative ethnic after-effects of the Soviet period could have been more successful if it were not for policy mistakes on the federal and regional level. He reminded the group of the most important, but still unresolved tasks for whose solution all national-cultural movements in the region are waiting. For example, it is necessary to: establish a consultative council on national-cultural issues accountable to the head of the regional administration (the governor); introduce a separate line in the regional budget for the financing of national-cultural associations and autonomies; work out without a delay the concept of a regional nationality policy and a regional statute on the national-cultural and ethnic components

in the educational institutions of the Kaliningrad region; and provide facilities for the activities of national-cultural associations.

Mr **Muliolis** criticized the fact that for almost a year national-cultural autonomies were not given the opportunity to discuss the Statute on the Consultative Council with the governor. National-cultural entities can only have contact with the regional administration's Committee on Information, Press and Public Relations, which does not promote the rapid solution of problems. This situation could be changed by the establishment of a department responsible for cooperation with national-cultural entities at the administration of the region. Serious lobbying has been done by the public chamber and by the national-cultural autonomies to introduce a separate budget line. However, multiple appeals to the authorities have not led to positive results. Instead of introducing a separate budget line, the administration of the region has been financing the national-cultural autonomies through grants. The board of the Lithuanian national-cultural autonomy considers this form of financial support as ineffective and even inadmissible. According to the board, competitiveness between national-cultural associations should not be introduced - the more so as many of them find it difficult to complete the required applications.

Mr **Jakov Sukhovolskii**, a representative of the Council of the Jewish Community in Kaliningrad, talked about the manifestation of nationalism in the Kaliningrad region. Similar to the previous speakers, he also noted the multinational character of the region. In his opinion, in such conditions the most important thing is to develop positive neighbourly relations and cooperation, avoiding any attempts to blame one's neighbours who are of a different nationality for one's own misfortunes.

Some 2,000 Jews belonging to three generations live in the Kaliningrad region. The first generation arrived after the war. They were soldiers and people who came to rebuild the city demolished during the war. They participated actively and successfully in the reconstruction and revival of the region's economy. The majority of the second and third generation are people who were born in the Kaliningrad region, which has become a 'small homeland' for them. The Jewish cultural society was established more than ten years ago and has developed into the Jewish community as the number of its members grew. Two rabbis have arrived to Kaliningrad in order to revive the lost

religious traditions in the region. Today, all those who feel the need to pray can do so in two Jewish congregations. The community has a kindergarten, a Sunday school, clubs of war veterans and ghetto inmate groups for studying Hebrew and Yiddish, as well as Jewish culture and arts, a boy choir, a musical room, and many other programmes aimed at reviving Jewish traditions and culture. The community is also publishing a newspaper. A Jewish newsletter and other interesting publications are regularly sent to the region from St. Petersburg. Nevertheless, there still remains a problem of organizing mass celebrations. These celebrations attract hundreds of people, not only Jews but also other nationalities who are interested in Jewish celebrations. This means that the community has to rent locations for these festivities.

Mr **Sukhovolskii** informed the participants that the community has built a monument on the site where 7,000 Jewish inmates of a Nazi concentration camp were executed in April 1945. This place is visited to pay tribute to kin and friends who perished during the Holocaust not only on the Baltic shores. The large Jewish community of pre-war Königsberg had five synagogues, which were destroyed as a consequence of pogroms and military activities. Today's community intends to build a new synagogue and a cultural centre in the place of the former main synagogue, but has not yet received the necessary permission from the authorities. Young members of the Jewish community have worked hard to put the territory of the Jewish cemetery in Kaliningrad, where many generations of Jews are buried, in order. The cemetery had been abandoned for many years and was considerably damaged. This is the place where the famous rabbi Salanter, an outstanding philosopher and the founder of the progressive Musar religious movement, has been buried. After an extensive search, his burial place was identified and in the summer of 2001 a monument was erected in his honour with the help of several communities. Over 400 rabbis from all over the world, including Israel, America and Australia participated in the opening ceremony of the monument in August 2001. As the restoration of other old graves was no longer possible, a common memorial – a weeping wall into which the remnants of the destroyed gravestones were included – was erected for all those buried there. The speaker noted that there used to be no problems in the relations between the Jewish community and people of other nationalities. However, recently several manifestations of anti-Semitism have occurred. Unknown persons have destroyed the plaque on the monument of Salanter and some parts of the common memorial. The Hannukkah,

which were erected in 1999 in prominent places in Kaliningrad were also demolished. David stars and the word 'Hannukah' as well other anti-Semitic slogans appeared on the walls of houses and on fences. Such slogans also appeared on the wall of the regional hospital, next to the memorial plaque for a famous doctor Moisej Dribinski, who saved the lives of dozens of people of various nationalities in that building and founded the Kaliningrad cardio-surgical school. Many people are angered over these events. The chief rabbi expressed his resentment in the local press. The mass media published other articles written by persons not indifferent to these occurrences.

No nation or state has ever gained anything from dividing a population into 'us' and 'them', the speaker stressed. The authorities enforcing law and order should counteract the anti-Semitic manifestations more vigorously. Tolerant attitudes towards those who are different should be developed. The role of education, especially in the humanities, is becoming increasingly important for the building of a genuine civil society. Mistrust, fear and prejudice cannot be overcome by logical reasoning only; but sometimes this can be achieved through daily communication. An important role in the establishment and maintenance of good relations based on trust between different ethnic groups can be played by formal, but even more so by informal leaders of society, for instance, by priests of all religions. Mr **Sukhovolskii** summed up his presentation by a famous quotation: "Fear breeds hatred, ignorance breeds fear, thus, in order to overcome hatred one must fight ignorance."

