

## **BDOHP Biographical Details and Interview Index**

**GLOVER, Dame Audrey Frances (born c 1942)**

**DBE 2004, CMG 1997**

Career (with, on right, relevant pages in interview)

Called to the Bar, Gray's Inn, 1961	pp 2-3
Lord Chancellor's Department, 1965–67	p 3
Joined Foreign Office, as Assistant Legal Adviser, 1967-71	pp 3-5
Assistant (Temporary), Attorney General's Dept, Australia, 1972–73	pp 6-7
Adviser on British Law, Library of Congress, Washington, 1974–77	pp 8-10
Legal Adviser (Assistant), FCO, 1978–85	pp 10-12
Legal Adviser, British Military Government, Berlin, 1985–89	pp 12-14
Legal Counsellor, FCO, and UK Agent to European Court of Human Rights, 1990–94	pp 15-16
Director (with rank of Ambassador), OSCE Office of Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, Warsaw, 1994–97	pp 16-24
Leader, UK Delegation to UN Human Rights Commission, 1998–2003	pp 25-27
Senior Adviser to Coalition Provisional Authority, Iraq and to Iraqi Minister of Human Rights, 2004–06	pp 27-30
General reflections on human rights and inequality	pp 30-33
Head, OSCE Election Observation Missions, 2004 onwards	pp 33-36

# BRITISH DIPLOMATIC ORAL HISTORY PROGRAMME

RECOLLECTIONS OF DAME AUDREY GLOVER DBE CMG

RECORDED AND TRANSCRIBED BY IAN HAY-CAMPBELL

*Copyright: Dame Audrey Glover*

**IH-C:** This is Ian Hay-Campbell recording Dame Audrey Glover for the British Diplomatic Oral History Programme on Tuesday, 6 April 2021.

Audrey, how did you come to choose law as your field of study at the beginning of your career?

**AG:** Well, the school and my parents suggested that I should go to university and I wanted to go to university myself and was thinking of my subjects. Much as I liked subjects like History and English I wasn't sure what you could do with them afterwards - I couldn't see myself doing anything very much with them. Friends of my parents were in the legal profession, they were solicitors, somebody else was the head of the court reporters - people who wrote down what was happening in court proceedings - and I had been taken to the Central Criminal Court and the Royal Courts of Justice. So, I thought that it all seems interesting because it covers so many subjects. There must be some among them that I would want to do and I vaguely thought about being a solicitor. The great advantage of law was that you didn't have to know anything about it before you went to university. So, on that basis I applied to universities and I was lucky enough to get to King's College, London.

**IH-C:** And in the course of your studies, did you find a particular branch of law that particularly interested you?

**AG:** Yes, towards the end. It was international law. In fact, when I was in my second year we were doing trusts and land and I thought: 'Oh, this is ghastly. This is what solicitors do so perhaps I won't be a solicitor.' And a friend said to me: 'Well, you know, if you join an Inn of Court and if you do a six months course after you've finished your finals and do your bar exam, you can quite quickly become a barrister.' And I thought that seemed rather attractive. And so I decided pretty well towards the end of my law degree to become a barrister. I

joined Gray's Inn and I started eating my dinners, which was a requirement, so I was able, when I'd finished my degree in June 1963, to sign up for the bar final exam.

**IH-C:** And how did that then lead you to the actual choice of employer, as it were, with the Foreign Office?

**AG:** I didn't join the Foreign Office straightaway by any manner of means. I did a year and a half's pupillage which I much enjoyed. But I had been doing a lot of divorce and criminal cases and I wondered: 'Do I really want to carry on in this particular area of the law?' I thought I needed a complete change and had to get out of this academic sort of world and I went to live in Spain for a year and a half and taught English and did a lot of other things there. Then my parents said: 'Well, it's about time you came back from Spain.' And I said: 'Yes, but I don't have a job.' So, they said: 'Oh well, OK', and put the phone down and about a week later I got a call and they said: 'Darling, we have found you a job in the Lord Chancellor's Department in the Criminal Court of Appeal Division where you would be helping the judges on appeal write up facts of cases that they were dealing with. Would you like to go for an interview?' So, I duly came back to the UK, had an interview and I got the job. I wasn't really terribly enthusiastic although it was interesting, but not terribly, terribly absorbing. Then one day the registrar who was in charge of us took me to one side and said: 'Audrey – it's not that I want to get rid of you but I've seen an advertisement in *The Times* newspaper today for legal advisers with the Foreign & Commonwealth Office. I think that's much more up your line and would suit you much more than working here in these courts day in and day out. Why don't you have a go?' I said: 'Oh, well – no' and he said: 'Go on, you have a go.' And by some miracle I was selected.

#### **Assistant Legal Adviser, FCO, 1967**

**IH-C:** One of the few women to be accepted for that job?

**AG:** There was a vacancy because a lady called Joyce Gutteridge was about to leave and she had been the first woman. There was another lady there, Eileen Denza who had joined, I think, about two years ahead of me – and then there was me.

**IH-C:** Maybe just to clear up for those not too familiar with it - what is it exactly that the Foreign Office Legal Advisers do?

**AG:** In two words: we give legal advice. That's a very quick summary! What happens is that you are given various FO (as it then was) departments: Migration, or you might be given a geographical department or Consular Department or something and when that department has any legal queries or problems or difficulties they would – at least in those days - make an appointment and come to see you or ask for written advice. You would get a file with documents in it, the top document being the question which they would like you to answer. That's how it worked. And then after a while you would progress. I mean, everybody started off with Consular Relations and you would progress and do different departments. Some you would obviously like more than others, some were more fascinating than others. But obviously all departments had to be covered and so you just took your turn.

**IH-C:** But it was perhaps in doing that that you realised that international law was something that really did very much interest you?

**AG:** Oh absolutely, yes. I had been quite lucky at university in having one of our tutors who taught us international law in our last year. He was a chap called Colonel Draper who had been at the Nuremberg Trials as an Assistant Attorney there. He obviously taught us quite a lot about the law of war etc etc and the Geneva Conventions and somehow, I thought that was really interesting and that got me interested in international law, of course.

**IH-C:** And how did you find the Foreign Office as a place to work in, in those days?

**AG:** I was a weeny bit – almost terrified when I first went there and thought: 'My God, how on earth am I going to ever fit in? Everyone's going to be so much more knowledgeable than I am. But they were extremely kind and welcoming and helpful and I had a more senior legal adviser who looked after me initially and to whom I could go if I had any questions or problems or difficulties at all. And to my utter surprise, apart from the head of department, everyone was on first name terms. That really surprised me; I wasn't expecting that at all. And that helped. And then Eileen was there and at the same time as I joined there was another chap who joined for the Foreign Office and two people for the Commonwealth

Office because it was separate at that time. We got on quite well and we would go to seek advice and help from each other from time to time. It was really a very pleasant atmosphere.

In those days, between 4.00 and 4.30 of an afternoon the legal advisers always used to meet for a cup of tea which was a rather charming custom because it meant that you could see the more senior ones and if you had enough courage you could speak to them but you could just chat and bring up questions and queries you might have etc etc or be asked something even, so they were rather useful sessions. I'm sure they don't go on now. But they were a very good way of getting knowledge. Getting to know the Foreign Office and how it worked etc.

**IH-C:** And how long were you there for, at that stage?

**AG:** I joined in 1967 and then I was married in 1971. Then I had to leave because I think it was the last year when women who married people who were in the Foreign Office had to leave.

**IH-C:** Did you know that this was about to happen because that must have made the leaving even more difficult?

**AG:** Well, yes in a way. But we were going to Australia because Edward was appointed Private Secretary to Lord Morrice James, the High Commissioner. So, I knew I was going abroad anyway and I knew that I couldn't do my job if I was abroad. I think I was probably a bit surprised that I would have to leave but that was all part of it and you just took it in your stride so to speak.

**IH-C:** And Australia – did you know anything about Australia before you went?

**AG:** Absolutely nothing at all. Obviously, we read up but I didn't have any connections, didn't know anyone who was there at all and it just couldn't have been any further away from the UK. But we thought: a new life, a new beginning. How exciting! In those days you either went by boat and they would pay you by boat and that would take about a month I think to get there, or just over a month. Or else they would give you the same amount of money as the boat fare would have been and you could choose your own way there. And as a

sort of honeymoon, we went bouncing around the world a bit on our way out to Australia. So, that was all fun and rather exciting and we eventually arrived.

**IH-C:** And how was Canberra when you got there because in terms of Australian cities, I think it probably would be fair to say that a lot of people don't think it's the most exciting place?

