

## Migliori visits refugees on Libyan border while on pre-election mission to Tunisia

OSCE PA Vice-President Riccardo Migliori, in his capacity as Head of the OSCE PA Election Observation Mission for the 23 October elections to the Tunisian National Constituent Assembly, paid a second visit to the country from 28 September to 1 October.

Following a recommendation of the Tunisian electoral authorities, Migliori visited the southern part of the country to get a direct impression of the preparation for the elections and to assess the socio-political climate during the election campaign in rural areas of Tunisia.

Vice-President Migliori visited Sousse, Sfax, Gabes, and Medenine, meeting with electoral authorities, leaders and candidates of the major political parties contesting the elections, and representatives of the international observers present in these municipalities. Migliori shared with all interlocutors his respect for the level of civic enthusiasm and professional dedication demonstrated by the staff of the regional election authorities. He also underlined that the climate of the political debate at the beginning of the election campaign is constructive and encouraging.

In Tunis, Migliori met with the President of the National Commission for the Reform of Information and Communication. He also met with the heads of the European Union



Riccardo Migliori meeting local politicians in southern Tunisia.

and Carter Center election monitoring missions to discuss coordination and information sharing in the pre-electoral phase.

While in the south of the country Migliori visited two refugee camps in Ras Ajdir, on the border with Libya. He was briefed by the International Organization for Migration and the Tunisian army on the condition of the camps and the distribution of asylum seekers and migrants.

Migliori was accompanied by Deputy Director for Field Operations Roberto Montella from the OSCE PA Liaison Office in Vienna and Giuseppe Maggio and Vincenzo Picciolo from the Italian Parliament.

## Battelli, Grossruck on official visit to Albania



Speaker Jozefina Topalli, Roberto Battelli, Wolfgang Grossruck, Eugen Wolfarth (Head of OSCE Presence in Albania), and Andreas Nothelle

OSCE PA Special Representative on South East Europe and Treasurer Roberto Battelli (Slovenia) is visiting this week the OSCE field operations in Albania and Montenegro. Battelli, who will chair a roundtable of regional heads of OSCE field operations in Dubrovnik on 7 October, has met with Speaker Jozefina Topalli of the Albanian Parliament and Prime Minister Sali Berisha. For these talks, Battelli was joined by PA Vice President Wolfgang Grossruck (Austria).

The delegation, which is accompanied by Amb. Andreas Nothelle from the Liaison Office in Vienna, also met with the Albanian Delegation to the OSCE PA, the Mayor of Shkodra and representatives of the diplomatic community. Following up on past visits, the delegation focused on international projects related to policing and border management.

In Montenegro, the delegation will continue to meet with high-level representatives from Parliament and the Government, before continuing on to Dubrovnik, Croatia, for the OSCE PA's Tenth Fall Meetings.

## Efthymiou addresses Barcelona conference

Addressing a conference of the Institute for Cultural Diplomacy in Barcelona on 23 September, OSCE PA President Petros Efthymiou spoke about the importance of enhancing the involvement of the OSCE and its Parliamentary Assembly in the Mediterranean region. The President noted the importance of Mediterranean dialogue in the OSCE, specifically mentioning that there is a need for the OSCE to enhance its role in the region by achieving closer co-operation with the Mediterranean partners.

"Both the OSCE participating States and Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation should aim at promoting security and co-operation in the region through a comprehensive process of enhanced political dialogue, economic co-operation and intercultural exchanges," Efthymiou said.

President Efthymiou stressed that the OSCE PA is strongly in favour of re-launching the Union for the Mediterranean and strengthening its role. It is time, he said, to develop and utilize the full potential of such a project, especially in sectors such as energy and the environment.

He stated that the PA would continue to promote the Mediterranean dimension of the OSCE, in particular through participation in annual OSCE Mediterranean Conferences, and by deploying an election observation mission to Tunisia. Efforts to re-establish stability in the Arab world will be addressed at the OSCE PA's annual Mediterranean Forum as well as upcoming side meetings, he said.