

President Lennmarker in Ukraine

On 15 and 16 February 2007 President Göran Lennmarker paid an official visit to Ukraine, upon the invitation of the Verkhovna Rada (Parliament) of Ukraine. During his visit President Lennmarker signed the official agreement between the Ukrainian Parliament and the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly regarding the hosting of the 16th Annual Session of the Assembly, to be held in Kyiv in July 2007. On behalf of the Ukrainian Parliament the agreement was signed by Deputy Speaker Adam Marteniuk in an official ceremony in the Parliament building.



President Lennmarker met with Ukrainian President Yushenko while in Kyiv

In Kyiv President Lennmarker also met with Oleg Bilorus, Head of the Ukrainian Delegation to the OSCE PA, as well as the other Members of the Delegation. Discussions focused on the upcoming activities of the Assembly, including the Winter Meeting and the Economic Conference in Andorra. The special debate on energy security in the OSCE to be held in Vienna during the Winter Meeting was of particular interest to the Ukrainian Parliamentarians.

Mr. Lennmarker also met with the Ukrainian leadership including President Victor Yushenko, Prime Minister Victor Yanukovich, and Deputy Foreign Minister Andriy Veselovsky. Discussions focused on the activities of the Assembly and the role of parliamentarians in the resolution of so-called frozen conflicts. President Yushenko underlined the importance that Ukraine attaches to the OSCE PA holding its Annual Session in the Ukrainian capital, and he has agreed to address the Opening Plenary.

President Lennmarker was accompanied by Deputy Secretary General Vitaly Evseyev, Gustavo Pallarés, Adviser to the President, and Åsa Ekwall, Counselor from the Swedish Parliament. Mr. Evseyev and Mr. Pallarés arrived in Kyiv on 13 February to meet with the Ukrainian officials responsible for the 2007 Annual Session. The Annual Session, which will focus on “Implementation of OSCE Commitments”, will be held in the premises of the Verkhovna Rada from 5 to 9 July 2007.

OSCE PA Participates in Conference on Parliamentary Dimension of Election Observation

A delegation from the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly headed by Vice-President Joao Soares and Secretary General Spencer Oliver participated in the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly Conference on ‘the Parliamentary Dimension of Election Observation: Applying Common Standards’, held on 15 and 16 February 2007. In the opening session, Vice-President Soares provided an overview of OSCE PA election observation missions, sharing also his personal experiences from the past many elections. Roberto Battelli, Head of the Slovenian Delegation, presented his views on recent inter-parliamentary experience in election observation stressing the scope and size of the OSCE PA Election Observation Programme. Deputy Secretary General Tina Schön served as key-note speaker on the issue of co-operation and the need for better synergy between International Organizations.

The conclusion of the meeting was that since election observation is a growing industry, there is a need for more co-operation and co-ordination. As a positive, new development, organizations of former Members of Parliament were present at the meeting and offered their support and assistance, particularly

with regard to long term observation. The specific co-operation issues between the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and the OSCE ODIHR were discussed at the final working session. Head of the Swiss Delegation, Christian Miesch, and Member of the Turkish Delegation, Yakup Kepenek, as well as Ambassador Andreas Nothelle actively supported the OSCE PA positions in the debates in the various working sessions.



Secretary General Spencer Oliver chaired a working session which included ODIHR Director Christian Strohal