**AG:** I think, quite honestly, I would agree with that! There was about one restaurant that stayed open after 9 o'clock at night; there was an orchestra but it was amateur, it wasn't a professional orchestra; there were hardly any plays at all – there were really very few plays; there was a good cinema. But the social life was good and because Edward was the Private Secretary to Morrice James, it did mean that a lot of the ambassadors and high commissioners had to go through him to get to Morrice James and as a result of that, we were often invited because we had no children at that time so no problems with having babysitters or anything – we were invited to a lot of events. And if anybody ever dropped out of Morrice James's dinner parties then we were invited so we were really mixing with people far above our station but that was really rather nice. So, we met a lot of people and had an interesting time - and Australians too. We became friends with people at the University. So, we really did have a very nice time. And in those days, Morrice James, the High Commissioner, had a flat at Point Piper in Sydney and, when he wasn't using it, he always gave us – although I don't think other people in the High Commission really realised this – he gave us first option on going down there. So, we were able to go down to Sydney quite a lot. We had a sports car in those days and were able to go down for the weekend which was very, very nice. And I got a job as well and that was interesting.

**Assistant (Temporary), Attorney General's Dept, Australia, 1972–73**

**IH-C:** Indeed, I was about to ask you about that. So how did that job come about?

**AG:** I did know someone in the Australian Government. It was at some international meeting before I'd gone to Australia. I got a job in a library but then another job came my way. I was asked to be on the secretarial side of a commission that was looking into administrative discretions and so I took that job.

**IH-C:** A slightly strange title – what kind of discretions? Or did they mean indiscretions?!

**AG:** They meant flexibility really, I think. To what extent various government departments had flexibility in the way that they operated and worked. It was rather a strange title but it was trying to build up a system of administrative law. I think that was the idea behind it all, in relation to administration because they felt they needed a bit more guidance in what they were doing.

**IH-C:** And this was a full time job?

**AG:** Yes.

**IH-C:** And the High Commission was quite relaxed about you taking on a full time job like that?

**AG:** I obviously wouldn't have done it if they had said I couldn't have done it, no. They didn't seem to mind at all.

**IH-C:** And by the time Edward was moving on to his next job with you accompanying him, you left Australia with some regrets, I imagine?

**AG:** Well, yes. We'd made lots of friends and it's a very beautiful, varied country. But by that time, I'd had a baby – I'd had our first child – and I think I was the first person, the first female, to have maternity leave in the Australian Government. They had to think about it very hard and I did do some work from home for them during that period but I think I'm right in saying I was the first female to do that.

**IH-C:** That's quite a distinction to be an Australian pioneer and yet to be a Brit! So, what followed Australia?

**AG:** Well, we came back to the UK and then in December of that year, 1973, we went to the United States, to Washington.

Adviser on British Law, Library of Congress, Washington, 1974–77

**IH-C:** Edward had his posting there. Were you going to the States hoping that you would have a job while you were there or would you be too preoccupied with family matters?

**AG:** I was looking for a job because it is possible to juggle the two and there I did meet up with some friends and I managed to get a job in the Library of Congress in the British and Commonwealth Law Division (to my horror because I really didn't know anything, other than about Australian law) because in the Library of Congress they had a department which was full of lawyers giving advice to members of Congress about whatever aspect of law they wanted to ask you about. So, I was dealing with British and Commonwealth law there as an adviser.

**IH-C:** And you did that for all the time that you and Edward were in the States?

**AG:** Yes, I did. I had a very short leave while I had another offspring. I didn't work five days a week: I worked three and a half days a week which was good because that enabled me to look after the children more and to participate in entertaining which we obviously had to do a lot of in America. But I had the job the whole time I was there even though it wasn't five days a week.

**IH-C:** And how was America and the American way of life? Again, something pretty new to you, I imagine?

**AG:** Oh, it was great! We enjoyed it very much. We were lucky, we lived in Georgetown and there was a nucleus of people from the Embassy who did, so in the summer we used to go to each other's back yards and listen to records and chat and drink wine and people were very, very easy to meet there. We met Susan Mary Alsop [the American socialite and writer], Evangeline Bruce, Avis Bohlen and a lot of fascinating people. Americans are very friendly and warm and they would come to your house very willingly for dinner or drinks and so we were able to have quite a large collection of friends there, actually, which was very nice indeed.

**IH-C:** In a sense, you were taken up by a number of them, weren't you?

**AG:** Yes, we were very lucky. We met this couple, Irena and Lane Kirkland. He was very high in the US AFL-CIO and to my utter surprise at one dinner at their house I found myself sitting next to Nelson Rockefeller, then the Vice President of the US, who was really the most charming person. Edward was watching me and he said I had absolutely glazed eyes and was full of attention (!) but he was very charming because he was so terribly unassuming and that made talking to him very easy and we had a very good and fascinating conversation.

The downside to entertaining in Washington was the attitude of Americans to black people when invited to dinner. I made friends with a black lawyer at the Library of Congress who was bright and charming. We invited him to our house for dinner on a few occasions but he asked apologetically if I would stop doing so because the attitude of some of the (white) Americans towards him made him feel uncomfortable. I was mortified. We invited him *à trois* after that. The Americans I might add were in the government and it never occurred to us they could or would create that atmosphere.

**IH-C:** It must also have been a place where you had to deal with a lot of official visitors coming over from the UK to America too.

**AG:** Yes, that was one of Edward's jobs to deal with visits and we had The Queen and Prince Philip – that was for the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of American independence; Princess Anne came twice; Edward went around the United States on a visit with Prince Charles; the Duke of Gloucester came. So, we were quite busy on that score to say nothing of politicians too. We were busy with that, that's for sure, yes.

**IH-C:** Did you have a chance to travel very much in the States?

**AG:** Yes, we did do quite a lot during our holidays. We certainly went down south, we went to New Mexico which I liked very much, Arizona, California, obviously New York quite a lot because we had friends up there, and up the east coast too. We got as far as Maine. So, we did do quite a lot. I must confess we didn't drive across the States because it took so long. It would have taken virtually all your holiday to drive so we did fly to Colorado and went sightseeing to the Grand Canyon. We went to quite a lot of places – obviously to

Virginia, that was close by and very attractive. We got to know people at the university. It was a very interesting and fascinating time, I must say.

And, of course, we were there for Nixon. I remember my daughter who was about 2 years old – I set her down in front of the television to watch Nixon's resignation speech. She obviously hadn't a clue as to what was going on. But I do remember that. That was the only occasion, in that particular period, if you went out to dinner there would be either the television on or the radio on because one was waiting minute to minute for what was actually happening at that time. So, that was fascinating; the whole Watergate case took up one's time, one was so obsessed by it, to know what was the latest development.

**IH-C:** And the Embassy itself, of course, one of the largest ones that the Foreign Office has, what was that like for you both, working in such a large place?

**AG:** Well, there was obviously a group of wives and we would meet from time to time and have bazaars and fêtes and things like that. There was a lot of entertaining going on as you might imagine and the residence was a very beautiful house with a lovely garden.

**IH-C:** And it was in 1977 that you returned home?

**AG:** That's right, we came back in December of that year.

### **Legal Adviser (Assistant), FCO, 1978–85**

**IH-C:** And for you that meant going back into the Foreign Office, is that right?

**AG:** Yes, I was quite lucky. I knew the FCO Legal Adviser at that time, Sir Ian Sinclair, and he called me in to his office one day and he said that because one of the legal advisers had been seconded to the Office for the Prevention of Chemical Weapons in Vienna, there was a vacancy and he asked me if I would like to come back for 18 months on a temporary basis and I said: 'Yes, I'd like to' because I was thinking: 'What am I going to do now? I've got two children but I want to do something with my life.' I even looked at joining Amnesty but took the Foreign Office suggestion and I was able then, after 18 months, get myself re-established. I just stayed there then.

**IH-C:** And you were the UK Agent before the European Court of Human Rights. Is that right?

**AG:** Quite a lot of my time was taken up with human rights cases. I was the Deputy Agent before the European Court of Human Rights and I spent a lot of time in Strasbourg because I also sat on various committees and I helped draft various conventions. As well as drafting the Council of Europe Convention on Torture I also helped draft the UN one on torture. I also, at that stage, chaired Women in the Political Process in the Council of Europe which was quite interesting. But I did spend a lot of time in Strasbourg what with committee meetings, cases and things like that. A counsel, Nicolas Bratza, who is now Sir Nicolas Bratza and who was a UK judge on the European Court of Human Rights, did a lot of cases for us and I obviously got to know him very well and he became a good friend. There was also another counsel, David Pannick who is now Lord Pannick and who sits on the cross benches. He did a lot of cases. Sometimes he was for the [British] Government, sometimes he was against the Government. I would be responsible for making sure that we had good counsel for our cases and go to the hearings. In those days there were hearings before the Commission and then the Court. That has now been done away with in the sense that there's not actually a hearing before the Commission, there's a decision by a small group of judges about a case as to whether it's admissible or not. And then if it is judged to be admissible, it goes to the full court. But in those days, there was this meeting before the Commission before it went to the full court.

