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Parliamentarians Monitor Macedonian Elections

"The citizens of this country have achieved a successful electoral process which could represent a major step towards restoring stability, reconciliation and democracy in the country. The small number of extremists responsible for violence during the past few weeks and days must not be allowed to jeopardize this achievement", said Kimmo Kiljunen, Vice President of the OSCE PA and Special Co-ordinator of the OSCE Chairman-in-Office to lead the OSCE Observation Mission during the Macedonian parliamentary elections on 15 September 2002.

The observation mission included more than 40 parliamentarians from the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly as well as parliamentarians from the Council of Europe and the European Parliament. Among the positive aspects of the electoral process highlighted by the international observers were the new election system adopted earlier this year, the exemplary work of the State Election Commission, as well as the electoral campaign, which was well organized and appropriately policed. However, the observers also expressed concern about a number of violent incidents which at times marred the election campaign and created a tense atmosphere. These incidents included the killing of police officers, hostage-taking, and attacks on party offices and media representatives. While the media as a whole offered a wide range of information and views, the

state media coverage of the campaign was biased in favour of the incumbents. Election day was characterized by a high turnout of voters, few and isolated incidents of violence, and in general an orderly process.



Vice-President Kiljunen meets President Boris Trajkovski at a polling station during the Macedonian parliamentary elections

OSCE Parliamentary Assembly's Informal Group on the Mediterranean Meets in Limassol

From 9 - 10 September the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly's Informal Group on the Mediterranean met in Limassol at the invitation of the House of Representatives of Cyprus. The meeting was chaired by Mr. Michel Voisin, Head of the French Delegation and President George's Special Representative for the Mediterranean. Participants discussed the ways and means to enhance the Mediterranean dimension of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly. The meeting was hosted by Mr. Yiorgos Lillikas, Head of the Delegation of Cyprus, and was attended by 23 parliamentarians from 12 Mediterranean States including the OSCE Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation Algeria, Israel, Morocco and Tunisia. Secretary General Spencer Oliver and Presidential Adviser Gustavo Pallarés attended and contributed to the meeting.



Upcoming Dutch OSCE Chairmanship

Mr. Karel Vosskühler, Deputy Permanent Representative of the Netherlands to the OSCE and Mr. Frank van Beuning, Deputy Head of the OSCE Task Force at the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, paid a working visit to the OSCE PA International Secretariat in Copenhagen on 11 September 2002. The visit took place in view of preparations for the upcoming Dutch OSCE Chairmanship in 2003. The Representatives of the Netherlands briefed Secretary General Spencer Oliver and senior staff on the progress of preparations after which possibilities and occasions were explored for co-operation and co-ordination with the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly activities. In this respect it was also noted that the 12th Annual Session of the Assembly will take place in Rotterdam in July 2003.

Upcoming Events

- **2-4 October 2002**
Standing Committee Meeting and Parliamentary Conference on Security in the Mediterranean, Madrid
- **5 October 2002**
Parliamentary Election in Bosnia & Herzegovina.
- **5-7 December 2002**
PA Bureau Meeting and OSCE Ministerial Council, Porto
- **20-21 February 2003**
PA Winter Meeting, Vienna