

Special Representative on Central Asia represents PA at Istanbul conference



Farah Karimi addresses Istanbul conference participants on 13 August.

The OSCE PA's Special Representative on Central Asia, Farah Karimi (Netherlands), represented the PA at the event "Central Asia and Türkiye Youth Talks" earlier this month in Istanbul. Co-organized by the OSCE Programme Office in Dushanbe and the World Bank, the event brought together 30 young people on 12-16 August. Karimi moderated a session on "Leadership in

Political Participation" on 13 August and emphasized the importance of supporting young people in Central Asia.

"With more than half of Central Asia's population under 30, it's crucial that we invest in their potential and provide needed tools to become active participants in shaping their societies," Karimi said. "The region's future depends on the empowerment of these young leaders."

Young people from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Türkiye, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan participated in the event. Karimi, who served as Special Representative on Youth Engagement from 2021 to 2023, discussed issues with the participants including building capacity of youth for active participation in decision-making processes, developing leadership and networking abilities, exchanging knowledge and experience among young community leaders, and promoting confidence-building and collaboration between the youth of different countries.

Registration open for OSCE PA Autumn Meeting in Dublin

OSCE PA Delegations are kindly reminded that registration for the 22nd Autumn Meeting, taking place from 2 to 4 October 2024 in Dublin, is now open. Hosted by the Oireachtas, the Autumn Meeting will include a Parliamentary Conference, a meeting of the Mediterranean Forum, and a meeting of the Standing Committee. It is highly advisable to check if delegates need a visa to travel to Ireland and, in case a visa is required, to apply for it as soon as possible. Please note that a Schengen visa or UK visa is not valid for travel to Ireland.

OSCE PA President Kauma appoints Special Representatives for 2024-25

Following the expiration of mandates after the Bucharest Annual Session, OSCE PA Special Representatives have been appointed for the 2024-25 year, including two newly created positions. President Pia Kauma (Finland) appointed Tine Novak (Slovenia) the Assembly's first Special Representative on Artificial Intelligence and Gudrun Kugler (Austria) the first Special Representative on Demographic Change and Security.

David Stogmuller (Austria) was appointed as the OSCE PA's Special Representative on Youth Engagement and Luis Graça (Portugal) the Special Representative on South Caucasus.

President Kauma also reappointed the following Special Representatives:

- Special Representative for the Arctic and High North Mark Pritchard (United Kingdom)
- Special Representative on Central Asia Farah Karimi (Netherlands)
- Special Representative on Climate Change Pere Joan Pons (Spain)

- Special Representative on Combating Organized Crime Eugenio Zoffili (Italy)
- Special Representative on Disinformation and Propaganda Oscar Mina (San Marino)
- Special Representative on Fighting Corruption Irene Charalambides (Cyprus)
- Special Representative on Gender Issues Hedy Fry (Canada)
- Special Representative on Human Trafficking Issues Chris Smith (United States)
- Special Representative on Mediterranean Affairs Pascal Allizard (France)
- Special Representative on Political Prisoners Steve Cohen (United States)
- Special Representative on South East Europe Kyriakos Hadjiyianni (Cyprus)

Biographies and mandates of the Special Representatives are available at www.oscepa.org.

OSCE parliamentarians to observe early parliamentary elections in Azerbaijan

Some 60 observers from the OSCE PA are deploying to Azerbaijan for the 1 September early parliamentary elections, marking the eleventh time the PA has observed elections in the country since 1995.

Michael Creed, Head of the Irish Delegation to the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, will serve as Special Co-ordinator and leader of the short-term OSCE observer mission, and Lucie Potůčková (Czechia), Chair of the Third Committee, will be the

Head of the OSCE PA delegation of observers.

Observers will be thoroughly briefed by representatives of the election administration, civil society, candidates, party representatives, and experts on the situation ahead of the elections, before fanning out to several regions of Azerbaijan for election day observation. The preliminary findings and conclusions will be presented at a press conference in Baku on 2 September.

In memoriam: Sheila Jackson Lee

The OSCE PA is mourning the death of long-time Member of the U.S. Delegation Sheila Jackson Lee. Representing Houston, Texas, in the U.S. Congress since 1995, Jackson Lee was active in the OSCE PA particularly on humanitarian affairs. She was a member of the OSCE PA's Ad Hoc Com-

mittee on Migration and spoke out regularly on the rights of vulnerable communities, including women and children.

She was 74.



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