The presentation of the chairman of the regional non-governmental organization "Cultural Society of *Prinemanje* (basin of the Neman River)" **Vyacheslav Shakhov** focused on the formation of interethnic tolerance in the Baltic region. He noted that a specific feature of the Kaliningrad region from an ethnocultural point of view is the absence of stable stereotypes in interethnic relations. Stereotypes characteristically lack stability in the present political and ethnographic situation. The population of the region is poorly acquainted with the ethnic culture of the previous inhabitants and the neighbouring countries. Numerous ethnic minorities preserve a specific national culture, religion and language, manifesting a tendency of self-isolationism.

According to Mr **Shakhov**, in the absence of a clearly defined ethnocultural policy, the civil society of the enclave could lead to a stratification and alienation of the

ethnic communities, inducing interethnic confrontation. There are practically no state institutions in the region today that monitor ethnocultural processes and research interethnic relations.

The solution of interethnic and inter-confessional problems is facilitated by the active cooperation of non-governmental organizations and ethnic communities with the bodies of municipal government. The close cooperation of the Cultural Society of *Prinemanje* with the administration of the city, cultural institutions, the regional national-cultural autonomy of Lithuanians and its branches in the city of Sovetsk (“Birute”, “Vidunas Society of Lithuanian Culture”) helps to carry out multifunctional ethnocultural programmes. The main goal of such programmes is the formation of an atmosphere of interethnic tolerance in the Baltic region of Russia. This is to be achieved in Russia by providing an ethnocultural education to the region’s young people, facilitating their contact with the citizens of neighbouring states.

Mr **Shakhov** drew the participants’ attention to the fact that the public opinion in Kaliningrad differs from that in the other regions of Russia. It is not so much formed by the federal mass media (i.e. the three Russian public TV channels) as by the local mass media – seven regional radio stations and newspapers and one radio station and newspaper in each district. However, the majority of journalists do not have access to the original publications in Lithuanian, Polish or German language because of the language barrier, which is reinforced by a lack of trust. Journalists often lack basic knowledge of the Baltic-Slavic ethnocultural unity, as well as of the traditions of the region’s ethnic minorities, primarily of Lithuanians and Poles. Without this, they are scarcely capable of consciously forming tolerant attitudes in popular behaviour, of keeping up contact with the neighbouring countries and of mediating between the cultures of the Baltic region.

Mr **Shakhov** added that the region needs scholarly proofed information in the Russian language on the Internet in order to guarantee that the most important problems of interethnic, inter-confessional and, to a certain extent, inter-state cooperation in the region are fully and objectively presented in the sources used by the mass media. The speaker expressed his strong conviction that the projects for consolidating a multiethnic

society in the unique enclave of Kaliningrad cannot be efficient without the strong support of the state.

Mr **Rudolf Aleksanyan**, the chairman of the Kaliningrad regional branch of the all-Russian non-governmental organization “The Union of Armenians in Russia”, spoke about the different forms of the preservation and development of national identity in Russia and the Kaliningrad region. He started by asking the audience why it was necessary to establish a non-governmental organization that unites people of one nationality in the Kaliningrad region. First of all, this is needed in order to create conditions for the preservation of the national language, culture, and traditions. National-cultural societies are created in the Kaliningrad region with the aim of preserving, enriching and protecting national culture and the people who belong to this cultural group. That is why two years ago a decision was taken to establish the Armenian Spiritual Centre in Kaliningrad, including the Armenian Apostolic Church, a Sunday Armenian School with a respectable library, an assembly hall with a stage for concerts and plays (not only Armenian), an open-air museum of Armenian stone-carving art and paintings of the nations of the world, a café for charity parties and festivities and an office for receipt and distribution of humanitarian aid.

Mr **Aleksanyan** expressed his worries about the process of adaptation of the Armenian migrants, who have started to settle in the villages and town of the Kaliningrad region as a result of well-known incidents in the Caucasus. According to the data of the administrative bodies and the mass media, the majority of these people are searching for employment. They are gifted craftsmen, ready to take any employment; they even create jobs themselves, and are efficiently engaged both in business and artisanship, farming and fishery, construction and other fields of production.

The new migrants - voluntarily or involuntarily – repeatedly get involved in everyday conflicts, largely because they are not prepared to live under the new conditions. The reason for this can be found in the observation that the representatives of many nations and peoples who were part of the Soviet Union still psychologically regard themselves as citizens of that huge country. They do not feel the same in the Kaliningrad region as being abroad. They do not accept the rules and traditions of

Russia. Instead, they try to transfer their own attitude towards the traditions and the way of life in Russia into a new environment and this can ignite a conflict situation.

In the new conditions, the local people in Kaliningrad consider themselves to be ethnically distinct group within the new Russian State. The former compatriots are seen as citizens of other states, other cultures, other languages, who have different morals, traditions, etc. The adaptation of the migrants to the new conditions requires enormous effort by the regional authorities and non-governmental organizations.

The speaker considered it obvious that in addition to supporting and protecting the interests of Russian citizens of different ethnic background, the organizations of certain ethnic groups should consider the education of the second wave of immigrants in the Kaliningrad region as a priority in order to ensure their smooth integration into the new environment. New migrants have to be prepared for the new conditions of life. It is important for them to understand that they are now living in a new state where they have to gradually integrate. They have to realize that the rules, norms and traditions that regulate the public life of the immigration state have to be observed if they want to live and 'prosper' in their new environment.

The speaker admitted that such educational work is not only the task of ethnic non-governmental organizations, which currently neither have the office space, nor the financial resources necessary to employ the required staff; this is also the task of the administrative bodies and of the mass media at the federal, regional, and local level of government. Regretfully, after the disintegration of the USSR not enough effort has been put into promoting national and cultural tolerance. There is no special body responsible for interethnic education, the formation of interethnic accord, religious tolerance and the respect for ethnic traditions. This situation can produce harmful effects. We are witnessing how unknown individuals develop their graffiti skills in Kaliningrad.