There were a lot of quite interesting cases that came up. There was the Cossey sex change case; there were cases in Northern Ireland; there were also cases brought against us by Ireland in relation to the way we treated detainees; the Malone telephone tapping case; and the *Sunday Times* thalidomide case where the *Sunday Times* was asked not to produce an article on thalidomide and they [the British Government] were told they couldn't do that: they [*The Sunday Times*] had to publish the article; and there was the inhuman and degrading treatment of children. There was a lot of work that went into these cases. You had to look very carefully into the background, you had to consult the relevant government department in the UK as to what their view was etc etc. Sometimes we would try to settle these cases. We would fight them hard but if it looked as though we weren't going to win, then we would try

and settle them. And at one stage we were quite good at implementing legislation when we lost a case.

But there was one case in particular and that was prisoners voting. There was a decision against us in 2005 and I think it was only about two years ago that we introduced some legislation whereby about half a dozen prisoners, perhaps a few more, were able to vote. Prisoners' correspondence was another case too. I learned a tremendous amount about the conditions in prisons which I really didn't realise were as bad as they were. They were quite disgusting. There was still 'slopping out' at this time. I mean, plastic buckets - lovely! When you're sharing a cell with two other people.

### **Legal Adviser, British Military Government, Berlin, 1985–89**

I was based in London from 1978 to 1985 and then in 1985 we went together to Berlin. Edward was the [Berlin] *Senat* Liaison Officer and I was the Legal Adviser and we were in Berlin from 1985 to 1989.

**IH-C:** So it was a joint posting for you both?

**AG:** Yes, absolutely. That was very good, actually and fascinating, absolutely fascinating.

**IH-C:** What was life in Berlin like at that stage?

**AG:** It was interesting because you had the military attached to the office as well as diplomats and it was very interesting working with them because, as you know, Berlin at that stage was still ruled by the British, the French, the Americans and the Russians. There was quite a lot of social life – not with the Russians but with the rest of us and I had an extremely expert, very helpful ex-judge assisting me and we worked together and through her and with her husband who was also a judge, we got to know a lot of German people and it was a very fascinating time. We did a lot of entertaining ourselves. We were very lucky, we had a slightly run down but large, pleasant house there and it was lovely for entertaining. We had a very large dining room.

It was very interesting with the Germans. You'd have to speak German for the first part of the evening but when it came to coffee they would talk English and of course their English was just immaculate and unfortunately our German – or at least, mine certainly – was not immaculate. But Edward's was pretty good because he had to go to the *Senat* every day and he had to speak German so his was very good. Mine wasn't quite so good. But it was a fascinating time and you never knew what was going to happen from one day to the next.

You couldn't travel that much but when you did travel you had to go through part of the Russian Zone and you would have these Russian officers emerging from their sentry boxes and you had to explain who you were and where you were going, and they would let you go and you would get into Germany as such. But it was a very interesting and fascinating time, I must say, and we did meet some very interesting people.

**IH-C:** It was important, of course, for the Western Allies to exercise their right to travel where they wished to in Berlin. It was important to keep that up, wasn't it?

**AG:** Absolutely. And everyone in the office from time to time had to walk through Checkpoint Charlie, drive through Checkpoint Charlie and also go on the Underground and by train just to make sure that we were able to do this. If you saw a queue at the Underground, I remember being told: 'You just go to the head of the queue.' And I thought: 'Oh my God, that's awful. That's so totally un-British. Why can't you queue?' And they said: 'Because you're one of the Allies and you have the right to go through so just go up and go through.' And you'd have this stupid business of them trying to get hold of your pass. You had a special pass and the East Germans always wanted to hold it and you wouldn't let them, so you had a sort of tug-of-war.

Initially, it was quite scary because not only did you have to go through by the Underground, you also had to go through by train. But there were no arrows as to which direction you should go in order to get on a train or even off it, so initially you had to work this out for yourself. You couldn't dare be seen asking anyone where to go: you had to know what you were supposed to be doing. But it was quite interesting to watch at times while you were waiting for a train to see the guards with dogs and taking the dogs around trains, underneath trains to see and sniff if there was anyone under there so you had a sort of *frisson* going on at the time. So, it was interesting.

**IH-C:** While you were there, Rudolf Hess was in Spandau Prison, wasn't he?

**AG:** Absolutely, yes. There was a special Protocol Liaison Officer who was very much in charge of seeing and looking after him to some extent, although there was staff in the prison. He [the Liaison Officer] was an ex-soldier and he represented one of the four countries who were ruling Berlin and they would meet every week at the prison and every month one of the four nationalities would have their guards and would be in charge of the prison. When our chap, Tony La Tissier, went on holiday or was doing something else, I would take his place at these meetings. And the first time I went there I thought: 'Well, Hess is just down the corridor. I'm just going to go and see him.' So, after the meeting finished I walked down the corridor and I was waiting for someone to say to me: 'Stop, what are you doing?' But the Brits were on guard and I went to see Hess. He was in bed because he wasn't terribly well and he'd been on his own in the prison for a very long time. He took his health extremely seriously – he'd nothing much else to do. So, he was in bed but he insisted on getting out of bed to salute me when I came in and he spoke very good English and I thought no – I must speak in German. So I spoke in German to him and we had a conversation but it was mainly about his health. And I went to see him on another occasion too. But there used to be a little meeting between the Russians for some reason and the Brits as to what he would be allowed to see on television. They would get out the programme for the events that were coming up and would go through it. And they'd say: 'What's this?' and I'd say: 'Oh, that's nothing, that's just a humour programme.' And I actually let through quite a few programmes that I thought might interest him. He wasn't supposed to see anything to do with the War or government or politics or anything and I suppose I had a certain child-like satisfaction of getting certain things passed [to] him that the Russians really wouldn't have wanted him to see. But anyway, that was what we did.

And I do remember too that the French and the Russians used to have almost competitions in relation to lunch – who would provide the best food and the best drink and of course the Russians were always terribly keen to pour vodka down us but we were rather careful, although it was delicious, not to overdo it. So, they were quite interesting meetings that one would have - which gave one this idea that we were really back to just after the War in Berlin, quite honestly.

## Legal Counsellor, FCO, and UK Agent to EC and Court of Human Rights, 1990–94

When we got back from Berlin - and we left at Easter 1989 just before the Wall came down - I went back into the Foreign Office into Legal Advisers and I was made a Legal Counsellor. I got to know Strasbourg very well again because as well as being the UK Agent before the Court, I also sat on various human rights committees. This was the period 1989 to 1994. I was also doing air service agreements. For some bizarre reason the Ministry of Transport, as it then was, used to come to the Foreign Office to do their international (British Airways, really) airways agreements, so I did go and spend quite a lot of time going to Africa and travelling around Africa to try to agree air services agreements which is quite interesting and something completely different from what I had been doing.

**IH-C:** You were still working in this field, obviously, when finally the Berlin Wall came down. I gather that when you heard about it, it was under quite special circumstances, wasn't it?

**AG:** Yes. Anna Momper, the wife of the Mayor of Berlin – we were very friendly with them – had come over at the request of the Barbican to unveil a bust of – I think of Mendelssohn. She came with Martin Loer, the *Senat* Protocol Officer who we also knew very well. Edward and I had a lovely evening together with them and she unveiled it, made a little speech and we went out to dinner. We got back home and there was a telephone call. It was her to say: 'You won't believe this – the Berlin Wall is down.' Her husband had been trying to get her all evening but couldn't. One didn't use mobiles in quite the same way in those days and it wasn't until later after it began to come down that she knew what had happened. So that was quite an interesting little event, I think.

Being back in the UK then I wasn't just dealing with Strasbourg. I was dealing also with the CSCE [the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe] as it was in those days as well and went to meetings in relation to that as a legal adviser in Copenhagen, Valletta, Geneva and Moscow, Oslo and Helsinki. The meeting in Copenhagen in 1990 was quite a landmark meeting because it drew up various principles in relation to elections and those principles were accepted by all the participating states of the CSCE as it was then (now it's the OSCE) and was the basis on which I was able to work when I went to head up the Directorate of the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights [ODIHR]. We used

the principles as a basis for observing elections and started off the methodology for election observation.

