

Hastings addresses celebration of 100th anniversary of Russian State Duma



On 27 April, President Alcee L. Hastings participated in the Gala meeting dedicated to the Centenary of the State Duma of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation, in St. Petersburg. Members of the Russian Parliament, Speakers of the CIS Parliaments, Heads of International Organizations and other dignitaries were also present.

The participants were addressed by Russian President Vladimir Putin. President Hastings addressed the meeting upon the invitation of the Chairman of the State Duma, Boris Gryzlov. In addition to Chairman Gryzlov, President Hastings held meetings with the Speaker of the Armenian Parliament, Arthur Baghdasaryan and other participants.

President Hastings was accompanied by Deputy Secretary General Vitaly Evseyev.

Solomon Passy represents PA at OSCE-Thailand Conference

Solomon Passy, Member of the Bulgarian Delegation to the OSCE PA and former OSCE Chairman-in-Office, represented the Assembly and addressed the OSCE-Thailand Conference on “Challenges to Global Security: From Poverty to Pandemic” on April 25, 2006. As Chairman-in-Office, Dr. Passy focused greatly on the Central Asia region and work with Asian Partners of the OSCE.

Addressing the Conference, Dr. Passy noted the progress made by Central Asian states in meeting OSCE commitments. Underlining the role of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly as an incubator of new ideas and a forum for dialogue, Dr. Passy stressed that the Assembly provides a vital link between the governmental side of the OSCE and representatives from all the parliaments of the OSCE countries.

Dr. Passy encouraged increased participation by Central Asian states and Asian Partners for Co-operation in OSCE PA activities. He noted the important role of OSCE parliamentary diplomacy in building bridges between Europe and Asia. Remarking on the Assembly’s potential as a democratic, international forum for promoting dialogue and furthering regional co-operation and stability, Dr. Passy encouraged members from the region to participate more actively in shaping the future of the OSCE.

Roberto Battelli on pre-referendum visit to Serbia and Montenegro

On April 26 and 27, 2006, the OSCE PA’s Special Representative on South-East Europe, Roberto Battelli (Slovenia), visited Serbia and Montenegro in order to assess the present situation and the status of the preparations for the PA’s Referendum Observation Mission (ROM) to the referendum in Montenegro, Serbia and Montenegro, on 21 May. The OSCE Chairman-in-Office, Belgian Foreign Minister Karel De Gucht, has appointed OSCE PA Vice-President Nevzat Yalcintas (Turkey) as his Special Co-ordinator for the observation mission.

Mr. Battelli met with the Speaker of the Montenegrin Parliament Ranko Krivokapic, EU Special Envoy Ambassador Miroslav Lajcak, the Chairman of the Republican Referendum Commission, Dr. Frantisek Lipka, senior representatives from political parties, NGOs, the Head of the Podgorica Office of the OSCE Mission to Serbia and Montenegro, Ambassador Paraschiva Badescu, the leader of ODIHR’s long-term observers and Core Team, Jørgen Grunnet, and other members of the ODIHR presence.

The logistical preparations for the OSCE PA ROM are well underway. The OSCE PA expects to deploy a delegation of around 70 observers to the observation mission. Mr. Battelli was accompanied by Ambassador Andreas Nothelle from the PA’s Vienna Liaison Office.