

News from Copenhagen

Preparations continue for OSCE PA's 23rd Annual Session in Baku

Parliamentarians from across the OSCE area are preparing to gather in Baku from 28 June to 2 July for the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly's 23rd Annual Session. The meeting, hosted by the *Milli Mejlis* (Parliament) of Azerbaijan, will be held under the theme "Helsinki +40: Towards Human Security for All." Nearly 500 participants from 52 countries have registered.

In addition to the three general committees' reports and draft resolutions covering topics such as democratic control of the armed forces, the role of technology and agricultural science in addressing environmental challenges, and addressing the human impacts of migration, the Assembly will consider 14 supplementary items, pending approval by the Standing Committee.

Among valid supplementary items are "Comprehensive Immigration Reform," "Clear, Gross and Uncorrected Violations of Helsinki Principles by the Russian Federation,"



"The Fight against Terrorism," "Prevention and Prosecution of Child Sex Trafficking," "Combating Torture," and "The OSCE's Further Engagement with Afghanistan." Full texts of these and other resolutions are available at www.oscepa.org.

Delegations are reminded that the deadline for amendments to the general committee draft resolutions is Saturday, 14 June. Amendments to supplementary items are due by Saturday, 21 June.

Last week, OSCE PA Deputy Secretaries General Gustavo Pallares and Semyon Dzakhaev and Conference Co-ordinator Odile Lelarge were in Baku for the latest in a series of preparatory visits, meeting with a range of interlocutors to discuss logistical and technical aspects of the Annual Session's organization.

All meetings will take place at the Conference Center of the Fairmont Baku Hotel and are open to the media.

Work of OSCE parliamentarians in Ukraine featured widely in international press



Ilkka Kanerva, Spencer Oliver, Kenneth Wollack, and Madeleine Albright at the opening of a polling station in Kyiv, 25 May 2014.

The PA's election observation mission in Ukraine was a major accomplishment, as more than 100 of the PA's elected MPs from nearly 30 OSCE participating States lent their credibility and expertise to the mission.

As they do in all of their activities, parliamentarians also lent high visibility to the OSCE's work. From Kyiv to Donetsk, MPs conducted dozens of television, radio and print interviews for domestic and international media outlets hungry for their perspective on the election and for information on the work of the monitors. The parliamentarians' work was highlighted in top international news sources such as Agence France-Press, the Associated Press, BBC, *The New York Times*, Reuters and *The Washington Post*. The voices of OSCE parliamentarians were also particularly featured in the local and national press outlets of their respective countries.

Joao Soares (MP, Portugal), the Special Co-ordinator of the OSCE's short-term observer mission, was interviewed in person by nearly a dozen news outlets. Shortly after delivering the OSCE's preliminary statement on the day following the election, Soares was interviewed by BBC World News TV, which is available in more than 300 million homes worldwide.

He described the OSCE's assessment and the PA's visit to Donetsk on the eve of the election. He was also interviewed on Maidan by one of Portugal's most respected journalists, describing the work of the OSCE's short-term observers.

Ilkka Kanerva (MP, Finland), Head of the PA's Delegation of observers, was quoted in RIA Novosti's story on the election: "Unfortunately, many citizens were prevented from voting in Donetsk and Luhansk, as were nearly all in Crimea, due to the ongoing threats to Ukraine's territorial integrity. However, the impressive turnout in the rest of the country offered a powerful rebuke to those who would challenge Ukraine's unity and progress." He was also interviewed by top Finnish publications about the PA's work in Ukraine.

In all, OSCE parliamentarians were quoted in the national media of at least 20 countries, from Ukrainian radio to Georgian television to German dailies. Visit the "OSCE PA in the News" section of the PA's website to see a selection of articles that highlight the Assembly's work and its members.



Joao Soares speaks with the media following the post-election press conference in Kyiv on 26 May.