**IH-C:** There was obviously a lot of very intensive negotiations that led to the final agreement. Was it very difficult to come to that overall agreement or was there a general willingness to do so which made things rather easier?

**AG:** Well, you're quite right. In 1990 when the Berlin Wall was down and the Soviet Union broke up, there was a lot of interest in democracy although I don't think a lot of countries realised what it meant. But there was enthusiasm and even the Russians didn't make it difficult in relation to drawing up the principles at all. There were problems subsequently but at that time people were only too pleased to have some rules to try and run their elections by. Things changed later. But there was obviously a certain amount of discussion and the meeting went on for some time. It was obviously unanimously agreed at the end which was good and has, as I say, provided the basis for the election observation that goes on these days.

**IH-C:** You must have got to know well also opposite numbers from other countries, working alongside them, getting to know them. There must have been some outstanding personalities.

**AG:** Yes, that was very useful and very helpful because the same legal advisers who used to meet in Strasbourg would also be at some of these CSCE meetings too. We got to know each other and respect each other, how to approach them and how to try and get their agreement etc etc. So, it does help if you know people well with whom you're dealing, I must say. It makes an enormous difference.

**Director (with rank of Ambassador), OSCE Office of Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, Warsaw, 1994–97**

**IH-C:** And then in 1994, through the Foreign Office, you had a new job in Poland?

**AG:** Well, in 1994 I happened to see that there was an advertisement for a director of the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights and the post was in Warsaw. And I saw this and I thought: 'Gosh, that sounds terribly interesting.' I asked Edward if he would object to me applying for it (I knew I had no chance of actually getting it), just to have a go.

He said 'yes'. So, I wrote to the department that was looking after the CSCE and said: 'I'd quite like to apply for this job because I've done work in Strasbourg etc etc and I've done legal advice for some time. I just thought it would be very interesting and I'd be very happy to work in Poland and advance the cause of the CSCE.' I think I was very lucky, there weren't very many people who were prepared to put themselves forward for that job.

And I have to say that the Foreign Office did the most amazing job in getting me elected. I don't know if this happens to people these days but they spent a lot of time: there were lunches, they put me in touch with everyone in the Foreign Office who could be of use and in other places as well and they really did a good job. And added to which they did a lot of lobbying and that was what made me realise that to get anyone into any job you have to lobby and you have to lobby at quite a high level. There was a Russian applying but I don't think other countries were quite so keen on him and by some miracle I got the job. I was the first woman director and certainly the first British person to have the job of director in the ODIHR - which everyone refers to as the "Oh Dear"! When my children heard that one of them said: 'Mum, you're going to a disaster before you've even set foot in the door.' It does rather sound like "Oh Dear" but I was there. I was there for three years and it was a wonderful job.

I might just say at this moment that later, around 2005 I was invited to be a member of a "wise persons committee" for the Council of Europe and there were quite a lot of people involved in this as you might imagine. The idea was to see how the Council of Europe might be improved. But there were five independents and I was one of the independents. When I told my children, they just fell about laughing, saying: 'Mum, for goodness sake - wise persons? It was bad enough when you went to the ODIHR - the 'Oh Dear' - which was a disaster before you crossed the threshold. Now, you're going to be a 'wise person'? Give us a break!' They were really very rude but it was funny. And having children who make comments like that - they keep your feet on the ground. They keep you going. Even Edward raised his eyebrows!

**IH-C:** Coming back to Warsaw, the job carried with it the personal rank of ambassador, I understand?

**AG:** Yes, it did. I did actually ask for that and I said to them: 'I'm going to be working among a lot of Eastern Europeans and a lot of them are going to be military and I'll be based in Warsaw and I think without the title of ambassador, I'm going to find it more difficult. That would I think, if you don't mind, open a few doors for me.' And [they said]: 'No problem. Yes, of course.' And they very kindly gave me the title of ambassador which was a help.

**IH-C:** And while you were there you were able to expand the workings of that office, I understand?

**AG:** Oh yes, certainly. It was great in those days because although the office wasn't showered with money by any manner of means – that was always our problem – we were, to a large extent, able to do really what we wanted provided it related to human rights. My predecessor had been an Italian gentleman and it had just been the Office of Free Elections then but then they changed the title and expanded it. So, we developed a methodology for elections; we had a special unit for Roma and Gypsies and immigrants and migrants and we started a special magazine for that; we had rule of law seminars; we had a department for women and children and the media. We really expanded. I was lucky enough to be able to double the number of people who were in the office and I managed to do that to some extent by going to certain governments and asking them if they would second people to us. So, we had double the number of staff but we didn't have to actually pay them, or not very much, apart from travel expenses. And the countries were very pleased to do that in Central Asia and all over the place. From Russia we got a lot of people to come and work with us for limited periods. Of course, we had to go to Vienna to the headquarters of the CSCE quite frequently. Shortly after I was there it became the OSCE, the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe. It had set up its headquarters in Vienna and before that it was rather a wandering body, vaguely based in Prague but most of its meetings took place in different countries. But it then became a properly based organisation and there was a lot of work going on and we also used to work very closely with the High Commissioner for National Minorities. Everyone who worked there seemed to enjoy the work and were very happy to try to advance the cause of human rights in those days. It's slightly different now, I think.

**IH-C:** I'll come back to that, if I may, in a moment. But you talked of Vienna and Prague and yet you went to Warsaw. So, a branch of CSCE, if you like, was in Warsaw? Is that right?

**AG:** Absolutely, yes. And there were great moves to try to get the office to go to Vienna. The Poles, of course, didn't want it to, and I didn't want it to either because I knew that if we were in Vienna, we would be at the beck and call of all the ambassadors there and from all the different offices there for all the different member states and they would want us to carry out their agendas. I didn't want that. And in any event, I thought that with the Berlin Wall and the Soviet Union all splitting up at this time, it was very important for a country that had been part of the Soviet Union to now be seen to be waving the flag for democracy etc etc.

I knew that my successor very much wanted to move the office to Vienna because his wife or girlfriend was there. So, I went to the Polish Foreign Minister, who I knew already, and I said to him: 'Minister, if you would like this office to stay in Warsaw, I suggest that as soon as possible you find [us] new accommodation.' Because we'd expanded, we'd knocked walls down and done as much as we could but there was no more room for us to expand in the office space we had. So, I said: 'We need new premises and more space because if not, I know that my successor will want to take this office to Vienna.' And within three days they found a new place – in the Protocol Section of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs but completely separate from the Ministry. So, they did find new accommodation for us very quickly. I've never seen the Poles work quite so quickly before in my life!

It's just gone on now from strength to strength and they have very, very nice premises – originally a palace, I believe, where the office now is situated. So, that's very good.

**IH-C:** What was the working language in Warsaw?

**AG:** It was English thank goodness. I mean, I did try and learn Polish. It is an extremely difficult language to try and learn, I have to say, and I really didn't make much headway. I could go shopping in Polish but not much more than that. It is quite complicated and there was never really enough time to absolutely sit down and absorb it. I should have had about a month or two while I was there learning it. I could get by in a restaurant or shopping, things like that, but I certainly couldn't sustain any conversation in Polish.

**IH-C:** Was it this job that also took you travelling for a certain amount into Central Asia?

**AG:** Oh, absolutely. Because we woke up one morning and found that Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan were all members of the OSCE and I have to confess I don't think I'd even heard of all those countries let alone been anywhere near them. Neither had anyone else. So, I spent a lot of time going there in order to get to know the people and the governments and to see what was going on and how we could help because, like everybody, they all said: 'Ooh, human rights, wonderful, yes. Democracy, yes, gorgeous, yes, let's have some of that' – without actually realising what it was. So, we did have meetings there and spent a lot of time in those countries to try and help them develop some knowledge of democracy and human rights.

There was a lot of travelling involved and some of those travels were really absolutely fascinating. Uzbekistan was wonderful and of course there's Samarkand there and was – this was about twenty years ago now – the most beautiful city with all the gorgeous colours of its tiles, blues and turquoises and lovely, lovely buildings which they had maintained very well. One realised that they were astronomers and had this wonderful, long telescope. I'd never seen anything quite so long - just outside Tashkent - and they were far more advanced than we were at that stage in history: we were just running around in woad.

But things did change a bit. They certainly had rather repressive régimes which they were terribly used to, having been part of the Soviet Union and just took for granted and so it was quite difficult to try and introduce them to democracy. It took a little time, in practice, for it even to begin. One had to try and explain to them what was entailed and what had to be done and it was important that people voted. And of course some of the dictators didn't take too happily to that, particularly in Turkmenistan. So that was all rather interesting at that particular time.