Mr **Aleksanyan** noted that the authorities actively have to integrate the migrants from the former Soviet republics into their new cultural and linguistic environment and help them to develop a respectful attitude towards the values and traditions of the local people. The national-cultural organizations could help the migrants of their own nationality orient themselves in the region. Simultaneously, a respectful attitude towards

the traditions and cultural values of the new migrants also should be promoted among the local people. This is the way in which a homogeneous political nation in Russia and in the multiethnic Kaliningrad region should be developed. It points to the prospect of creating a developed civil society in the westernmost and remotest region of Russia. This - and only this - can become a solid basis for the future Russian democratic state on a territory where Armenians have been living for over a thousand years as part of a multiethnic Russian society, the speaker concluded.

Commenting on the presentation of Mr **Aleksanyan**, Mr **Järve** noted that two important aspects were highlighted in the presentation: the problem of the adaptation of migrants and the external assistance in the preservation of their identity. This is exactly where the national-cultural organizations could help. There are several ethnocultural organizations and organizations of migrants in the Kaliningrad region, whose assistance and support would be very helpful for the migrants settling in the region.

The presentations of the members of the Kaliningrad Youth Parliamentary Assembly, Ms **Marina Kirichenko** and Mr **Gennadij Novikov**, were of special interest to the participants of the conference. The presentation of Ms **Kirichenko**, Chairman of the Committee of the Youth Parliamentary Assembly for Relations with Non-governmental Organizations, focused on the problems of cultural identification of the youth in the Kaliningrad region. Ms **Kirichenko** reported that the Youth Parliamentary Assembly (YPA) was established in 1999 by a group of young people following Article 19 of the Kaliningrad regional law of "On the State Youth Policy in the Kaliningrad Region" and Decree No. 9 of the Kaliningrad regional Duma of 21 October 1999. The organization acquired the status of a research-consultative council at the Kaliningrad regional Duma. Its decisions are treated as recommendations by the authorities.

The Assembly participates in the development of programmes and in the drafting of normative acts related to youth problems, represents and protects the interests of the youth in all legislative and executive institutions, creates conditions for the formation and preparation of a pool of civil servants from the representatives of promising young people to be employed by the regional authorities, organizes and conducts seminars, conferences, disputes and other events that help finding solutions to youth-related problems. The Assembly deems it of special importance to examine the problems facing

the youth of the region. These include the self-identification of the young people and the development of ethnic tolerance. Research has identified some positive developments as well as a considerable number of negative phenomena.

Ms **Kirichenko** presented the data of the Kaliningrad Regional Committee on State Statistics which shows that in 2001 there were 213,609 young people aged between 14 and 29 in the region, making up 22.5 per cent of the overall population. Among many typical problems of all of Russia's regions (unemployment, low wages, an increasing crime rate, a growing number of minors among drug addicts and alcoholics) Kaliningrad faces a specific local problem: the self-identification of the young people, i.e. "in the first place we are Kaliningraders, only then—inhabitants of Russia". Ms **Kirichenko** backed up her thesis with data from the sociological youth survey "Russia from the Baltic Sea to the Pacific Ocean". The survey revealed that 53.5 % of the respondents identify themselves first of all as inhabitants of their region, 36 % as inhabitants of Russia, and 13.2 % as Europeans. This is, without doubt, related to the geopolitical situation of the region, but also to the general attitude of the federal centre and Europe towards the Kaliningrad region.

The other aspect of the problem is the attitude of the region's inhabitants towards the federal centre. It is not uncommon today to hear phrases such as "When I was in Russia..." or "They in Russia...". Similar phrases have become commonplace among the people of the Kaliningrad region, both among the youth and adults. This is not surprising. The majority of the region's children and young people have never been to Russia (or they have been only to Moscow). By comparison, every third of them has visited Poland, Germany, Lithuania, or some other European country. Even Turkey is a more common holiday destination than, for example, Sochi, a Russian Black Sea resort town. This might be the reason why the young generation perceives their region to be a small country with a "Rouble-Dollar-Euro" as the national currency.

Education presents another example. Today, every young person who speaks a foreign language can apply for a grant or subsidy from international foundations to continue education in some European country, be it Poland, Sweden or Denmark. The accepted applicants receive enough money to cover their living costs in those countries.

The speaker doubted that this is possible with any institution of higher education in Russia.

Cooperation is an important aspect in the development of any region, but especially in that of a border region. As a rule, non-governmental youth organizations, which have a highly active staff, cooperate with their European counterparts. By comparison, only a few keep in touch with partners from other regions of Russia. Previously, joining international youth camps or exchange programmes were popular because of the possibility to go abroad. Currently, this has become more of a bilateral process. Delegations from Europe pay return visits and sometimes find it very surprising that the youth in Kaliningrad are not much different from them. They all listen to the same music, watch the same movies, drink the same beverages and so on.

Another characteristic feature of the region is the 'eclectic' nature of Kaliningrad. It includes the whole variety of cultural traditions of the peoples living in the region – Russians, Byelorussians, Poles, Lithuanians, Kazakhs, Koreans, Armenians, and others. Western culture also has a strong influence on the region. Kaliningrad was among the first provincial regions of the country to start celebrating such Western holidays as Valentine's Day and Halloween, which have become very popular among the younger generation. The musical tastes of the youth are variegated. This might be a result of the fact that new musical hits reach the region more quickly than the rest of Russia. In concluding her presentation, Ms **Kirichenko** insisted that there are no interethnic conflicts among the regional youth. Some occurrences of national and racial animosity can be observed, but according to the speaker, this is a natural phenomenon in any multiethnic community, state, or society where people belonging to more than one national culture live.

