

OSCE PA's South East Europe envoy visits North Macedonia, Albania and Montenegro

The OSCE PA's Special Representative on South East Europe, Vice-President Azay Guliyev (Azerbaijan), has been in the region this week for a series of meetings with parliamentarians, governmental officials and representatives of political parties on domestic and regional developments.

Special Representative Guliyev has held meetings, inter alia, with North Macedonia President Stevo Pendarovski and Foreign Minister Bujar Osmani, as well as representatives of political parties in Skopje. In Albania, meetings were held with President Ilir Meta and various government and parliamentary leaders, and representatives of the international community. In Montenegro, Guliyev will meet Thursday with Prime Minister Dritan Abazovic and others. Meetings are also taking place with the OSCE PA delegations and staff of OSCE field operations in the region.

In Tirana, Guliyev congratulated Albania for having successfully led the OSCE in 2020 and in Skopje, he assured North Macedonia of the OSCE PA's full support for the upcoming Chairmanship of the OSCE in 2023. The meetings were an opportunity to listen to regional co-operation initiatives as well as bilateral relations with neighbours, to discuss with interlocutors ongoing efforts to advance the European Union accession process and outstanding challenges.



Azay Guliyev, fourth from left, with Xhaferi Talat, centre, with delegation in Skopje, 9 May 2022.

During the visit, Special Representative Guliyev proposed the idea of an inter-parliamentary forum with the participation of OSCE PA Delegations from South East Europe, as a platform to advance regional co-operation.

In Skopje, Tirana and Podgorica, the OSCE PA delegation, led by Special Representative Guliyev, was joined by the Head of the OSCE Mission to Skopje, Ambassador Clemens Koja; the Head of the OSCE Presence in Albania, Ambassador Vincenzo Del Monaco and the Head of the OSCE Mission to Montenegro, Ambassador Dominique Waag. From the International Secretariat, Guliyev has been accompanied by Francesco Pagani, Serif Abdili and Roberto Ferrari.

Virtual meeting on the role of the OSCE in addressing the war in Ukraine



The PA today held an online debate on "The role of the OSCE in addressing the war in Ukraine and its consequences." With a keynote address by Amin Awad, the United Nations' Crisis Coordinator for Ukraine, the event included a debate on possible initiatives in light of the ongoing war and its impact on the civilian population. Other speakers included OSCE PA Margareta Cederfelt, Secretary General Roberto Montella, Head of Ukrainian Delegation to the OSCE PA Mykyta Poturaiev, OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine Henrik Villadsen, OSCE PA High-Level Expert Lamberto Zannier, and Pascal Hundt from the International Committee of the Red Cross who highlighted the global impact and appealed to the OSCE to contribute in resolving the conflict. Participants discussed the humanitarian

crisis, the growing number of refugees and internally displaced persons, and more generally, the consequences of the massive violations of key principles embodied in the 1975 Helsinki Final Act. OSCE parliamentarians highlighted initiatives taken in their countries on the national level, including the implementation of sanctions and providing aid directly to Ukraine. Amb. Villadsen highlighted the many areas of work that the OSCE continues to conduct in Ukraine despite the closure of the SMM.

Awad noted that the humanitarian situation in Ukraine continues to deteriorate, with the the fastest growing displacement of people since World War II. He estimated that nearly 16 million people are in need of humanitarian aid. In response, the UN and more than 200 humanitarian partners have deployed across the country to support the humanitarian response, he said.

President Cederfelt said that it is up to OSCE parliamentarians to encourage and support the use of the OSCE in helping to resolve the conflict, urging colleagues to utilize channels of diplomacy to stop the war. In this regard, Secretary General Montella announced the appointment of Austrian parliamentarian and OSCE PA Vice-President Reinhold Lopatka as the Assembly's Special Representative on Parliamentary Dialogue on Ukraine.

PA participates in UNOCT event on civil society, parliaments and terrorism

Kyriakos Hadjiyianni, the OSCE PA's Special Representative on Civil Society Engagement, represented the Assembly at a side event on Monday held on the margins of the High-Level International Conference on Human Rights, Civil Society and Counter-Terrorism in Málaga. The event, focused on engaging parliamentarians with civil society to enhance counter-terrorism legislation and oversight, was organized by the UN Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT).

In his remarks, Special Representative Hadjiyianni shared experiences of parliamentary co-operation with civil society. Expert civil society input can significantly improve legislation, he said, based on experience providing frontline services, and NGOs often provide ongoing monitoring that can highlight areas for further parliamentary attention. These dynamic partnerships

between NGOs and parliamentarians are a "win-win scenario," he said.

The UNOCT event provided an opportunity for civil society organizations and parliaments from around the world to enhance parliamentary functions in preventing and countering terrorism and violent extremism, especially with regard to victims of terrorism. The OSCE PA's Ad Hoc Committee on Countering Terrorism (CCT) helped facilitate Special Representative Hadjiyianni's participation. In his role as Special Representative, Hadjiyianni works in consultation with other OSCE PA Members, including the CCT, engaging with representatives of non-governmental organizations and advising on ways for the Assembly to ensure an inclusive approach to representatives of civil society.