But they were very interesting countries and the people were fascinating. I got on particularly well with [Islam] Karimov who was the President of Uzbekistan. He did have a pretty ghastly régime and you may remember Craig Murray, the British Ambassador in Uzbekistan who had great difficulties in that country. They could be perfectly cruel and unpleasant, that's for sure. Karimov did see me every time we went to visit the country and

we used to have long discussions. He would have staff there. I would gently explain – well, not so gently, actually! - that torture is not permitted and it was quite interesting to catch up afterwards with some of his assistants who were there who said: ‘My goodness, we’ve heard all sorts of things we never knew existed. All these rules and regulations, we didn’t know they were there.’ So, we did make an effort to try and get people to come and visit the country who could gently explain to them how the West operated. It was interesting and fascinating and we did travel around the countries and they had some very interesting old relics and ruins and remains that they really weren’t taking very good care of.

It was interesting to see that there were just one or two women who were standing out and wanting to make a difference and trying to make a difference. But it took time. Kazakhstan, of course, was the big country at that time. It was very successful. They must have had oil, I think. You’d go to the capital and there would be women in mink coats and they were very sophisticated. The other ‘Stans’ were not quite so sophisticated. But they were fascinating and I am interested to see that the new Chairperson in office of the OSCE, who is a Swede and who took office at the beginning of January [2021] or the end of December [2020], has already visited some of the ‘Stans’ and is in the process of visiting all of them. It is important to try to bring them into the fold because they have some very talented people there. Another guy I knew in Uzbekistan ended up as their Ambassador in Brussels and when Edward was stationed there I used to go to Brussels whenever I could and I used to see him. He had wonderful heirlooms that had been in his family for thousands of years. They are, in their own way, rather cultured and civilised but perhaps not in the same way as we would expect a democracy to be but they have a fascinating history and they’re very interested in people and I do hope that more is done to enable them to keep their culture but also edge a little bit further into a way where everybody in the country has a voice and everyone is regarded as important, not just the upper ranks of society. I would love to go back and spend more time there but – we’ll see!

**IHC:** While you were in Warsaw, you also visited Chechnya. Now, how did that visit come about?

**AG:** Well, at that time Ingushetia, Dagestan and Chechnya, all Muslim little states at the end of the Soviet Union, were sort of trying to break away and this obviously wasn’t looked upon with any favour by Russia and there was in fact a conflict there and the Hungarians had just

become the Chair in Office of the CSCE. They wanted to send a fact-finding mission and I guess I ticked two boxes, a) I was a woman and b) I dealing with human rights so I went along too. We travelled around the country in this huge, long cavalcade and to my slight alarm there was this ambulance at the back and I thought: 'What the bloody hell do we have an ambulance for?!'

I think we were in Chechnya for two nights and staying in a pretty lousy hotel. You just didn't want to stay in your room other than for sleeping. During the time that we were there we were entertained of an evening and I was supposed to be going that weekend straight to London and give a talk somewhere but it was quite clear I wasn't going to be able to get out in time and somehow or other the Russians also found out that it was my son's birthday so they gave me, to give him, one of those folkloric costumes. It was a great big huge enormous cloak which I think must have been made of bearskin or something. My son at the time was 12 and although he's now six foot seven and could wear it, he certainly couldn't at the time. The next day we had a press conference and the rest of the team went home, but because I'd had to change my flight and go back later, I was in the Hungarian Embassy for the whole of the day and somehow journalists found out I was there and I just got all these telephone calls from journalists and initially I was absolutely terrified: 'My God, these journalists. This is awful.' But by the end of the day I got quite used to answering all their questions. It was quite extraordinary, really. It was the most bizarre experience altogether, I have to say. But I survived and nobody at that stage was too critical of me.

I was absolutely shattered when I saw the capital, Grozny. You were wading ankle-deep in rubbish and ruins. There were old people crouching around, desperately looking for food. There'd been a market that had been smashed up completely and I was walking around with this young guy from Hungary. We heard noises in the distance and I said: 'Oh gosh, is that fighting? That sounds quite close.' And he said: 'Yes, it's not all that many metres away from where we are.' 'Well', I said, 'shall we perhaps change the direction we're walking in?' And he said: 'Yes, it would be a good idea if we did.' But we were taken to a hospital and you could see the soldiers in there. They were white, they were the colour of their sheets all with tubes and everything. And I said to the guys I was with at the time: 'I think it's better if we leave here and leave these poor guys in peace.' And I shall always remember as we came out there was the most beautiful sunset. The barbarity was humungous. I remember walking along a path and seeing bits of bodies laid out, a torso, a leg and a Russian general said to me:

‘This is not the place for you. Come away.’ And I did. That was quite an extraordinary experience, I must say. I shall never forget leaving in a Russian jet with all these Verey lights and I said: ‘Oh, what’s all that?’ And they said: ‘That’s flak to stop us getting hit.’ And I said: ‘Oh, good.’ I was rather ignorant about warfare until I had finished there. So, there were some very interesting times, I must say, very interesting experiences.

**IH-C:** The trip was done, obviously, with the agreement of the Russians. But you were visiting Russian territory that had, as it were, its own independence movement. Were the Russians at ease about the mission going there in the first place?

**AG:** Yes, they were and the military were really quite helpful actually. Of course, the native people there were all Muslims and when we first started going to meetings it was obviously quite clear that they didn’t want me to go. And I thought: ‘This is bloody stupid if I sit outside with the women. I can’t speak their dialect. What am I supposed to do?’ So I said: ‘Excuse me, for the purposes of this meeting, I’m a man. And I just went in and sat down and participated in the meeting. I thought it was a bit strange to have to sit outside having gone all that way. Yes, the Russians were quite pleased to be able to show that someone had gone to see what was happening. Of course, they only showed us what they wanted us to see. It’s now very, very much under the Russian thumb. They have this horrendous dictator, Ramzan Kadyrov.

**IH-C:** While you were doing this job in Warsaw with its emphasis on human rights, you were able to bring in people from outside also?

**AG:** Yes, and we had some interesting visitors too. I managed to get some people from the Bar (a judge and two lawyers) to come and give a mock trial - it was very good - which we recorded and showed later to explain exactly what goes on with judges and the prosecution and the defence and the person who is accused. So, that was interesting. And we also produced a magazine in addition to the newsletter we did for minorities and Roma and Sinti. So, we were quite busy and at that time because a) we were in Warsaw and b) because it was all so new and fresh, one had more leeway in trying to achieve these things. If it was in the right direction people wouldn’t say: ‘No, you can’t do that.’ You could, and so we did. It was fascinating, absolutely fascinating.

**IH-C:** Did you have the same feeling of possibilities opening up with the Russians as well as with some of the other countries?

**AG:** Oh yes. In those days the Russians were quite co-operative in a way and quite helpful – or rather they weren't unhelpful. The only thing they would ever try and stop us doing was increasing our budget. They never wanted us to have any more money than we had but we still managed. Some governments like the Nordic governments – Norway, in particular was very generous in organising things for us so that we could do more than we had money to do. The Russians in those days were quite friendly and helpful. I went there quite a few times for meetings there.

**IH-C:** This job, of course meant that you were living apart from the rest of the family.

**AG:** Indeed, indeed. The boys were at boarding school by then and the girls were older – we had two girls and two boys – and Edward and all the children would always come out at Easter and I would take a holiday then and we would travel around Poland which was fascinating. Caroline was studying the history of art and art restoration and she came out during the summer and through one of my assistants who knew someone in an art gallery in Warsaw, got her a job – I don't think she was paid anything – restoring paintings. That was quite interesting for them too to meet Polish people and interact with them.

**IH-C:** But not an easy time for the family being so divided like that?

**AG:** No, it wasn't. I was asked to renew my job but I said at the beginning that I'd do it for one term of three years because I realised that it was difficult for the family and so I kept to that and so I only did it for one term. We managed somehow or other and I used to fax the children and they would fax and email me. But it was a strain and Edward obviously did very well by looking after them in the way he did.

**IH-C:** So, your time in Warsaw came to an end and what happened at that stage?

## Leader, UK Delegation to UN Human Rights Commission, 1998–2003

**AG:** Just before I left Warsaw there was some big meeting – I can't remember what it was now – but the Head of UN Department came out (I did know him) and he said: 'I'd like to have a word with you.' And I thought: 'My God, what have I done? Have I done something wrong?' And he said to me: 'Would you like to head up the UK Delegation to the UN Human Rights Commission?' And I looked at him and said: 'What did you say? Yes, I'd love to!' I'd not thought about it. I guess they must have advertised it or something but I was lucky enough to be asked to do that. It was to replace a gentleman called Henry Steel who had been a legal adviser and he had done the job before me and they asked me to take over from him which was amazing. I was speechless actually because I realised a) what an important job it was but also how very interesting it would be and how it proved to be.