Mr **Gennadij Novikov**, representative of the Youth Parliamentary Assembly, talked about the interaction of religious and youth organizations in the Kaliningrad region. He referred to several surveys that revealed that the Russian youth is less religious than other age groups. At the same time, the number of 'total atheists' among young people is decreasing. But the religiousness of the youth often merely demonstrates the wish to be similar to others, to call themselves believers, to conform to the stereotype. At the beginning of 2002, there were 134 registered religious

organizations in the Kaliningrad region. The number of religious youth organizations was approximately the same. According to their confession, they were divided up as follows:

The Russian Orthodox Church has 46 parishes. The leaders of the church maintain that between two thirds and three fourths of the inhabitants of the region identify themselves as Orthodox believers. The church has a department of education, which together with the department of education of the regional administration organizes courses for the teachers of the subject “The basics of Russian Orthodox culture”. The church is also active in preparing the Days of Slavic Letters and Culture in the region. Recently a department of relations with the youth has been established at the church, which is responsible not only for organizing youth activities, but also for cooperating with non-governmental youth organizations.

The Roman Catholic Church has 21 parishes and six smaller groups of believers. Its leaders claim that thirty thousand inhabitants of the region identify themselves with this faith. However, only some three to four thousand of them are active Catholics. During recent years, the influence of this particular church is increasing in the Kaliningrad region. The main reason for this is charity work and the provision of humanitarian assistance for people of all age groups, including young people. The possible establishment of additional parishes has been announced, including a special parish for young people. The Catholics are active in national-cultural organizations, youth centres and various other establishments of interest to young people. Monks of various Polish and Lithuanian orders, as well as believers of other Christian confessions are working at some of the parishes.

The Evangelic-Lutheran Church has 15 parishes and some 23 unregistered groups. The membership is estimated at around three thousand people. They are cooperating with other organizations in providing humanitarian assistance and in organizing meetings and conferences on religious topics.

The Muslim community has one registered organization. The number of active Muslims is over five hundred people. The total number of the representatives from Islamic nations in the Kaliningrad region is between eighteen and twenty-five thousand

people. Muslims are active in national-cultural organizations and regional branches of the Islamic Party of the Russian Federation. The most important annual religious holidays observed by the Muslim community in the region are Uraza Bairam and Kurban Bairam. A project for a new mosque is also currently being developed.

The adherents of Judaism are active members in two organizations: The Jewish Community of Kaliningrad City and the The Jewish Community Adat-Israel. The number of adherents of Judaism is approximately one-and-a-half to two thousand people. The participants of these organizations are active in planning religious festivities in Kaliningrad together with other non-governmental organizations, including youth organizations. They travel abroad to visit historical religious sites. A synagogue is going to be built in Kaliningrad in the nearest future.

There are also a number of churches and parishes of other confessions in the Kaliningrad region, such as Baptists, Adventists, Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormons, Buddhists, Krishnaites, Methodists, Armenian-Grigorian Church, among others.

Mr **Novikov** also talked about trends in the cooperation between religious organizations and non-governmental youth organizations in the Kaliningrad region. This work chiefly focuses on the social sphere, which includes the support of people in need, the provision of humanitarian assistance, consultations on a variety of social issues related to the development of young people, visits to sick people and the support for young families and single mothers. Another aspect of the work of religious and youth organizations is the strengthening of the family and the protection of unborn children. To achieve this aim, educational work is carried out in secondary schools and higher educational institutions of the city and the region.

Another actual aspect is the fight against HIV infections and drug addiction. Support is provided for drug addicts and infected persons, as well as for their relatives. This includes legal and psychological assistance, as well as seminars for youth workers and volunteers. These workers and volunteers actively cooperate with the Kaliningrad authorities and youth organizations, as well as with Polish and Swedish organizations that deal with similar problems.

One of the main aspects of the activity of religious and youth organizations is migration. The main goals of this activity are urgent social and legal support for young migrants at the first stage of their orientation, the provision of legal and psychological assistance, the fostering of a positive public opinion toward migrants and the assistance in the migrants' adaptation to the new environment. Social and legal consultations are organized for young migrants to provide them with the necessary information. Special projects are devoted to this sphere of activities, such as "Medical Social Assistance for the Refugees and Forced Migrants" or an exhibition "Migrants as Creative People".

Since 2001, religious and youth organizations have also been active in providing social-psychological and medical assistance to prisoners. Furthermore, there is a special project "Support for Families with Disabled Children", in the framework of which socio-psychological support is provided to young disabled people and socio-cultural rehabilitation support to their families. In addition, religious and youth organizations plan a variety of charity events, concerts and performances for young people, entertaining events, meetings and conferences on religious and social topics. Young people and their families receive humanitarian assistance. The number of churches and districts for believers and the number of young people among them is increasing.

According to Mr **Novikov**, the main goal of cooperation between religious and youth organizations is to educate young people to respect religious and moral values, to support young people and their families, as well as to foster the spiritual development of a young person.

Mr **Novikov** was asked several questions from the audience. One participant asked two questions. "Do young people just consider themselves to be religious, or do they really believe?" and "What values underlie the education of young people?" Mr **Novikov** explained that young people do consider themselves religious and that their education is based on universally accepted values. Another participant inquired whether young people define themselves by belonging to a certain ethnic group or to a particular confession. Mr **Novikov** responded that young people define themselves by their relations with each other, by communication, by their capability of doing something for other young people. Ethnicity does not play a special role in that self-identification. Belonging to a certain ethnic group or to a confession is not an issue among young

people. Yet another participant was puzzled by the fact that while the religiousness of young people is increasing, drug addiction and crime are also on the rise. Mr **Novikov** gave a short answer: it has become fashionable to be religious.

This concluded the first working day of the international conference.

IV. Discussion

The plenary meeting of the international conference continued on Saturday, 30 November. It was organized as a round table in order for the participants of the conference to have time for discussion. Mr **Järve**, the chairman of the meeting, enumerated the issues to be discussed: legislation and the conceptual framework in the sphere of regulating activities of national and cultural unions; the international and Russian experience in resolving interethnic disputes; material-technical conditions of minority organizations in the Kaliningrad region; the lessons to be learnt from international experience of interethnic cooperation; relations of national and cultural unions with authorities and political parties; the role of national and cultural unions in improving the image of the Kaliningrad region, etc.

