

Visiting South East Europe, Battelli highlights OSCE engagement in region



Roberto Battelli, Ambassadors Andreas Nothelle and Jonathan Moore, meet Deputy Speaker Mladen Bosic in Sarajevo, 18 May 2017.

OSCE PA Vice-President and Special Representative on South East Europe Roberto Battelli (MP, Slovenia) was in Albania, Montenegro, and Bosnia and Herzegovina last week with the OSCE PA's Special Representative in Vienna, Amb. Andreas Nothelle, for a series of high-level meetings.

Battelli noted that the visit came at a crucial time for the region and was productive in reassuring national political, institutional, religious and other stakeholders that the OSCE remains fully engaged including through its PA. In meetings, Battelli and Nothelle also highlighted the unique work of the OSCE field missions operating in challenging environments, and expressed appreciation for their support in the visit.

Beginning the visit in Albania on Monday, Battelli and Nothelle met with heads of political parties and national leaders, including Prime Minister Edi Rama, Speaker of the Assembly Ilir Meta and Head of the OSCE PA's Albanian Delegation Arta Dade. Meetings were also held with

opposition leader Lulzim Basha and Denar Biba, Chair of Albania's Central Election Commission.

Battelli met with Amb. Bernd Borchardt, Head of the OSCE Presence in Albania, and Amb. Peter Tejler, who is heading the election observation mission of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights. Battelli is expected to serve as Special Co-ordinator for the short-term OSCE observer mission for the scheduled 25 June vote.

In Montenegro, Battelli and Nothelle participated in and addressed a Conference on the OSCE Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security. They met with Amb. Maryse Daviet, Head of the OSCE Mission to Montenegro, and Speaker of Parliament Ivan Brajovic.

In Sarajevo on Thursday, Battelli together with Amb. Jonathan Moore, Head of the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina, met with representatives of the international community and parliamentary leaders including BiH House of Peoples Deputy Speaker Safet Softic and House of Representatives Deputy Speaker Mladen Bosic. Friday's meetings included discussions with Minister of Security Dragan Mektic and with senior staff of the OSCE Mission. Battelli wrapped up the visit in Banja Luka where he held talks with RSNA Speaker Nedeljko Cubrilovic, Minister of Interior Dragan Lukac, and national religious leaders.

Special Representative Kovalev urges increased co-operation to counter terrorism

The OSCE PA's Special Representative on Anti-Terrorism, Nikolay Kovalev (MP, Russian Federation), participated Tuesday in the OSCE-wide Counter-Terrorism Conference 2017, being held in Vienna this week on the theme "Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism and Radicalization that Lead to Terrorism." Opening his remarks with an expression of condolences to the people of the United Kingdom for the terrorist attack in Manchester on Monday, Kovalev noted that the tragedy recalls the urgency of developing effective and innovative counter-terror strategies that keep the citizens of the OSCE area safe.

He pointed out that in recent years the topic of countering terrorism has become one of the most pressing areas of work for the PA, and discussed issues such as terrorist recruitment methodology and the topic of violent computer games as possible precursors of violent extremism.



Nikolay Kovalev addresses OSCE conference, Vienna, 23 May 2017.

Upcoming events and deadlines

President Christine Muttonen is hosting a Retreat on National Minorities in Villach, Austria, on **29-30 May**, focusing on ways to improve public support for national minorities in areas such as education, culture, and language.

Delegations are also advised of two upcoming election observation missions, to the **25 June** elections in Albania (registration deadline: **26 May**) and **26 June** elections in Mongolia (registration deadline: **26 May**). Further, delegations are kindly reminded that supplementary items must be received by the Secretariat by **31 May**.

Warsaw meeting on election observation

Members of the OSCE PA Secretariat, led by Secretary General Roberto Montella, were in Warsaw on 22-23 May for consultations on co-operation in the field of election observation with traditional OSCE PA partners. The meeting with ODIHR Director Michael Link, PACE Secretary General Wojciech Sawicki, NATO PA Secretary General David Hobbs, and Cristina Castagnoli from the EP served as an opportunity to consider ways to improve delivery of services to their election observers and solidify joint work. Montella and his team – including Andreas Nothelle, Andreas Baker and Iryna Sabashuk – also met with Members of the Polish Delegation to the PA, headed by Barbara Bartus.