

News from Copenhagen

OSCE PA

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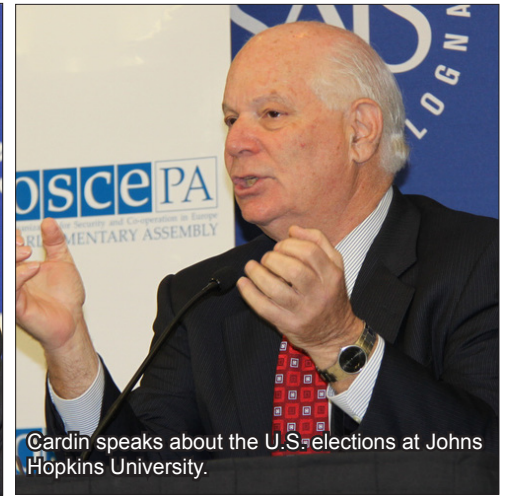
Soares, OSCE call US elections a commitment to democracy



Soares delivers the US election observation statement on behalf of the OSCE.



Oliver speaks about foreign policy and the U.S. elections.



Cardin speaks about the U.S. elections at Johns Hopkins University.

The 6 November 2012 elections in the United States demonstrated a commitment to democracy, international observers said on 8 November at the OSCE press conference.

Joao Soares, the Special Co-ordinator who led the OSCE short-term election observation mission, delivered the official statement of the OSCE at a news conference Thursday.

The observers noted the large role money played in the campaign, and Soares called it “troubling that many political ads did not reveal the source of their funding, thereby undermining transparency and accountability in the elections.”

The OSCE PA’s election observation mission assessed the U.S. elections for their conformity with the 1990 Copenhagen Commitments, to which the United States has subscribed. The 100 observers included 73 parliamentarians from 26 countries. After thorough preparations and briefings, they observed election activities in Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, North Carolina, and the District of Columbia, and were largely well received and granted open access to polling stations with only

one exception.

A limited assessment mission from the OSCE/ODIHR failed to follow the 1997 co-operation agreement that guides the OSCE’s work in the field of election observation. This mission declined to share long-term observation data as called for in the agreement, breached the code of conduct by publicizing questionable negative assessments of the elections in the press on election day, and staged a separate news conference in advance of the official event hosted by Special Co-ordinator Soares

The OSCE observers lauded the professionalism of election administrators but pointed to crowded polling stations and how decentralization created vulnerabilities in the system. Following the OSCE news conference, attended by more than 80 journalists, academics and diplomats, U.S. Senator Benjamin Cardin and Secretary General Spencer Oliver joined a panel of experts at Johns Hopkins University to discuss the affect the elections could have on the OSCE region.

Migliori in Moscow focuses on balancing OSCE activities throughout the region

OSCE Parliamentary Assembly President Riccardo Migliori is in Moscow today for his first presidential visit to the Russian Federation.

President Migliori, fresh from a trip to the United States, where he held meetings with National Security Council officials, stressed the importance of balancing the OSCE’s activities east and west of Vienna.

He emphasized the rule of law, corruption and transnational crimes as areas in which the Assembly will continue to focus its parliamentary dialogue. In a meeting with Chairman Sergei Naryshkin of the Russian Duma, Migliori urged for continued robust participation from the Russian Delegation, which has been increasingly active in election observation missions.

Migliori also met with Nikolay Kovalev, Head of the Russian Delegation to the OSCE PA, Acting Foreign Minister Andrey Denisov, and Ambassador-at-Large Sergey Gubarev,



Migliori and Oliver meet with Duma Chairman Naryshkin, and Kovalev, Head of the Russian Delegation to the OSCE PA.

who focuses on Moldova/Transdnistria. The president was supported by Secretary General Spencer Oliver, Senior Counselor Semyon Dzakhayev, Director of Presidential Administration Roberto Montella, and Valeria Galardini of the Italian Parliament.