The discussion was opened by Mr **Andrei Pozdnyakov**, advisor to the Russian government, who touched upon the issue of federal legislation. He claimed that the federal law on national-cultural autonomies has drawbacks, which have recently become particularly obvious. For a more productive functioning of the law, several amendments have to be introduced. In 2001, the Ministry of Nationalities made an attempt and proposed amendments to the law, which passed the first reading in the state Duma. But the opinions of legislators, academics and representatives of the ministry differed in the interpretation of the term “national minority” and the amendments were not adopted. This set back notwithstanding, the government will not stop its efforts to improve the law. Another aim of the federal government’s policy is to propose amendments to other laws on nationality policy (laws on the protection of small indigenous peoples, on communities of small peoples, on their habitat, and others).

Ms **Dubovaya** wanted to know whether there are formulations such as “advisory boards/councils shall be established, the budget shall have a separate line, mass media shall be financed” in the governmental draft of the law. Mr **Pozdnyakov** answered in the negative. According to him, it is very difficult to make the federal government apply binding clauses. In those federal subjects where the initiative comes from below and where the administration of the subject understands the necessity of constructive work with national-cultural unions, these issues are solved successfully, but where the regional authority is inattentive, the work comes to a standstill.

Ms **Tsyrenova** elaborated on the use of the words “may” and “shall” in the statement of her colleague. According to her, previously laws could not oblige federal subjects. Now, the committee of Dmitry Kozak, deputy head of the Russian presidential administration, which is preparing proposals on laws concerning nationality issues, supports formulations that oblige regional governments. There **shall** be a separate line in the regional budget; regional authorities **shall** render assistance to national-cultural unions. She suggested that the administration of the region elaborates a strategic five-year programme relating to the development of the different nationalities living in the Kaliningrad region, which would be scientifically grounded and would specify the rights of representatives of all national associations. The implementation of this programme, according to Ms **Tsyrenova**, should be assigned to all subdivisions of the regional administration. However, before this can be done, representatives of Kaliningrad need to visit other regions of Russia in order to exchange experiences. For this purpose, an interregional seminar could be organized in Perm or in Orenburg.

Mr **Evgenij Chayauskas**, representative of the Lithuanian national-cultural autonomy of the region, noted that national-cultural associations in the Kaliningrad region do not have the financial resources to organize such interregional seminars and the administration of the region does not arrange seminars for national-cultural autonomies and organizations. Mr **Pozdnyakov** added that the “group of Kozak” works with a longer-term perspective. As far as the Law on National-Cultural Autonomies in the Russian Federation is concerned, the state Duma adopted amendments to it in the second reading. The essence of the amendments was an attempt to constitute a national-cultural autonomy as a subject of law. The weak point of the law is that it does not define the concept “national minority”, which is important because defining this term

has met strong resistance and fostered misunderstanding among the deputies of the state Duma.

Mr **Andrey Rende**, representative of the regional national-cultural autonomy of Germans, expressed his surprise that the national-cultural associations of the region are left all alone. He claimed that the problems under discussion have to be considered in a broader context. As an example, he referred to the initiative of the Russian Ministry of Education to introduce in schools a course of Orthodox culture. According to Mr **Rende**, this, on the one hand, is a positive step but on the other hand, it is not clear why Orthodox culture should be given preferential treatment. Since many people living in Russia belong to other religious cultures, such an initiative would provoke friction and tension among national representatives. He also noted that it is necessary to discuss nation-wide problems of culture. In the schools, not only the Holocaust, but also the 20 million Soviet citizens who lost their lives in the Second World War, the Armenian genocide in 1915-1916, the killing of Poles in 1941 and the victims of Stalinism should be talked about. He stressed that until now the Germans of Russia as a people have not been rehabilitated. They are unable to solve their problems and they have lost their culture and language. Mr **Rende** expressed his concerns regarding the work of the mass media, which depicts nationality issues incorrectly. There are no essentially bad or good nations. However, some nations have bad representatives and the media should report on them very thoughtfully.

Mr **Chayauskas**, rejoining the discussion, noted that in the Kaliningrad region interethnic relations have to be constantly monitored. The region has a complex cultural history and the problem of how its inhabitants are going to deal with this heritage will always loom large.

Responding to the criticism addressed by some participants to the executive power of the region, Ms **Dubovaya** stressed that the nationality policy will be successful if it is not imposed from above. She made clear that nothing would be dictated from above, although some national-cultural associations seem to expect this kind of behaviour from the regional authorities. The speaker explained that the monitoring of interethnic relations takes place quarterly (according to the Decree of the Governor No. 4 of 2002), but that the results have not been disclosed to the general

public. The proposal to develop a concept of a nationality policy for the Kaliningrad region is accepted without objections. The administration is thinking about the establishment of the House of Friendship to accommodate national-cultural organizations. One of the possibilities would be to build it next to the German-Russian House, which had been opened in Kaliningrad nearly ten years ago.

According to Ms **Dubovaya**, the constituent parts of the governmental mechanism in a multinational region are the following: an expert assessment of the situation of ethnic groups and the specifics of their established interrelations and development; the planning of the development of the ethnocultural system at the regional level; the consideration of the originality of each ethnic group, each national culture; the creation of favourable conditions to ensure the adaptation of ethnocultural features to the new living conditions in the region. Practical measures for the solution of these tasks today include: the development of a concept of a regional nationality policy; the development of a programme for the national-cultural development of the peoples of the Kaliningrad region; the establishment of a House of Friendship for the national-cultural organizations of the region; the introduction of a line in the regional budget for the financing of national-cultural autonomies and associations; the conducting of research on the actual situation and the problems of the ethnic groups in the region in order to 'draw' an ethnic map of the region. Furthermore, a council on interethnic relations should be established at the administration of the region, the task of which would be to work out recommendations on the introduction of minority schools, classes, optional subjects, Sunday schools and minority-language groups in pre-school establishments; on learning minority languages in educational establishments; on the elaboration of recommendations and routes of excursions for the study of the region; on the publication of educational and methodical literature in minority languages and on many other issues.