**IH-C:** This involved working in ...?

**AG:** ... Geneva. But I always used to go to New York, sometimes before but certainly after the Geneva session because they had their human rights meetings there too. I was not involved in that but I used to go to speak to people because we were up for re-election to be on the Human Rights Commission because it's not every member of the United Nations who is on that Commission. There are 52 people, I think, who are on the Commission and we came up for election in 2000 and 2003. I said: 'If you want us to get back in, I think I could be helpful, I could do something useful in New York because everyone there is always so busy doing everything else.' So, I used to go there to lobby and we really lobbied very, very hard. And I'm pleased to say that we got our seat back in 2000 and 2003, so we were lucky. But we really worked terribly, terribly hard and you literally had to chat to people day in and day out while you were there. It was fascinating, I really enjoyed it.

I remember there was a room, I think it was called the Singapore Room, which was a coffee room. And all the delegates were there. And they would meet and you would be told that you had a meeting with Mr 'X' from Zimbabwe and of course you didn't quite know who it was. You had to sort of look around rather carefully and then if you saw a gentleman who looked as though he was looking around rather carefully too, and might come from that part of the world, you would bounce up to them and say: 'Oh, excuse me, are you Ambassador so-and-so?' That was quite amusing but we really did work extremely hard morning, noon and

night, as well as doing the other work. And we had to do the other work before the Commission and to my horror the first year I was doing it I discovered – that was 1998 – we had the presidency of the European Union so that meant everything had to go through us and I had to get on with all the other members of the EU on the Commission etc etc. And then the next year we ended up leading the WEOG, the Western European & Others Group, for the daily meetings every morning before the session started. So, it was quite a lot to do, but I enjoyed it. At times your heart was in your mouth but I enjoyed it, it was fascinating, I met so many people and some seemed to appreciate my sense of humour.

You know it really helps you learn how to react to and get on with people. Luckily, I like people so I didn't mind going around and lobbying them etc etc. You can have great fun as well, actually. For some reason, we were always sitting behind the Cubans. Inevitably you strike up a relationship and there's always a resolution against Cuba, criticising Cuba for not doing the right thing etc etc but they always seemed to be quite friendly with us, nonetheless. Just before Easter every year the Cuban threw the most wonderful party. The Canadians were always trying to chat them up too and one year the UK was invited to this party and the Canadians weren't. Oh, my goodness, were the Canadians cross with us for that! But that was just a minor detail.

But you really did have to lobby very hard and keep at it because you'd go to a country and chat to them for a bit and say: 'Will you vote for us?' And they'd say: 'Yes.' But, of course, it's all too easy to say: 'Yes'. We always used to try to get something in writing. But we were all at it and I must have spent hours doing it and mercifully it paid off and we were able to get back on to the Commission on two occasions.

**IH-C:** Was it very much on a personal level in the sense that – you headed an office. But there must have been others who would lobby along with you from the UK? It wasn't falling entirely on your shoulders.

**AG:** I wasn't the only person lobbying and others would be lobbying. But the people you really had to lobby were the Heads of Mission. There were other meetings and all sorts of occasions but actually I realised from the reactions I got from people that you really had to get the agreement of the Head or the Deputy Head of a Mission who was in the Commission to really get anywhere. Other people at a lower level were obviously working as well but I

think it was quite important to lobby high. I've seen over the years where Brits didn't get positions and one learned that it was because there wasn't lobbying at a high enough level early enough or long enough. It was fascinating. The whole world was there. It was really great. I really enjoyed it. But as I say, there were some moments when my heart was really in my mouth.

From 1998 to 2002 Edward was High Commissioner in Guyana. When I was not in New York or Geneva I was there and along with other wives became involved with street children, all boys. We spent time with them and helped them with school work but we were also able to raise money to refurbish a building for them where they could stay the night, a time when they were most vulnerable. I also helped with a boys orphanage (run by nuns), again with schoolwork and sport, and my children also came and helped out too when they were with us. My sons played a great deal of cricket with them. They were all very delightful children and fun to be with. I was rather sad to say goodbye to them. We also did some work with disadvantaged children and their mothers.

But the most work that I did was with prisons. I visited all of them in the country (six) which was fascinating and I was much impressed by the attitude of the staff to the prisoners and the wood carving that the prisoners made. I did most work with the one women's prison. I helped to buy the necessary equipment to start a hairdressing salon in the Prison Officers Mess of a Saturday morning. Which was quite successful although I never went there myself. Quite what the shop attendants thought when I went in to buy black hair dye and straightening equipment I don't know!

**IH-C:** And that lasted until 2003?

**AG:** That's right. Then in 2004 I went to Iraq to help set up a ministry of human rights and I was there for about 9 months. Then I went back again in 2005 and also 2006.

**Senior Adviser to Coalition Provisional Authority, Iraq and to Iraqi Minister of Human Rights, 2004–06**

**IH-C:** So how do you go about setting up a ministry of human rights in a place like Iraq because you're doing it from scratch, presumably?

**AG:** Yes, absolutely. Well, a minister had to be chosen and one worked with him. The first one I had didn't last long because he couldn't agree with what we were trying to do. And then mercifully, the next minister appointed was a guy called Bakhtiar Amin, who I had met in Geneva and New York because he was a dissident Iraqi. The UK had always been responsible for bringing a resolution against Iraq every year. And because he was in the opposition I got to know him very well. We would draft our resolution which we had to get through the EU and we would always ask him for ideas or suggestions or always discuss it with him. And he, mercifully, was appointed the second minister. He was much easier to work with because he was very for human rights etc etc. We used to have meetings with other ministries and particularly the women. The Iraqi women who were educated were absolutely phenomenal, they were quite amazing. We had a go at getting the women interested in what we were doing and they were very appreciative and started lecturing at university.

Edward was there as well as I was. We weren't there the whole time at the same time because we would come back home at different times to see the family but we were there together which was quite interesting. He was in a different ministry. He was working with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. You got to know yourself rather well during that period because you were on your own and you never knew when an accident would happen. And sadly enough, quite a few people we knew were killed while we were there. Obviously, we were in the Green Zone but all our ministries were in the Red Zone. I thought it very important to try to get to the Ministry as much as possible. You would put in a request to have a car to take you there and of course, it wasn't just a car. You yourself had to wear body armour and you went in a car but there was a car in front and a car behind and you had security guards with you. The security was extraordinarily good. They would all change positions, as you might imagine, and you would have someone sitting in the car with you. When I left the Green Zone, I tried not to think about it very much. I thought: 'Oh well, a new day in the Red Zone.' Then I have to confess coming back in the evening, when you got back into the Green Zone again, you did breathe a sigh of relief. But there was no point in thinking about it when you were out because you wouldn't have done anything at all.

We did have one or two occasions when we were in difficulties. I remember once that there was a roundabout we had to go round because we were going to the desert to meet the

Jordanians who were exhuming their dead after the war and the traffic was jammed solid and the guy who was sitting in front of me, Mick - I could sense that he was getting a bit tense and worried. Eventually an Iraqi very sweetly stopped and helped us through this humungous traffic jam and subsequently when we were having lunch and I said to Mick: 'You weren't very happy, were you, during that little episode?' And he said: 'No,' And I said: 'What were you going to do?' And he said: 'I was going to turn right and go through the stalls and the shops.' And I thought: 'Bloody hell, how glad I was that we had managed to get around. The thought of doing that was really rather alarming.' But it did show you how ruthless they were in protecting you.

Mercifully we survived but there was another occasion where we got held up and it was late and you were always supposed to be back before nightfall. The Americans were, for some reason, blocking one or two entrances to the Green Zone. We got back late and I did explain to our people that it was not the fault of our guards at all but because there was so much traffic and the entrances were blocked. There were quite a few adventures, I have to say.

