

News from Copenhagen

Seasons Greetings

OSCE PA Bureau approves agenda for 2006 Winter Meeting in Vienna

On request of President Hastings, the Bureau has approved the draft agenda for the Winter Meeting on 23-24 February 2006. The draft agenda follows the same pattern as previous Winter Meetings, with meetings of the three General Committees and Joint Sessions. President Hastings has also proposed a special debate on 'Integration of New and Old Minorities in the Society' to take place on Friday, 24 February at 11:30 immediately following the meeting of the Third General Committee. Senior OSCE Officials will also address the Winter meetings. In keeping with previous tradition, the Austrian Parliament will host a buffet reception on Thursday evening on the premises of the newly renovated Austrian Parliament building.

Ukraine Elections to be held on 26 March 2006

On 19-22 December, Presidential Advisor Gustavo Pallares participated in the OSCE Needs Assessment Mission to prepare for the observation of the parliamentary elections in Ukraine on 26 March 2006. Mr. Pallares and the OSCE ODIHR staff had meetings with several representatives of the Ukrainian authorities, parties, candidates and representatives of civil society. In addition, on 22 December, Mr. Pallares met with Mr. Ihor Ostash, Member of the Ukrainian Delegation to the OSCE PA as well as the staff of the Ukrainian Parliament to discuss the preparations for the Annual Session 2007 which will take place in Kiev.

Rapporteur of Political Affairs and Security Committee visits the International Secretariat

Austrian Parliamentarian Wolfgang Grossruck, Rapporteur of the General Committee on Political Affairs and Security, visited Copenhagen on 22 December. He was accompanied by Mr. Lukas Mussi, Secretary of the Austrian Delegation to the OSCE PA. Included in the programme for the visit of Mr. Grossruck was a meeting with Secretary General Spencer Oliver and Deputies Vitaly Evseyev and Tina Schøn to discuss the upcoming Assembly winter meeting in Vienna as well as the Annual Session in Belgium. Mr. Grossruck briefed the International Secretariat on his ideas for the report and draft resolution which he

will present orally to the first General Committee during the Winter Meeting in February before finalizing a written version. Mr. Grossruck would like to focus his report on the role of the OSCE field missions under the overall theme of 'Strengthening Human Security in the OSCE region'. In order to gather material for his report and draft resolution, Mr. Grossruck intends to visit several field missions in the Balkans as well as perhaps in the Caucasus. The Secretary General briefed Mr. Grossruck on the upcoming events, particularly in relation to election observation and the work of Ad Hoc Committees and Special Representatives.