Mr **Chayauskas** asked whether the regional administration has a mechanism to determine the necessary volume of funding for national-cultural autonomies. Ms **Dubovaya** answered that the mechanism works through grants for programmes of social importance. These programmes are examined by a committee consisting of representatives of the administration, the regional Duma and the Public Chamber).

The financing of the national and cultural unions was further elaborated on by Mr **Vladimir Bagalin**, Chairman of the regional Duma committee on law and order, security, international, interethnic and interregional relations. He said that the budget of the Kaliningrad region is five billion roubles. A little more than 50 per cent of this sum is the region's own revenue. The deficit of the regional budget in 2002 was five per cent. The average monthly salary in the Kaliningrad region is about 90 US dollars - 20 per cent of the regional population live under the subsistence level. There are 1,460 voluntary associations with different orientations registered in the Kaliningrad region. The government bodies have to work under the above-described conditions and their most important task is the search for intellectual forces capable of promoting the economic breakthrough of the Kaliningrad region. It is not easy to find financing sources for such an important task as the nationality policy. The people of Kaliningrad have to understand that the region can develop only if it is economically strong. Mr **Bagalin** appealed to the participants of the conference to attract people competent in economics to search for ways out of the continuing crisis. This is especially vital for the rural regions. According to Mr **Bagalin**, the economic situation has to become the most important issue in the functioning of national and cultural autonomies and unions. It is also necessary to create opportunities for small and medium sized enterprises.

Mr **Chayauskas** did not agree with such a role of national and cultural associations because the majority of their members are older people who are unable to run a business. In the case of Kaliningrad, national and cultural autonomies can count only on the government; otherwise they are doomed.

Mr **Bagalin** responded that his task was to admonish. If the national and cultural autonomies keep on waiting for someone to help them, they face serious disappointment. He reminded the group that today there is no political majority in the regional Duma. Pressure, including that coming from the leaders of national and cultural autonomies, has to be directed either at delegates who have been elected over the party list system or at delegates who have been elected to the Duma from single-member districts. Mr **Bagalin** appealed to the leaders of national and cultural unions to constantly 'pester' the Duma delegates in order to remind them of their obligation to solve the problems of their electors. As a reaction to Mr **Bagalin's** statement, Mr **Chayauskas** expressed his doubt about the productivity of such interaction. He stated

that the Lithuanian national-cultural autonomy was in close contact with the regional Duma when the issue of a separate line in the regional budget for the needs of national and cultural unions was discussed. However, this idea was ‘buried’ in the course of an inter-faction struggle.

Continuing the discussion, **Mr Bagalin** proclaimed that he carried the responsibility for himself and not for all delegates, including those who are bound by their party membership. In addition, the regional authorities are tied to the strict budget code of the Russian Federation. According to this, all the financing comes from the federal treasury. Even the regional Duma does not have the possibility to run the budget as it used to be.

Mr Algimantas Savitskas, chairman of the regional council of the Lithuanian society, gave the discussion a more cheerful twist. He noted that only ten years ago such a conference could not have taken place since the views on the issue of nationalities were too different. Today, nobody persecutes him because he is Lithuanian, he can talk about his rights, about the preservation of his culture. He pointed out the high quality of the presentations and the participants’ considerable knowledge of the issues under discussion. He also stressed that today the Lithuanians living in the Kaliningrad region can pray, sing and teach children in their native language. There are still some unresolved problems: the introduction of Lithuanian television programmes and the development of minority education.

In the course of the discussion, **Mr Stanislav Chernykh**, senior inspector on special assignments of the regional department of the interior, appealed to the European visitors to assist the regional actors in the struggle against negative transnational developments, such as criminality, extremism, terrorism and drug addiction. **Mr Järve** answered that the European Centre for Minority Issues is not authorized to deal with such issues; the centre has other tasks. There are intergovernmental agreements and institutions, as well as a global anti-terrorist coalition. It is possible that a serious reassessment of the reasons for the differences between the rich and poor countries may take place, which could lead to an overhaul of the present international economic and trade relations. The centre follows these developments and aligns its work accordingly.

Mr **Chernykh** formulated his next question as follows: “Why is the Kaliningrad region depicted as a hotbed of crime?” Mr **Bagalin** responded that the people of Kaliningrad have to represent themselves with numbers and facts and that they should not let incompetent journalists and reporters speak on their behalf. Besides, visitors from Europe may also use their contacts and their communication channels to create an objective picture of the Kaliningrad region.

Mr **Aleksanyan** continued to discuss the topic of criminality. In his opinion, the marginal layer of society acts as a breeding ground for the criminal environment. In the developed countries, where the government functions effectively, this layer can consist of up to 12 per cent of the population. In the Soviet Union this layer reached between three and four per cent. After the Soviet Union broke up, the marginal layer reached between 30 and 40 per cent. Therefore, the national and cultural autonomies and unions have to work towards decreasing the share of the marginalized in the overall population. For example, Armenians from Nagorno-Karabakh came to the Kaliningrad Region without passports or any documents proving their previous achievements. In the new place they had to start their lives anew. In a situation where there is no hope for any outside help, people are ready to do anything, even if it means breaking the law. This is where the help of national and cultural unions is needed.

Mr **Järve** supported Mr **Aleksanyan**'s point of view. According to him, marginalization fosters criminal actions and the national-cultural autonomies and unions can perform a valuable role by preventing the marginalization of migrants in the Kaliningrad region.

