

**REPORT OF THE SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE ON SOUTH EAST EUROPE MARK
PRITCHARD FOR THE OSCE PA Winter Meeting**

Vienna, 20 February 2020

Appointed Special Representative on South East Europe in July 2018, I am tasked with serving as the Assembly's focal point in South East Europe, promoting dialogue, and encouraging reconciliation and rehabilitation in the region. My mandate is also to:

- *Promote dialogue in all segments of society, in particular at the parliamentary level, in order to encourage reconciliation and rehabilitation in South East Europe, and in particular in the Western Balkans, and to make a contribution to the transformation and building up of democratic institutions;*
- *Maintain close contact with and serve as a focal point for the Assembly's work in the region in general and its participation in the activities of the Regional Cooperation Council in particular;*
- *Advise and report back to the President on the situation in the region, in particular the development of the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina and with respect to the Belgrade-Pristina dialogue.*
- *Communicate with relevant actors within the OSCE as well as PA Committees dealing with migration and terrorism who work on issues related to the region.*

Since my last report circulated at last year's Annual Session, I have continued to closely follow the situation in the region. Although the EU Council's decision to postpone the start of accession negotiations with Albania and North Macedonia in October triggered significant disappointment in both countries, the EU has not given up on its enlargement agenda and has recently revised its accession methodology. It's imperative that Albania's and North Macedonia's foreign policy priorities oriented towards EU integration are fulfilled and that negotiations are opened before the EU-Western Balkans Summit in Zagreb this May.

I have also followed developments in the EU-led Belgrade-Pristina dialogue. The protracted lack of a resumption of the dialogue remains deeply concerning.

Early parliamentary elections are planned to take place in North Macedonia on 12 April and regular parliamentary elections are scheduled to be held in Serbia on 26 April. We are likely to deploy election observation missions for both elections.

Meanwhile, Albania has successfully launched its OSCE chairmanship. In September last year, the President and the Secretary General paid an official visit to Tirana to lend PA's political support to Albania as it prepared to chair the OSCE.

Furthermore, in October President Tsereteli and Secretary General Montella visited Belgrade to take part in the 141st Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union and held meetings with high level officials and stakeholders. Such a bilateral component of the visit offered an opportunity to discuss Serbia's domestic and foreign policy priorities and regional cooperation with the country's authorities. Unfortunately, due to Brexit related developments back home, I was unable to participate in both visits.

In March I look forward to my visit to Greece aimed at discussing regional cooperation, migration and security in the region. I thank the Greek Parliament and the Greek Government for ensuring a successful and productive visit.

I will continue to follow the situation in the region and will keep you informed about further developments.