

News from Copenhagen

Ferrier addresses OSCE Economic and Environmental Committee



Kathleen Ferrier addresses the OSCE Economic and Environmental Committee on 19 May

The Parliamentary Assembly's Special Representative on Migration, Kathleen Ferrier (Netherlands), visited Vienna on 19 May to address the OSCE Economic and Environmental Committee. Speaking to representatives of OSCE participating States, Ms. Ferrier underlined that "both on the international and on the national level, migration is the biggest challenge of the 21st century."

She pointed to the several resolutions that the OSCE PA has adopted on migration, most recently at last year's Annual Session in Vilnius, and underscored that parliaments pay particular attention to how the governments implement these recommendations.

"I can inform you that in the Dutch Parliament we have asked our Minister of Foreign Affairs to report on how the Dutch government follows up on resolutions from the OSCE PA," she said.

Ms. Ferrier also held discussions with the Dutch OSCE Ambassador and her staff as well as with the OSCE Economic and Environmental Co-ordinator Goran Svilanovic and Ambassador Andreas Nothelle.

In Vienna, Ms. Ferrier's visit was supported by the OSCE PA Liaison Office.

Azerbaijani parliamentarians visit International Secretariat in Copenhagen



Azerbaijani Delegation to the OSCE PA meeting with Deputy Secretaries General Tina Schoen and Gustavo Pallares on 25 May

Members of the Azerbaijani Delegation to the OSCE PA visited the International Secretariat for two days of briefings on 25-26 May.

The Head of Delegation, Bahar A. Muradova, as well as Azay A. Guliyev and Fazil Mustafa, participated in meetings with Secretary General Spencer Oliver, Deputy Secretaries General Tina Schoen and Gustavo Pallares as well as other senior staff.

They also met with the Danish Delegation to the OSCE PA, including Head of Delegation Peter Juel Jensen, Deputy Head Jeppe Kofoed, and Jens Christian Lund. An election expert from the Danish Ministry of the Interior briefed them on the details of the election system in Denmark.

The delegation also met with the OSCE PA's Research Fellows, who described the work they are doing, particularly on follow-up to the Vilnius Annual Session.

Just conclusion urgently needed in Zhovtis case, Mecacci reports

In a report issued last week, Matteo Mecacci (Italy) said that it is up to the Kazakh authorities to urgently find a just conclusion to the case of the human rights defender Yevgeny Zhovtis, who is serving a four year sentence at a penal colony in Ust-Kamenogorsk following a fatal traffic accident last year.

Domestic legal experts and international observers at his trial reported numerous procedural violations, and questioned whether he was given adequate ability to mount a defence. Opposition parties in Kazakhstan have also raised concerns about the sentencing.

In his report to OSCE PA President Joao Soares, Mr. Mecacci, who met with Mr. Zhovtis on 13 May, also said that

this case raises serious questions about the respect for the individual to receive a fair trial in Kazakhstan.

Mr. Zhovtis has been subjected too long to a sentence he does not deserve, he reported, adding that the Kazakh OSCE Chairmanship has a special responsibility, like all previous OSCE chairs, to make sure that the OSCE commitments in the field of human dimension are respected.

Mr. Mecacci, Rapporteur of the Assembly's committee on human dimension issues, is the first OSCE PA representative to meet with Mr. Zhovtis in prison. The visit was conducted in agreement with the Kazakh authorities and supported by the OSCE Centre in Astana.

His full report is available at www.oscepa.org.