

Kanerva, Harstedt lead pre-election visit to eastern Ukraine



The PA delegation visits a checkpoint outside Dnipropetrovsk.

As part of its ongoing election observation activities in Ukraine, a senior team from the OSCE PA visited Dnipropetrovsk and Zaporizhzhya from 27 to 30 April. Vice-President Ilkka Kanerva (MP, Finland) led the delegation, together with Kent Harstedt (MP, Sweden) and Secretary General Spencer Oliver.

The team was briefed by long-term observers from the OSCE/ODIHR, which provided strong support to the delegation. In addition, the group met with election administration officials, representatives of local and regional government, including the Mayor of Dnipropetrovsk city and the Deputy Governor of Dnipropetrovsk Oblast, as well as candidate representatives and civil society.

“While here to get informed about the election and the campaign, the troubling security situation in the east of

the country and the unpredictability was an underlying theme in all of our discussions. That being said, our visits to Dnipropetrovsk and Zaporizhzhya, both neighbours to Donetsk, showed that the current situation is generally calm here,” said Kanerva.

The delegation visited one of numerous checkpoints established jointly by local self-defence forces and security officials in the area.

Prior to visiting the regions, Spencer Oliver, who was accompanied by Director of Elections Andreas Baker and Operations Officer Iryna Sabashuk, visited Kyiv. He met with Tana de Zulueta, leader of the OSCE/ODIHR’s election observation mission and her team, and was briefed on their work. Oliver expressed his strong appreciation for the support provided by the ODIHR mission to the Assembly’s work.

In addition, they met with Ambassador Ertugrul Apakan, who heads the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission in Ukraine. Ambassador Apakan discussed the work of the mission, which is deployed across the country and is expected to expand to several hundred monitors throughout the country, as well as on the circumstances surrounding the release of two members of their team, who had briefly been detained.

Ambassador Apakan welcomed the plans of the OSCE PA to play a leading role in the observation mission and assured Oliver of their full support.

Muttonen and Santos lead OSCE PA observers in Skopje

Fundamental freedoms were respected and candidates were able to campaign freely in the 27 April elections in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, but shortcomings identified in the first round of the presidential election two weeks earlier, including the blurring of state and party activities and biased media coverage in favour of the ruling party, persisted, election observers said in a statement issued Monday.

“Yesterday’s elections were effectively administered and election day went smoothly, but there were real problems before and, unfortunately, after the vote,” said Christine Muttonen (MP, Austria), the Special Co-ordinator who led the short-term OSCE observer mission.

The OSCE PA’s delegation consisted of 31 MPs and staff, led by Isabel Santos (MP, Portugal), Chair of the PA’s Third Committee.

From the OSCE PA’s Vienna Liaison

Office, Roberto Montella, Francesco Pagani and Firuze Demir supported the mission, working closely with the OSCE/ODIHR and in co-ordination with colleagues from PACE.



Christine Muttonen and Isabel Santos at a polling station on election day.

Special Rep Kovalev addresses OSCE Counter-Terrorism Conference in Switzerland

OSCE PA Special Representative on Anti-Terrorism Nikolay Kovalev (MP, Russian Federation) addressed the OSCE’s Counter-Terrorism Conference on 28 April in Interlaken, Switzerland, warning that international co-operation against terrorism is “seriously lagging behind.” Kovalev, who is also Head of the Russian Delegation to the OSCE PA, highlighted the divide between East and West as undermining success, saying that the “crisis of confidence”

between OSCE participating States is hampering counter-terrorism efforts. He was accompanied by Deputy Secretary General Semyon Dzakhaev.

Kovalev was appointed Special Representative by PA President Ranko Krivokapic in November 2013. His mandate includes facilitating an exchange of views among parliamentarians and communicating with relevant actors in the OSCE and other international bodies on terrorism issues.