After the discussion, the participants considered the draft of the conference's final document, which was displayed and amended in the process on a large video screen. It took more than two hours. The draft highlighted the suggestions made both at the plenary meeting and during the discussions by the participants of the conference. During the discussion of this draft document essential remarks and additions were proposed by **Boris Sheremetev**, the second secretary of the representation of the Russian Foreign Ministry in Kaliningrad, by **Vladimir Bagalin**, member of the regional Duma and by the leaders of the national-cultural autonomies of Lithuanians, Belorussians, and Germans. A heated discussion was ignited by a proposal of **Christian**

Wellmann, Deputy Director of the Institute for Peace Research, Kiel, to include in the last article of the document the following phrase: “to draw the attention of all the subjects involved to the necessity of adopting measures according to their competencies in order to prevent the occurrence of hatred, anti-Semitism, xenophobia and discrimination in any form.” The participants’ different viewpoints notwithstanding, the majority agreed that this phrase could conclude the work of the international conference as it reflects the spirit and thoughts of all participants.

VI. Annexes

A. Final Document of the International Conference

The participants of the international conference “The Role of the Interethnic Factor in the Development of the Kaliningrad Region”...

- noted that people of more than 100 nations live in the Kaliningrad region. Five national and cultural autonomies and more than 90 national, cultural and Cossack unions (further in the text – Unions) have been registered and are presently active, in preserving their historical and cultural heritage, in promoting national traditions, folklore, amateur art, and language studies and in sending their representatives to all of the region’s public institutions;
- discussed the problems and perspectives of interethnic relations in the Kaliningrad region, the European experience with the implementation of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, peculiarities of ethno-policy in the Russian Federation, the record of the Council of Europe’s work with migrants, migration and the religious situation in the Kaliningrad region, the experience of working with national and cultural autonomies, as well as the identity problems of the Kaliningrad youth and the cooperation between youth and religious organizations in the Kaliningrad region;
- supported the work of the Kaliningrad regional Duma on the development and improvement of legislation on religious issues, the creation of favourable conditions for the activities of national and cultural autonomies and Unions and the promotion of a further democratization of regional public life and EU enlargement;
- assured that there are stable and favourable conditions for the preservation and development of national and cultural heritage in the Kaliningrad Region;
- noted the positive role of national and cultural autonomies and Unions in guaranteeing a stable regional development in new geopolitical conditions and in reaching a civil consensus;

- arrived at the common conclusion regarding the necessity to join the efforts of all national and cultural autonomies and Unions, NGOs and citizens in the establishment of a tolerant civil society.

We consider it possible to draw the attention of:

1. the federal state authorities of the Russian Federation:

- to apply the positive experience of Russia with the harmonization of relations between different ethnic groups in the Kaliningrad region;
- to eliminate contradictions and omissions in the federal law on national and cultural autonomies of the Russian Federation, to dispose of vague clauses of this law concerning the governmental authorities of the subjects of the Russian Federation;
- to the necessity of improving legislation on the rehabilitation of the repressed peoples of Russia, including the Germans, restoring their language and culture;
- to foresee a special budget line for the financing of federal national and cultural autonomies while drafting the law “On the Federal Budget of the Russian Federation”.

2. the administration of the Kaliningrad region:

- to the necessity of establishing a consultative council on national and cultural issues at the governor’s office of the Kaliningrad region. The suggestions of national and cultural autonomies and Unions of the Kaliningrad region are to be taken into consideration during the development of the council’s statute;
- to the necessity of developing a concept of a regional ethno-policy based on the experience of other subjects of the Russian Federation;

- to the necessity of elaborating and adopting the statute on regional ethnocultural components for the public educational institutions of the Kaliningrad region;
- to the necessity of organizing interregional seminars for the exchange of experiences in interethnic cooperation and in work of state authorities in this sphere;
- to the necessity of opening a the House of Peoples' Friendship in the Kaliningrad region.

3. the Kaliningrad regional Duma:

- to work out regional legislation that takes into consideration the ethnic diversity of the Kaliningrad region and the interests of different social groups in the population, including forced migrants, taking into account the experience of the member countries of the Council of Europe;
- to the necessity of supporting the initiative of the Kaliningrad regional administration to include into the regional budget a special line for the financing of national and cultural autonomies, and of advancing a legal initiative in the state Duma on changing the budget code of the Russian Federation.

4. The regional departments of federal authorities

- to the necessity of discontinuing hooliganism against representatives of ethnic communities living in the Kaliningrad region;
- to the possibility, provided by federal legislation, to organize local national and cultural autonomies in the territory of the Kaliningrad region independently of the existence of regional autonomies.

We consider it necessary:

5. to support the initiative of the youth parliamentary assembly and youth organizations of the Kaliningrad region concerning the youth's civic and patriotic education and self-identification according to the principles of respect for religious and national differences, human rights and universally accepted values as citizens of Russia who live in a territory with unusual geopolitical, economic and social conditions.

6. to appeal to the mass media, politicians and leaders of executive authorities to refrain from ethnic stereotyping when reporting and commenting on events that occur in the Kaliningrad region.

7. to draw the attention of all the subjects involved to the necessity of adopting measures according to their competencies in order to prevent the occurrence of hatred, anti-Semitism, xenophobia and discrimination in any form.

