

Mecacci, Migliori conclude pre-election visit to Belarus

Matteo Mecacci (Italy), special co-ordinator to lead the OSCE short-term election observation mission in Belarus, today concluded a pre-election visit to the country.

OSCE PA President Riccardo Migliori also participated in the visit, the first political-level OSCE visit since the closure of the OSCE mission in Belarus in 2010. The three-day visit included meetings with the leaders of Belarusian

parliament, Minister of Foreign Affairs, the head of the Central Election Commission, as well as registered and non-registered candidates, opposition leaders boycotting the election, political movements and civil society, independent media and several relatives of opposition figures who are in prison.

“In fact, we regret that we were not able to meet with those political figures who are in prison, and I hope they know that we are thinking of them and their struggle as we observe events in this country,” said Mecacci, who chairs the Parliamentary Assembly’s human rights committee.

Parliamentary elections are scheduled for 23 September. More than 300 observers from the OSCE, including more than



Riccardo Migliori (left) and Matteo Mecacci (right) meet with opposition leader Alexander Milinkevich (center) in Minsk.

80 from the Parliamentary Assembly, will start deploying to the country next week.

The mission reserves its full observation statement until after election day, but Mecacci called on authorities to respect their OSCE commitments pertaining to fair, democratic elections.

“For these elections to meet OSCE commitments, citizens need to have free access to information, freedom to organize and participate in the political

process, and in the end freedom to choose candidates among many options,” Mecacci said. “Our mandate is to observe that Belarusian authorities respect citizens’ political rights and we will do so scrupulously.”

President Migliori said the government’s open door to meet with the OSCE observers was a welcome sign. “We appreciate the courtesy shown to us by the Belarusian authorities and hope that officials extend the same welcome to all international observers who are traveling to Minsk in the coming days for this important election,” Migliori said.

The visit was supported by Programme Director Anna Chernova and Programme Officer Maria Chepurina from the OSCE PA International Secretariat.

Migliori pays visit to OSCE PA headquarters in Copenhagen



Roberto Montella, Riccardo Migliori, Peter Juel Jensen, and Gustavo Pallares

OSCE PA President Riccardo Migliori last week paid his first visit to the International Secretariat since being elected president at the Annual Session in Monaco. The visit on 6-7 September included briefings by the Secretary General and the full staff of the International Secretariat about the work of the OSCE PA in the coming months.

Migliori has a full itinerary for the autumn and winter, with engagements scheduled at the Council of Europe Conference of Presidents of Parliaments, the OSCE Human Dimension Implementation Meeting, the OSCE PA Fall Meetings, the OSCE Permanent Council, as well as other OSCE events such as the OSCE Mediterranean Conference and the OSCE Ministerial Council. He will be visiting Ukraine ahead of the 28 October parliamentary elections and will observe the U.S.

general elections on 6 November.

Migliori’s visit also included a meeting with the Head of the Danish Delegation to the OSCE PA, Peter Juel Jensen, in which the president expressed appreciation for Denmark’s hosting of the Parliamentary Assembly headquarters.

The president also met with the PA’s team of research fellows to discuss their views on the work of the OSCE.

Deadlines reminder

Please note the following registration deadlines for upcoming election observation missions.

- Montenegro Parliamentary Elections on 14 October
Deadline: **14 September**
- Georgia Parliamentary Elections on 1 October
Deadline: **17 September**
- United States General Elections on 6 November
Deadline: **9 October**
- Ukraine Parliamentary Elections on 28 October
Deadline: **11 October**

Delegations that have not yet registered for the Fall Meetings in Tirana, to be held 5-7 October, are kindly asked to do so as soon as possible.