

News from Copenhagen

OSCE PA prepares for Ukrainian Chairmanship, Winter Meeting

The OSCE PA International Secretariat is preparing for a busy start to the new year, with the opening of the OSCE Ukrainian Chairmanship and a reception to be held in Vienna next week in honor of the 10th anniversary of the PA's Liaison Office. Arrangements are also continuing for the PA's 12th Winter Meeting, to be held at the Hofburg Centre 21-22 February.

Representatives of the PA will participate in the Chairmanship Opening Event on 16 January and attend on 17 January the address by the CiO, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ukraine Leonid Kozhara. The PA will also participate in the Annual Meeting of the Chairmanship and the Secretariat with the Heads of Field Operations and Institutions.

On 18 January, PA representatives will participate in the annual Regional Heads of Field Operations and Institutions Working Group sessions. Director of Presidential Administration Roberto Montella is expected to cover the session on the South Caucasus, with Special Representative Ambassador Andreas Nothelle covering South Eastern Europe, Programme Director Anna Chernova covering Central Asia and Deputy Director of Administration Marc Carillet covering Eastern Europe. Secretary General Spencer Oliver will participate in the restricted session with the CiO and OSCE Secretary General Lamberto Zannier.

Following these meetings, the OSCE PA will hold a reception, hosted by Secretary General Oliver and Ambassador Nothelle, to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the establishment of the OSCE PA Vienna Liaison Office. The Austrian Delegation to the OSCE PA, the Chairperson-in-Office, the 57 members of the Permanent Council (plus the EU ambassador), the Partners for Co-operation, all Heads of OSCE Field Operations and Institutions, and Secretary



General Zannier and his senior staff have all been invited.

Preparations are also underway in Vienna and Copenhagen for the OSCE PA's 12th Winter Meeting, which will include addresses by the President of the Austrian Parliament, Barbara Prammer, the Chairperson-in-Office of the OSCE, OSCE PA President Riccardo Migliori (Italy), OSCE PA Special Representative on Gender Issues Hedy Fry (Canada), and OSCE Secretary General Zannier.

Heads of OSCE Institutions, including the High Commissioner on National Minorities, the Director of the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media and the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities, are expected to address relevant meetings of the General Committees.

The Winter Meeting, starting on 21 February, will be comprised of meetings of the Standing Committee of Heads of Delegations, each General Committee, and joint sessions of the three committees. A topic for the special debate is expected to be announced soon. The draft programme is available at www.oscepa.org, along with registration forms. Delegates are kindly asked to register no later than 22 January.

Special Representative on the South Caucasus to visit region

From 16-26 January, former PA President Joao Soares (Portugal) will visit Azerbaijan, Georgia and Armenia in his capacity as Special Representative on the South Caucasus. The purpose of the visit is to discuss developments in the region, both with regard to democratic reforms and the prospect of resolving the protracted conflicts. Soares will start his trip in Baku, Azerbaijan from 16-19 January. As Baku will host the Annual Session 2014, Soares will take the opportunity to also begin preliminary discussions on preparations for the Session.

Following the Baku visit, Soares will travel to Tbilisi, Georgia from 19-23 January where he will be joined by Secretary General Spencer Oliver and Roberto Montella, who along with Deputy Secretary General Tina Schoen participated in the Assembly's election observation mission to the recent parliamentary elections in Georgia. Coinciding with the Special Representative's official visit to the country,

the delegation will conduct a follow-up evaluation for the election observation mission.

Finally, Soares will visit Yerevan, Armenia, from 23-26 January where he will be joined by OSCE PA Vice-President Tonino Picula (Croatia), who President Riccardo Migliori (Italy) appointed to lead the OSCE PA election observation mission to Armenia for the 18 February presidential election. Soares and Picula will conduct a pre-election evaluation on the possible modalities of an OSCE PA election observation mission there.

Deputy Secretary General Schoen, who is co-ordinating the trip, will travel with Soares to all three countries. The Secretary of the Portuguese Delegation, Nuno Paixao, will also accompany Soares throughout the trip, and Picula will be accompanied to Armenia by the Secretary of the Croatian Delegation Milovan Petkovic.