Kaliningrad
30 November 2002

B. List of Participants

№	Name	Position	Organization
1	Aleksanyan Rudolf	Director	Kaliningrad Regional branch of «Union of Armenians in Russia»
2	Andreyev Anatolij	Ataman (Cossack chieftain)	NGO «Union of Cossacks in Kaliningrad – stanitsa Andreeskaya »
3	Antonenko Maria		NGO «League of voters of Kaliningrad Region»
4	Bagalin Vladimir	Head of the Committee for law and order, security, international and interregional relations	Kaliningrad Regional Duma
5	Baryshev Dmitrij	Head	Kaliningrad regional youth organisation «Hope of the century»
6	Beletzkaya Anastasiya	Head of the social sector	Kaliningrad regional youth organisation «Hope of the century»
7	Belozeroval Valerij	Head of the apparatus	Administration of Chernyahovsk Municipality
8	Birbrover Semen	Council member	Jewish community of Kaliningrad
9	Boesche-Seefeldt Ute	Baltic Sea Project Organizer	European Centre for Minority Issues (ECMI)
10	Bordinovskij Vladimir		Regional NGO of Ukrainian culture «Dumka»
11	Chayauskas Evgenij	Deputy Head	Regional national-cultural autonomy of Lithuanians in the Kaliningrad Region;

		Director	Russian-Lithuanian cultural centre
12	Chayauskas Maxim	Chairman Editor in chief	Kaliningrad union of Lithuanian youth; Newspaper «Gintaras»
13	Chernykh Stanislav	Senior inspector for special issues	Police Department of the Kaliningrad Region
14	Cheshko Sergey	Deputy Director, PhD in History	Institute of ethnology and anthropology, Russian Academy of Science
15	Dubovaya Olga	Deputy Head of the Committee for information, press and public relations	Administration of the Kaliningrad Region
16	Duda Georgij		Kaliningrad regional community of Ukrainian culture «Mria» (NGO)
17	Emets Svetlana	Deputy Director	Kaliningrad Regional branch of «Union of Armenians in Russia»
18	Gerasimov Igor		Regional NGO of Ukrainian culture «Rodynka»
19	Gerbst Vladimir	Director	Regional NGO of Russian Germans «Zemland»
20	Golubeva Ljubov		Regional NGO of Ukrainian culture «Dumka»
21	Gurov Igor	Consultant	Department for collaboration with NGOs, religious organisations and nationality issues, Administration of the Kaliningrad Region
22	Gurova Silvia	Vice-Mayor	Kaliningrad City Government
23	Ivanov Alexander		Association of unregistered organisations
24	Järve Priit	Senior research associate	European Centre for Minority Issues (ECMI)
25	Kaganovskij Anatolij	Associate Professor of Management Department	Kaliningrad Tourism Institute
26	Kharchenko Vladimir	Advisor	Kaliningrad department of the federal employment agency of the Ministry of labour and social development of the Russian Federation
27	Kirichenko Marina	Chairwoman of Committee for NGOs	Youth Parliament Assembly
28	Kirsch Johannes		Free University of Berlin
29	Kovun Ivan		Foundation of penitential organisations
30	Kuzin Vladimir	Deputy Director	Information and analytical centre RIAC
31	Kuzminov Alexander	Rector, PhD in political science, Professor	Kaliningrad Tourism University
32	Kuldyshev Evgenij	Head of the Migration Department	Police Department of the Kaliningrad Region
33	Kyaulakis I.	Director	Band «Pyanki vaike»
34	Lavrinovich Kleofas	Council member	NGO «Community of Polish culture in the Kaliningrad Region»
35	Laurushas I.	Head	Rehabilitation Centre for former exiles «Trayamtinis»
36	Lening Viktor	Chairman	National-cultural autonomy of Germans in the Kaliningrad Region
37	Leonova R.	Chairman	Kaliningrad Region Community of Lithuanian culture, named after L. Reza
38	Long Litt-Woon	Consultant	Council of Europe
39	Manzhosene V.	Council member	Kaliningrad Region Community of Lithuanian culture, named after L. Reza
40	Martynuk Vadim	Delegate	Kaliningrad Regional branch of Russian non-government organisation of the mass media staff «MediaSouz»
41	Muliuolis Alvidas	Head; Chairman	Lithuanian regional national-cultural autonomy in the Kaliningrad Region; National-cultural Council of Kaliningrad Region Public Chamber
42	Novikov Gennadij	Delegate	Youth Parliamentary Assembly
43	Ogol Maria	Head	Charity Christian NGO of Ukrainians of the Kaliningrad Region «Dobrodia»

44	Parshukova Raissa		Regional NGO of Ukrainian culture «Dumka»
45	Pozdnyakov Andrey	Consultant of the Apparatus of RF Government	Government of the Russian Federation
46	Rende Andrey	Delegate	National-cultural autonomy of Germans in the Kaliningrad Region
47	Rymar Nikolaj	Chairman	Regional non-government organisation «Union of Ukrainians from Kaliningrad Region»
48	Salenko Alexander	Professor of Faculty of Law	Kaliningrad State University
49	Savitskas Algimantas	Council Chairman	Regional Lithuanian Community
50	Schielberg Silke	Consultant	Schleswig-Holstein Institute of Peace, University of Kiel
51	Shakhov Vyacheslav	Head, PhD in culture studies, Honoured artist of Russian Federation	Regional NGO «Cultural community Prinemania »
52	Shvabas R.	Deputy Head	Regional national-cultural autonomy of Lithuanians in Kaliningrad region
53	Sheremetjev Boris	Second secretary	Kaliningrad office of the Russian Foreign Ministry
54	Sivkova Olga		Youth organization «Svet»
55	Suhovolskij Yakov	Council member	Kaliningrad Jewish community
56	Tomchuk Vyacheslav		Charity Christian NGO of Ukrainians in Kaliningrad Region “Dobrodia”
57	Tsyrenova Zoya	Consultant of the Apparatus of RF Government	Ministry of nationality affairs of the Russian Federation
58	Vabalas N.	Advisor for youth issues	Kaliningrad regional Union of Lithuanian youth
59	Vabalene V.	Chairman of Auditing Commission	Community of Lithuanian culture, named after L. Reza
60	Vershinina Irina	Ombudsman in the Kaliningrad Region	Ombudsman Office in the Kaliningrad Region
61	Vinokurov Evgenij	Doctoral student	Institute of world economy and international relations of the Russian Academy of Science (Moscow) and Grenoble University (France)
62	Walczak Piotr		Department of migration and Roma problems, Council of Europe
63	Wellmann Christian	Deputy Director	Schleswig-Holstein Institute of Peace, University of Kiel
64	Yachmeneva Tatjana	Director	Democracy development Foundation