**IH-C:** Life in the Green Zone must have been, to some extent, somewhat artificial, wasn't it?

**AG:** Yes, it was in a way. There were restaurants there. We stayed in a caravan. Well, it was a bit bigger than a caravan. There were two sides to it with a wash facility in the middle. We were staying in the American Zone at one stage in the grounds of Saddam Hussein's palace which had become the US Headquarters. At least it was above ground and you felt you weren't like a little mole. Subsequently, when the situation got more dangerous, we had to go underground into a big underground car park and we were in a trailer there. The Italian Ambassador was quite amazing. Initially, he was living in his residence in the Red Zone. He invited quite a few of us to dinner one evening with the most beautiful paintings on the walls, the most wonderful furniture, peacocks and flamingos in the garden – it was just incredible. But even he eventually had to move into the Green Zone but initially, before he did that, he used to come in in the evenings with a rucksack full of pizzas and red wine. There was a big swimming pool in the grounds of where we had our offices. We used to sit there and think: 'My goodness. Is this real? Am I really doing this in a war zone?' It was rather extraordinary.

I remember on one occasion, he eventually had a tiny little house with a tent around it in the Green Zone and I was there for dinner one night and he had this wonderful majordomo who came around and he said to him: 'Oh look, we'll have some white wine before dinner.' And this guy said: 'No you won't. I've got some champagne in the refrigerator and you're drinking that.' 'Oh, oh, alright!' We would have this wonderful meal and this Italian still had his paintings on the walls of his tent with his furniture. It was quite wonderful. So, you had that extraordinary sort of situation going on and at times you would have a voice over the Tannoy which would really shout: 'Take cover. Take cover.' And that of course meant that if you were in your trailer you had to dash to make it to the main building and then go underground. Of course, if you went underground you were stuck there for hours, they wouldn't let you out. So, one always used to try and get into one's office and hide behind a desk and hope that the American soldiers wouldn't come around and tell you to go down below because if you went down below, into the air raid shelter you would stay there for hours and it was so awful. So, we always used to try and hide – rather pathetic, really. By the way, the food was wonderful and prolific!

**IH-C:** Looking back on it, you had some further spells out there as well – shorter spells out there after 2004. I mean, at the end of that time did you feel you were in a slightly Alice in Wonderland world or did you feel there some solid achievement that you could point to?

**AG:** Achievement-wise, human rights in Iraq, as you might imagine, was pretty thin. What we were able to achieve was that they did start doing a certain amount of training of other ministries in human rights. They would have people come in to the Human Rights Ministry and do a certain amount of training of human rights for these people and I think they attempted to do this for Parliament too. The office is still there: I think it's used now as a reference library. It still exists but what it achieves now, I don't know. As in most things, there is an initial enthusiasm in relation to human rights. But when it starts telling you that you can't do certain things and have to do other things - the enthusiasm for it slowly dissipates, I'm afraid. It sounds rather cynical but around the world you can see that. In Africa and elsewhere, unfortunately, and democracy itself – they are just not good words these days, I'm afraid.

**IH-C:** It's rather ironic because you've spent much of your career in that sense in trying to improve things. It makes you cynical, of course, it would make anyone cynical. Does it

make you also somewhat sad that you really didn't achieve what you would have liked to have done?

**AG:** Certainly, certainly - only too conscious of it. I'm on the Advisory Board of GAPS – Gender Aspects of Peace and Security - and the situation in relation these days to women around the world has not desperately improved from what it was so many years ago and I find that very sad. It's coming out now that misogyny still exists and I find that extremely disturbing. And I often wonder why. Are men so unsure of their own position? Are they frightened that women are going to take over and do better than them? I just don't know what it is and it worries me. Obviously, in some areas there are many more women now working and many more women from minority groups with important jobs. But not as many as one would have hoped and liked to have seen being treated equally as men as one would have hoped and liked by this stage. I am afraid to say that inequality is pervasive and expanding.

But it is not just inequality for woman that is disturbing. I think it's all very sad that corruption is evident in institutions that one had great faith in like the police. Obviously, there are a lot of extremely good policemen but some of the stories you hear, if they are true, are rather disturbing. I remember as a child always being told of a policeman: 'Oh you must respect him. If you've got any problems then go to him because they're there to help you.' And I wonder if that's so true today. I'm not obviously castigating all police by any manner of means but these various stories you hear I find rather disturbing. I don't know about you but I have the impression that the police force is not quite the same as it used to be. I don't know. I'm not terribly happy with the stories that you do hear and especially in relation to the police and minority groups. I find that most disturbing in this day and age.

**IH-C:** What about the role of the British Government in continuing to promote human rights. Do you think we have a record that we can be at least reasonably satisfied with?

**AG:** Not entirely, I don't think. There's a certain amount these days of trying to do things without going before Parliament, without having issues discussed in Parliament. I find that slightly worrying. I don't know that we are quite so engaged as we used to be with human rights years ago. Since I left the ODIHR, from about 2004 onwards I've been heading election observations missions for the OSCE in various countries around the OSCE region

and whereas years ago we used to have a lot of people from the UK coming as long term observers and short term observers, we're not seeing that quite so much now, I think.

We do have a Human Rights Act which is good but I don't know that we are so engaged with the European Court of Human Rights as we used to be. And it's not only happening in this country but it's around the world too, I'm afraid even in European countries too. I mean, what's happened in Poland I find terribly upsetting in a way because initially with Lech Wałęsa they were all so enthusiastic for human rights etc but now the situation has changed. And also in Hungary too. Prime Minister Victor Orban is becoming more authoritarian. Some of these countries have been able to make use of the Coronavirus to enable them to take more power and I find this all rather alarming because at the moment, understandably, people are all very concerned about their citizens and their citizens' welfare and not spreading the disease but they don't have so much time to look and see what's happening around them so this is very worrying.

**IH-C:** And of course we haven't mentioned China yet.

**AG:** No, we haven't mentioned China yet. You're right. And China has changed very much too, actually. I remember I used get on quite well with their Head of Delegation, a guy called Li Badong and he was an interesting chap. His attitude at that time (perhaps it was just put on) I found quite convincing: 'Look, we're trying. We're a big country but we're trying to do what we can human rights-wise.' But I don't think you would get that sort of approach today, I'm afraid. The Chinese were very helpful. Their Ambassador would invite me to some of their dinners and there I met a huge raft of people I wouldn't normally have come across. And he would often give me a little nod or a wink as to whether a resolution was going to go through or not.

The Chinese did in fact officially invite me to China in July 2001 and I accepted after I had checked with the FCO. I was shown round a male prison where, I am sure for my benefit, the prisoners were arranging flowers! There was also a conference, trips to the Great Wall, the Forbidden City and also numerous museums. I was also flown to Shanghai. I was accompanied most of the time by a member of the diplomatic staff from the British Embassy. In Shanghai we were invited to lunch by an important female lawyer (I think that she was the Governor) and we ate delicious Chinese food with silver chop sticks. I found it very difficult

to keep the food on the chop sticks. It kept on sliding off but I certainly did my best. Shanghai is a very vibrant city with very tall buildings. One felt like a midget. It was teeming with life with an old quarter close to the harbour which was fascinating.

Now I think it's very different which is unfortunate because what's happening to the Uighurs is just awful, absolutely appalling. On a subsequent occasion I went there on a visit many, many years ago with a delegation from the FCO. We had asked to go to Xinjiang before the trip and we were allowed to go there much to our surprise. There were certainly a very large number of Uyghurs emerging from mosques after Friday prayers. There really was a very, very large number living there and the thought of what's being done to them now is really quite appalling. It's disgraceful and more fuss should be made about it. It's a form of genocide, in a way. It's the same as what's happening in Burma with the Rohingya. You couldn't imagine that happening years ago, I don't think anyway.

### **Head, OSCE Election Observation Missions, 2004 onwards**

**IH-C:** Can we take a look at the period from 2005 when, as you say, you were participating in OSCE observer missions. What actually happens on those missions when you go there? What's the routine?

**AG:** Yes, I was heading EOMs (Election Observation Missions) over the years and headed about 25 in all. It's quite a lengthy routine, in a way. The office in Warsaw asks for an invitation to go and observe an election because you can't go to an election unless you're permitted by the country concerned to do so. Otherwise, obviously, you wouldn't get anywhere. When you've got the invitation you then look about getting your staff. The ODIHR advertises for a head of mission and a deputy and then, depending on how many people they think they need, as a result of an assessment mission, there will usually be a legal adviser, a media adviser, an election adviser, a political adviser etc so you'll have a core team of between 11 and 13 people. The core team are all paid for by the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights but they will then appeal to the participating states for long-term observers [LTOs] and short-term observers [STOs]. They will say they want a hundred LTOs and they may get less. But they get people who know something about elections who are sent by the participating state and paid for by them. No state can send more than 10 long-term observers. The LTOs go and stay in different parts of the country and they go to

different cities and towns and they report on what is happening. How the Election Commission is operating; how the local press is working; whether voters are properly registered so they can vote; and see the local politics in action. They will report all this back to the core team on a regular basis.

