

News from Copenhagen

OSCE PA members on humanitarian-focused visit to Ukraine



Visiting internally displaced persons in eastern Ukraine, 19 Dec. 2018



Examining replicas of mines at the SMM Mariupol Hub office, 19 Dec. 2018.



Visiting a hospital in Dnipro, 18 Dec. 2018.

Leaders from the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly's human rights committee are in Ukraine this week to learn more about issues related to the humanitarian situation in areas impacted by the conflict in Donbas. Committee Chair Margareta Kiener Nellen (MP, Switzerland) and Committee Rapporteur Kyriakos Hadjiyianni (MP, Cyprus) are focusing their attention on humanitarian issues such as prisoner exchanges, demining efforts, and the situation of those displaced by the conflict.

They met Monday in Kyiv with Iryna Gerashchenko, the Ukrainian President's Humanitarian Envoy at the Minsk peace talks, Artur Gerasymov, Head of the Ukrainian Delegation to the OSCE PA, and Ertugrul Apakan, Chief Monitor with the OSCE's Special Monitoring Mission (SMM) in Ukraine.

Following the meetings in Kyiv the OSCE parliamentarians travelled to the east of Ukraine, where they are visiting several different cities and meeting with internally displaced persons.

On Tuesday they spoke with doctors and met wounded soldiers at the hospital in Dnipro where 90 per cent of wounds are mine explosion traumas and 10 per cent bullet wounds. The PA members urged an immediate focus on implementing a sustainable ceasefire and renewed demining efforts.

At the SMM Mariupol Hub office, they were briefed Wednesday on a range of issues including landmines. In a penitentiary near Mariupol Hadjiyianni and Kiener Nellen met Wednesday with detainees who were transferred from non-government controlled areas last week. The committee leaders are calling for the next major exchange of prisoners to take place for the holiday season.

They also accompanied a patrol by the SMM in the area east of Mariupol. The programme continues with visits in the Mariupol area and back to Kyiv for additional meetings. Kiener Nellen and Hadjiyianni expect to present their findings at the Winter Meeting in Vienna, 21-22 February 2019.

Happy holidays and best wishes for the new year from OSCE PA SG

As another year draws to a close, I want to extend my heartfelt gratitude to all of the parliamentarians and staff who have contributed to the OSCE PA's work, provided leadership to election observation missions, participated in debates, and the delegations that have hosted meetings. The Annual Session in Berlin, Autumn Meeting in Bishkek, and Winter Meeting in Vienna brought together hundreds of parliamentarians for debates on some of the most pressing issues of the day, including migration, cybersecurity, terrorism, arms control, "fake news," and climate change.

Thank you once again to the hosts of these meetings and to those who are already busy preparing for our meetings in 2019.

OSCE PA President George Tsereteli provided strong leadership throughout the year, representing the Assembly at events both within the OSCE and with partner organizations, conducting high-level diplomacy, increasing engagement with OSCE PA delegations, and visiting several OSCE field operations. The Secretariat looks forward to continuing our support for his activities, as well as our dedicated Special

Representatives, ad hoc committees, Bureau members and other active members of the Assembly.

I thank you all again for a fruitful 2018 and wish all of us in the OSCE PA family season's greetings and a happy and healthy new year.

- OSCE PA Secretary General Roberto Montella

