

## President Soares holds discussions in Moscow

Amidst ongoing tensions regarding the conflict in Georgia, OSCE PA President Joao Soares met in Moscow from 8 to 10 September with senior Russian officials and parliamentarians on the invitation of Chairman of the Russian Duma Boris Gryzlov.

In the wide-ranging discussions on current developments in the conflict, Mr. Soares emphasized that Georgian territorial integrity must be respected and that war is not an acceptable recourse for resolving difficulties.

Meeting with Chairman Gryzlov, Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov, Deputy Chairman of the Federation Council Alexander Torshin, and the Russian delegation to the OSCE PA, headed by Alexander Kozlovskiy, Mr. Soares also discussed the role that the OSCE will continue to play in finding a lasting solution to the current crisis. He noted the importance of inter-parliamentary discussion and particularly encouraged the active participation by the Russian government and OSCE PA delegation in the debate on the Georgian crisis that is set to take place on 19 September at the OSCE PA Fall Meetings in Toronto.

The meetings in Moscow also touched on other OSCE-related issues, including reforming the functioning of the organization and particularly the need for improving transparency at all levels. Russian interlocutors also raised the possibility of pursuing a new security charter for the Euro-Atlantic area, as proposed by Russian President Dmitry Medvedev.

President Soares underlined the importance of avoiding



double standards within the OSCE region and in this regard urged active participation by the Russian Federation in the Assembly's election observation activities, particularly during the upcoming observation mission to the United States.

The trip to Moscow was Mr. Soares's first official visit since being elected OSCE PA President in July. He was accompanied by OSCE PA Secretary General Spencer Oliver, Senior Counsellor Semyon Dzakhaev, and Presidential Advisor Andreas Baker from the International Secretariat, and by Nuno Paixao from the Portuguese Parliament.

## President Emeritus Lennmarker visits South Caucasus



President Emeritus Goran Lennmarker visited the South Caucasus from 1 to 6 September and held talks with leading officials. It was his first visit to the region after his appointment as Special Envoy for Georgia. He also serves as Special Representative on the Nagorno Karabakh conflict.

In Armenia and Azerbaijan, Mr. Lennmarker stressed the

urgent need to find a solution to the Nagorno Karabakh conflict. He emphasized the negative consequences of the "no-war no-peace" situation and urged Armenia and Azerbaijan to make use of the OSCE framework, the Co-Chairs of the Minsk Group, to reach a solution.

In Georgia, Mr. Lennmarker emphasized the need to implement the ceasefire negotiated by the President of France and to protect civilians. He urged that OSCE observers be allowed to patrol in the entire conflict zone and pointed to the need to get humanitarian aid into the security zone.

To see first-hand the consequences of the war, Mr. Lennmarker visited the town of Gori and travelled to the Russian military checkpoint at Kareleti. He also visited two centers for internally displaced people -- in Tbilisi and in Gori.

Mr. Lennmarker will deliver a report on the situation in Georgia at the OSCE PA Fall Meetings in Toronto 18-21 September.

Mr. Lennmarker was accompanied in Georgia by Tina Schøn, Deputy Secretary General of the OSCE PA.