Then, two days before the election, the STOs will arrive. No 'local' people operate in these elections. The STOs are the ones who observe what is happening in polling stations, not locals, and they are all sent by the participating states. There will usually be a lot of them, one hundred, two hundred, something like that. In some elections there'll be 700 of them if the election is in a very big country. They come two days beforehand and their job is to stay and watch polling in various polling stations. They will be asked to look at about six polling stations in a day. They have to stand there and watch for at least half an hour in each polling station, to watch exactly what goes on, whether people are not allowed to vote, whether they are pushed away; whether the votes are put in the ballot box correctly etc etc. They record their observations in a form. And then they also have to stay and watch for the counting. During the day they're feeding information to the core team and we're producing our preliminary report for the press conference the following day. A lot of it is written in advance but of course we do need a lot of information on the day as to what happened, whether it was peaceful and calm, whether there were riots and difficulties etc. Then we give a press conference on the afternoon of the following day and after that, in a few weeks, we will produce what's known as the Final Report. By that stage we will have had the results about any legal cases that have taken place as a result of the election like: 'I wasn't able to vote' etc etc. People can bring complaints about that. The Election Observation Mission looks at the beginning, the middle and the end and we're usually in country for about six or seven weeks. Sometimes, if it's a smaller country, we will perhaps be there less time or there won't be a full mission but we obviously have to make sure that the East and the West are both covered. We can't look as though it's just an exercise for the Eastern European countries. We have to watch elections everywhere. I was very thrilled and pleased to be able to go to Mongolia which is the most amazing country. That was very fascinating and I was lucky enough to head a Mission there twice.

Of course, you have problems sometimes. We've always had a certain problem with Albania because when I was the Director there was an election there. Elections observation was nothing like it's grown into now. We had very few people to send but I did have one or

two good election experts who I could trust implicitly and they went and it was apparently the most appalling, appalling election. It was so bad that the opposition, in the end, just withdrew from the polling stations because they were just too scared about what was going on. But the President of the time took offence that at the fact that we hadn't covered that particular issue in the Final Report. I had ticked off the Report because I trusted the people who were there. So many bad things were happening that the fact that the opposition were not staying at polling stations was very minor in comparison to what else was going on. But the President wanted me to change the Report. And I said to him: 'Mr President, I'm sorry I can't do that because if I start doing that everyone is going to want to start changing reports. This is not a consultative document. It is something that we write, we say represents what we have seen and heard. I'm sorry I can't change it. If you want to, you can send a note around the Permanent Council saying that we got it wrong. Fair enough. But I cannot negotiate a Final Report with you, I'm very sorry.' Well, he held it against me for years and years and years. Yet I often went back because I did get on with most people in Albania very well and it was only at the last election when his party was in opposition when we actually criticised the Government for what they did and got into power that he actually brought himself to say: 'Actually, that was a good report.' It took him many, many years to get to that position. So, you do have some rather strange situations.

Turkey was rather bad at times too and the last election I did in Turkey Erdogan was obsessed with the feeling that Fethullah Gülen was a very strong active opposition leader in exile. Erdogan thinks that he is trying to stage some kind of revolution from abroad. There is a well established opposition party, HDP [Peoples' Democratic Party], some of whom are old school intellectuals. Some live in the south east of Turkey. Two days before the election Erdogan changed a number of the polling stations. He said he had 'amalgamated them' so that it would be easier to protect them because he was afraid there might be trouble. But what he very cleverly did was that he made it impossible for people who didn't have a car to reach them because he moved them something like 20 miles sometimes and what he also very cleverly did was to amalgamate villages which were at daggers drawn with each other. So, you can imagine what sort of effect that had on the elections, opposition votes were lost. But that's some of the things that you find when you really look closely at what some leaders do.

**IH-C:** It occurs to me, being someone quite unfamiliar with this process – you talked about people in the country reporting back to the 'core team' in these elections. Now, they are

presumably people who have been found by the government of that particular country. So, you need to be somewhat alert to what these local observers, are reporting back to you. Can they always be trusted? You've mentioned this theme of 'trust' before?

**AG:** Occasionally there are problems with Observers but it's usually pretty minor and over personality issues. Also, over the years one gets to know people because states tend to get the same people who are very good. The Russians don't often send observers and when they do, they don't usually cause any problems. The problem these days is that the participating states don't send the requested number of LTOs or STOs. I remember in 2016 when I was heading the Election Observation Mission in the United States we had asked for 100 LTOs but we only received 49. As everyone knows the US is a large country and every state has its election laws and procedures. The object of EOMs is to ensure that the principles relating to elections as laid down in the Copenhagen Document are implemented. So, when only 49 LTOs turned up we thought: 'Crippen! What are we going to do? How can we observe the whole country?' But most of the LTOs were German and they were amazing. Because it was an English-speaking country, they did not have a driver and so had to drive themselves. In addition, they did not have an interpreter/assistant and had to do everything for themselves. But as I said, they were amazing. So, not only did they have to find out for themselves where they were going, some of them had to look after 2 States! And as you know, distances in the United States are vast. Mercifully, most of them already knew quite a lot and had visited the United States. But I was always concerned that the number would leak out and people would say: 'How can you possibly observe an election where you've only got half the number?' Somehow, we had to get these poor guys on the move the whole time so that we could produce the Preliminary and the Final Report. But they really did an excellent job. As I've said, some of them had two states to look after and the problems were different in each state. They did an amazing job and I was very pleased with the report. They gave us a lot of information. One has to recognise that in the United States there is the National Democratic Institute, there's the IRI which is the International Republican Institute and NGOs around who we could talk to and consult. But, of course, we did need to get information on the ground and also on what happened on polling day. That was quite a memorable election. I was really so relieved when that was over because, as I say, people were saying: 'How can you do a good job when you have 49 or even less of the people you had requested?'

**IH-C:** Over the last few years you've been involved in quite a range of organisations but all to do with human rights really, in way or another?

**AG:** The Foreign Policy Centre is a think tank where I am Chairman of the Trustees. It deals not just with human rights but issues of the day. From 1998 - 2011, I was the Convenor of the International Law Course once a year at Cambridge for a week mainly for people from the FCO in the autumn just before the University went back up. I'm also on the Advisory Board of GAPS which is the UK's civil society network of Women Peace & Security. It's an advisory group of many women's organisations and we assess the UK government on Women Peace & Security issues. The different organisations have their own different mandates but we make sure we help them where we can, liaise, keep each organisation informed about events and co-ordinate when we can on what is happening. That is quite interesting.

But the thing that always frustrates me so much about all this is: lots and lots of meetings, lots and lots of talk but not very much 'do' and that I do find is really rather disappointing, I must say. We've been talking about the same thing for years. Luckily, some things are better these days. But for example, in this country we were having great problems with vaccinations and it was all sorted out by a woman, Kate Bingham. It was a woman behind the vaccinations programme in this country. That's why we did so well, I think. I'm not by any means saying that women are better than men. They are as good and they're not, even in this day and age, really given the recognition that they should be given or the positions that they should be given. The one thing that women are very good at is solving problems. Women are 'deep doers' not thinkers. You lovely gentlemen tend to think a lot and hard and discuss but I think women get on 'and do' and that's not actually as recognised as it might be, I'm afraid. My little outburst!

**IH-C:** Given your time spent with these organisations, do you think they are still fit for purpose or are they organisations that need reforming?

**AG:** That's an interesting question and I think it could – it should – be looked at as to whether they are doing the right thing. Are they approaching various subjects in the right way? But it's not easy. With the OSCE, for instance, these days it's certainly fighting below its weight, so to speak. The problem for the OSCE is the fact that they have a consensus rule

so everybody has to agree to a particular resolution before it can be passed and of course if it's one that one or two countries don't like – Russia probably being one of the main ones – all they have to do is to refuse to vote for it and so you're stymied. That whole issue is being informally looked into by the OSCE Parliament at the moment. It's informal, it's not official as such but we're having some quite interesting discussions there. But it's difficult to reform these organisations to get the votes in order to be able to change practices. I think it's good that these things are raised at these meetings but – I don't know what the trouble is but not much happens in reality. Trade is obviously more important to some countries than anything else. Some countries won't even criticise others as they might have done in the past. Things have changed and certainly haven't gone in the way one might have hoped a few years ago, I must say. But the FPC is looking at itself at the moment to see how it can be more effective. Perhaps other organisations will do the same. A final general comment in my view is that there is too much time spent discussing 'plans' but far too little time spent in implementing them.

**IH-C:** Dame Audrey Glover, thank you very much.