

News from Copenhagen

OSCE Parliamentarians gather for 21st Annual Session

Under the general theme of “The OSCE: Region of Change,” more than 250 lawmakers from Europe, Asia and North America are gathering in the Principality of Monaco for the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly’s 21st Annual Session from 5 to 9 July 2012.

The Inaugural Plenary Session convenes Thursday afternoon with addresses by Michel Roger, Minister of State of the Principality of Monaco; Jean-Francois Robillon; Speaker of the National Council of Monaco; Jean-Charles Gardetto, OSCE PA Vice-President and Head of the Monegasque Delegation; and OSCE Chairman-in-Office, Irish Deputy Prime Minister Eamon Gilmore.

Hosted by the Monegasque Parliament, all meetings will be held in the Grimaldi Forum, starting with a meeting of the Standing Committee of Heads of National Delegations Thursday morning.

The Standing Committee will send supplementary items to the Assembly’s general committees and plenaries for debate, including resolutions on the rule of law in Russia, the contribution of small States to international affairs, investigations into extraordinary rendition, Iran’s nuclear programme, OSCE co-operation with Afghanistan, and human rights in Belarus and Ukraine.

The second plenary on 5 July will be addressed by OSCE Secretary General Lamberto Zannier and OSCE PA Special Representative on Gender Issues Hedy Fry, and will consider a number of supplementary items.

The PA’s Committee on Economic Affairs, Science,

Technology and Environment will debate a resolution authored by Committee Rapporteur Tony Lloyd (United Kingdom), calling for national governments to invest in energy-saving technologies to assist the post-crisis economic recovery.

The resolution before the Committee on Political Affairs and Security, authored by Rapporteur Vilija Aleknaite Abramikiene (Lithuania), calls for increasing transparency among States by lowering the thresholds at which they are required to inform each other of their military exercises.

The Committee on Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions will take up a resolution that calls for countries leading the OSCE to “set the standard” on human rights, including respecting the independence

of the judiciary. Ireland is currently leading the 56-country Organization. Ukraine takes the helm of the OSCE in January 2013.

The Annual Session will include a Mediterranean Forum on the afternoon of 6 July, with participation expected from parliamentary delegations from most OSCE Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation, including Algeria, Israel and Morocco, as well as delegations from Libya and the Palestinian National Council.

The session concludes 9 July with the election of officers and the adoption of the Monaco Declaration, which helps shape OSCE and national policy. Meetings of the Annual Session are open to the press and will stream live online, available at www.oscepa.org.



Human Rights Rapporteur Coruz visits Tymoshenko in Kharkiv hospital

A day before the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly is set to debate a resolution aimed at improving the rule of law in Ukraine, Coskun Coruz (The Netherlands) today visited former Ukrainian prime minister Yulia Tymoshenko at the hospital in Kharkiv, Ukraine, where she has been receiving treatment.

The two met for nearly two hours discussing her case and the need for judicial independence and prison reform in Ukraine. “I appreciate the Ukrainian authorities allowing me to visit Ms. Tymoshenko and hope this visit is the start of Ukraine showing a permanent commitment to its OSCE values and dialogue with the OSCE,” Coruz stated.

Coruz also met with prison officials, prosecutors and the

hospital director. He is the author of a resolution to be voted on this week in Monaco by more than 250 parliamentarians from 54 countries.

The OSCE Parliamentary Assembly Committee on Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions resolution calls for countries serving as OSCE Chair-in-Office to set the standard for “exemplary observance” of their human rights commitments, including respecting the independence of the judiciary.

“I have positive feelings about changes to the criminal procedure but I have great concerns about the case of Tymoshenko,” Coruz said. “There should be transparency in the whole process.”