

OSCE PA calls for thorough rethinking at OSCE Summit

OSCE PA President Petros Efthymiou called today for strengthening transparency and accountability in the OSCE in an address at the start of the OSCE Astana Summit.

The OSCE is facing an “identity crisis,” said the President, but the roots of the crisis can be identified. He cited a lack of mutual trust that “prevents our collective decisions and undermines our ability to deal with the regular workload of the Organization.”

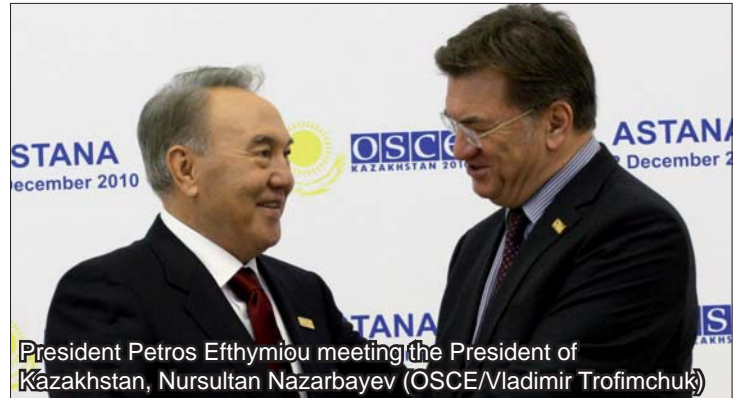
In order to develop trust in the Organization, the structures should make better use of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, he said, and the Permanent Council must open its meetings to the press and the public.

Mr. Efthymiou called for the Secretary General and Director of the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) to be filled following a major international search “in order to select individuals of high political caliber.” This would help to increase the visibility, enhance the functioning, and deepen the role of the Organization, he said.

The OSCE PA Bureau met in Astana on 30 November, bringing together the elected officials of the Assembly who form the delegation of the Assembly to the Summit.

The Bureau was addressed by the Chairman-in-Office of the OSCE, Kazakhstan’s Foreign Minister Kanat Saudabayev, who expressed his appreciation for the support of the Parliamentary Assembly during the Kazakh Chairmanship. The input by the Assembly to discussions on the Summit document was greatly appreciated, he said.

Following a briefing by OSCE PA Special Representative Andreas Nothelle on the current state of discussions on a



President Petros Efthymiou meeting the President of Kazakhstan, Nursultan Nazarbayev (OSCE/Vladimir Trofimchuk)

Summit document, Members offered their strong support for his work. The parliamentarians stressed the importance of having the parliamentary view featured prominently in the document, as well as appropriate recognition of the place of the OSCE PA as the OSCE’s parliamentary Institution.

After the Bureau meeting, President Efthymiou issued a statement applauding the work of Kazakhstan’s Chairmanship and calling on Heads of State or Government to reconfirm their commitments by adopting an effective Summit Declaration.

“In this milestone year that marks the 35th anniversary of the Helsinki Final Act and the 20th anniversary of the Charter of Paris for a New Europe, the magnitude of old and new challenges and threats facing member states and their citizens demands direct political engagement at the highest level,” the President said.

Both of the President’s statements are available in their entirety at www.oscepa.org.

Picula: Moldovan elections met most international standards

The 28 November early parliamentary elections in Moldova met most OSCE commitments, international observers concluded in a post-election statement delivered by Special Co-ordinator Tonino Picula at a press conference in Chisinau on Monday.

“These elections reflected the will of the people, and were a positive step in Moldova’s democratic development,” said Tonino Picula who led the OSCE short-term observer mission and headed the delegation of OSCE Parliamentary Assembly. “We commend the competitive and pluralistic environment of this country, and hope that the political forces will act responsibly in building bridges and bringing Moldova out of this political crisis.”

Observers noted that the elections were administered in a transparent manner and a wide range of candidates provided voters with a genuine choice. Election day was assessed positively although some procedural errors were observed.

Mr. Picula, Head of Croatia’s OSCE PA delegation and



Tonino Picula and Indrek Saar from PACE

Rapporteur of the General Committee on Political Affairs and Security, led more than 200 short-term observers including more than 30 OSCE parliamentarians.

The PA worked closely with parliamentary colleagues from the Council of Europe and the European Parliament, as well as the OSCE/ODIHR. The OSCE PA’s delegation was supported by Deputy Secretary General Tina Schoen, Programme Officer Anna Chernova and Logistics Officer Petra Jezkova.