

News from Copenhagen

Georgia Envoy Lennmarker holds talks in Moscow

OSCE PA President Emeritus and Special Envoy for Georgia, Goran Lennmarker, visited Moscow 6-8 October to discuss the situation in Georgia with the Russian authorities.

Mr. Lennmarker, who visited Georgia and the other two countries in the South Caucasus, Azerbaijan and Armenia, from 1 to 6 September, met in Moscow with Konstantin Kosachev, Chairman of the State Duma's Foreign Affairs Committee, and with Grigory Karasin, Deputy Foreign Minister/State Secretary. He also held discussions with members of the Russian delegation to the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly.

In his talks, Mr. Lennmarker stressed two points: the importance of allowing the refugees from South Ossetia to return, and the importance of a joint investigation to find out what really happened in the recent conflict between Georgia and Russia.

Mr. Lennmarker, appointed Special Envoy by OSCE PA President Joao Soares, has long been involved in issues in the South Caucasus, particularly the conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh.



Goran Lennmarker speaks to reporters during his September visit to Georgia

Parliamentary Troika on Belarus meets in Brussels

The chairs of parliamentary committees of the OSCE, Council of Europe and the European Union on relations with Belarus met at the European Parliament in Brussels on 7 October 2008. Following the parliamentary elections in Belarus, the Parliamentary Troika met to share information and discuss policy issues related to the country.

The OSCE was represented by Ms. Uta Zapf, Chair of the Working Group on Belarus. The participants shared their impressions from the 28 September 2008 Parliamentary Elections in Belarus and compared institutional policy approaches to relations with the country, including legislative reform, visa issues, and other matters of common concern. OSCE PA Programme Officer Anna Chernova accompanied Ms. Zapf to Brussels.



Spencer Oliver and Dr. Michael Woods, Chairman of the Joint Foreign Affairs Committee of the Irish Parliament

Secretary General Oliver visits Dublin

OSCE PA Secretary General Spencer Oliver visited Dublin on October 6 and 7 to begin preparations for the OSCE PA's Economic Conference which will be held there next May. The Head of the Irish Delegation, Senator Ivor Callely, arranged an intense programme, including meetings with officials at the Foreign Ministry and an appearance before the Joint Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Affairs, as well as visits to the prospective meeting sites and various hotels which will be used for the conference.

Secretary General Oliver had a lengthy discussion with the Minister of State for European Affairs, Mr. Dick Roche T.D. and also with the Minister for Overseas Development, Mr. Peter Power T.D. Secretary General Oliver's televised appearance before the Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs focused on the role of the Parliamentary Assembly in the OSCE, with particular emphasis on the leadership of Parliamentarians in the electoral field. Several members of the Committee also raised questions about the role of the OSCE in Georgia as well as the work of the Parliamentary Assembly Special Representatives on Gender Issues and Guantanamo.

U.S. Election Observation Deadline Reminder

The deadline for registering for the OSCE Election Observation Mission to the United States is 15 October. So far, 87 parliamentarians from 27 participating States have registered to observe the 4 November elections.

The OSCE PA's preparation for the elections continues this week with OSCE PA Vice-President Pia Christmas-Møller travelling to the United States to meet with election officials and party representatives. From 12 to 17 October, Ms. Christmas-Møller will visit several key battleground states to observe first-hand the atmosphere and identify potential areas of concern. She will be accompanied by OSCE PA Director of Communications Klas Bergman and Presidential Advisor Andreas Baker.

To register for the observation mission, please contact Logistics Officer Petra Jezkova at the International Secretariat: petra@oscepa.dk.