

News from Copenhagen

Number 56

Current Information from the OSCE PA International Secretariat

6 September 2002

Bruce George Addresses OSCE Permanent Council

On 5 September 2002, President George, delivered his first address to the OSCE Permanent Council in Vienna.

In his speech Mr. George informed the Permanent Council about the Berlin Declaration on confronting terrorism adopted during the Assembly's 11th Annual Session in Berlin and outlined the main priorities of his Presidency.

"It is my intention to continue working for the development of the Parliamentary Assembly as a reliable partner contributing to the success of the OSCE", said Mr. George, "I will make every effort to increase the co-operation between the governmental structures of the OSCE and the more than 300 elected parliamentarians that provide the OSCE with a firm democratic foundation".

On the Berlin Declaration Mr. George emphasized that many of the Assembly's recommendations in the field of

combating terrorism were aimed at improving co-operation and co-ordination between organizations, states and other actors. Mr. George welcomed comments to the Declaration from members of the Permanent Council and expressed his hope that such dialogue would continue each year after the OSCE PA Annual Sessions.

In his address, President George also referred to the appointment by OSCE Chairman-in-Office António Martins da Cruz of OSCE PA Vice President Kimmo Kiljunen to lead the OSCE observation of the parliamentary elections in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia on 15 September.

On Belarus, Mr. George informed the Permanent Council of the decision taken by the Assembly's Standing Committee to postpone the decision regarding the seating of the National Assembly until the Winter Session in February 2003.

OSCE Parliamentarians pay pre-election visit to former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

From 26-28 August four Members of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly visited Skopje together with colleagues from the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe in order to assess the preparations for the parliamentary elections, to be held on 15 September. This visit took place at the initiative of the OSCE Mission to Skopje and was led by Vice-President Rita Süßmuth (Germany). Mr. Pieter De Crem (Belgium), Ms. Helena Demakova (Latvia) and Mr. Kjell Engebretsen (Norway) also took part in the OSCE PA Delegation.

In a statement issued at the conclusion of the visit, the delegation emphasized that it had been impressed by the efficiency and professionalism of the Election Commission and welcomed its well-balanced composition. They further concluded that the electoral law provided the right conditions for democratic elections and that overall, the campaign had so far been peaceful and constructive.

The joint Delegation had an extensive programme which included talks with the President of the Parliament, Mr. Stojan Andov, the President of the State Election Commission, Mrs. Mirjana Lazarovska-Trajkovska as well as with representatives of major political parties, NGOs and the media.

Vice-President Kimmo Kiljunen has been appointed by the OSCE Chairman-in-Office to lead the OSCE Observers on election day and to deliver the preliminary post-election statement. The OSCE Parliamentary Assembly delegation is expected to include more than forty parliamentarians from twelve OSCE countries.

President George attends EU Regional Conference in Helsingborg

On 29 and 30 August President George and Secretary General Spencer Oliver attended the regional EU Conference on Conflict Prevention - Partners in Prevention held in Helsingborg, Sweden.

The conference brought together key international actors to discuss conflict prevention in Europe. The conference debated the need to increase co-operation and build effective partnership for conflict prevention, in line with the EU Programme for the Prevention of Violent Conflicts, endorsed by the Göteborg European Council. The Conference was also a follow-up to the fourth High-level meeting between the United Nations and regional organizations in New York in February 2001. The Meeting was also attended by OSCE Chairman-in-Office, Mr. António Martins da Cruz and EU High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy, Mr. Javier Solana.

OSCE PA President visits Copenhagen Headquarters

In conjunction with the regional EU Conference on Conflict Prevention Mr. George paid a working visit to the OSCE PA International Secretariat from 28 August-2 September. The visit was organized in order for the President to familiarize himself with the Secretariat and to plan the work of the Assembly during the coming year. President George consulted with members of the senior staff to hear their reports on planned activities. In Copenhagen Mr. George also held talks with the Speaker of the Danish Parliament Mr. Ivar Hansen and senior Nordic Council officials. President George also met with the research team at the International Secretariat.

Upcoming Events

- **15 September 2002**
Parliamentary Elections in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.
- **2-4 October 2002**
Standing Committee Meeting and Parliamentary Conference in Madrid on Security in the Mediterranean
- **5 October 2002**
Parliamentary Election in Bosnia & Herzegovina.
- **5-7 December 2002**
PA Bureau Meetin and OSCE Ministerial Council