

In Greece, Special Representative Gulyev highlights regional co-operation



Gulyev's meeting with Charalampos Athanasiou

The OSCE PA's Special Representative on South East Europe, Vice-President Azay Gulyev, has been in Greece this week for a series of meetings with parliamentarians, governmental officials and representatives of political parties on regional developments and perspectives.

Gulyev has met with Charalampos Athanasiou, Second Deputy Speaker of the Hellenic Parliament; Ambassador Themistoklis Demiris, Secretary General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Minister of Interior Makis Vouridis; Anastasios Chatzivasileiou, Secretary General of the Standing Committee on National Defense and Foreign Affairs of the Hellenic Parliament and Representative of the Prime Minister's Diplomatic Office; Dimitrios Konstantinos Kairidis, First Vice-Chairperson of the Special Committee on European Affairs of the Hellenic Parliament; Notis Mitarachi, Minister of Migration and Asylum; representatives of the opposition, including George Katrougalos, Representa-

tive of the President of the Syriza party Alexis Tsipras and former Minister of Foreign Affairs; and members of the Greek Delegation to the OSCE PA, headed by Theodoros Karaoglou.

In meetings, Gulyev touched upon the latest developments in the Western Balkans, including prospects for European integration, upcoming elections, and regional co-operation. Discussions highlighted future regional prospects also in light of the successful resolution of the name dispute between Athens and Skopje.

Gulyev also stressed the invaluable contributions of the Greek Delegation in the Migration Committee and in the context of election observation activities. He noted that the Ad Hoc Committee on Migration has been closely following migration challenges faced by Greece as a frontline country on the eastern Mediterranean route, and highlighted the challenges associated with an equitable distribution of asylum seekers, repatriation and the threat related to foreign terrorist fighters in the region.

Other topics discussed included institution building, the strengthening of the rule of law in the region and the challenges which the pandemic impresses on freedom of the media. The visit, Gulyev's first to the region since being appointed Special Representative last summer, took place 22-24 November.

OSCE President issues letter on the failure to hold HDIM in 2021

Last week, OSCE PA President Margareta Cederfelt sent a letter to PA Members regretting that for second year in a row, no Human Dimension Implementation Meeting was held this year. In the letter, she urged parliamentarians to officially inquire with their Ministers for Foreign Affairs about the steps taken to avert this situation in future years.

Read the letter here: <https://bit.ly/30U5WnM>

Cederfelt and Richey advance OSCE co-operation on combating human trafficking

On 19 November OSCE PA President Margareta Cederfelt and the OSCE Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings (OSR/CTHB) Valiant Richey engaged in an informal Zoom conversation focused on advancing co-operation between the PA and the OSCE on the role of parliaments in combating trafficking in human beings and areas for further collaboration. President Cederfelt emphasized the importance that the PA attaches to this topic and the resources at its disposal, highlighting in particular the extensive work of the Special Representative on Human Trafficking Issues Chris Smith (United States).

Cederfelt and Richey also reflected on the collaboration between the PA's Ad Hoc Committee on Migration and



Margareta Cederfelt and Valiant Richey

the OSR/CTHB on the shared priority of combating human trafficking in mixed migration flows, and the joint visit to BiH last July of the OSR/CTHB and Migration Committee Vice-Chair Gudrun Kugler (Austria). Vice-Chair Alf Dubs (United Kingdom) has made a significant contribution to addressing the situation of unaccompanied minors, Cederfelt stressed.

Special Co-ordinator Juel-Jensen addresses STOs in Kyrgyzstan

On Monday, OSCE PA Treasurer Peter Juel-Jensen (MP, Denmark), who has been appointed by the Chairperson-in-Office as Special Co-ordinator and leader of the short-term OSCE observer mission to Kyrgyzstan, spoke to a team of 230 short-term observers in a video address, noting the important role of observers in assessing the electoral process.

More than 60 OSCE parliamentarians from 21 countries are deploying this week to observe the 28 November parliamentary

elections. Working closely with colleagues from the OSCE/ODIHR and PACE, the OSCE PA delegation is headed by Farah Karimi (MP, Netherlands). The leaders of the mission will deliver the post-election statement of preliminary findings and conclusions at a press conference in Bishkek on 29 November.

The OSCE PA has previously observed five parliamentary and five presidential elections in Kyrgyzstan.