

# News from Copenhagen

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## U.S. Helsinki Commission hosts Mediterranean Seminar



Representatives of OSCE Partner States from across the Middle East and Northern Africa, as well as leaders from the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, gathered at the U.S. Capitol on 22 July for a seminar on OSCE Mediterranean Partner Engagement. The seminar is organized by the

Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe (U.S. Helsinki Commission).

The representatives came from Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia – all countries which are Partners for Cooperation in the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

Senator Benjamin Cardin, Chairman of the Helsinki Commission and a Vice-President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, and Co-Chairman, Congressman

Alcee Hastings, the Assembly's Special Representative on Mediterranean Affairs, opened the seminar in the U.S. Capitol Visitor Center. Other speakers included the President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, Joao Soares (Portugal), President Emeritus Goran Lennmarker (Sweden), and Vice-President Jerry Grafstein (Canada).



The two-day event will include seminars on current Mediterranean issues, a panel focused on security, a meeting on the current Mediterranean Partner relationship with the OSCE, and a public hearing on the future of the partnership, with the ultimate goal of improving the relationship between the countries and the OSCE.

OSCE PA Secretary General Spencer Oliver is also participating.

## OSCE PA election observers in Kyrgyzstan and Moldova

Around 60 parliamentarians from the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly will observe the elections on 23 July in Kyrgyzstan and 29 July in Moldova.

OSCE Special Co-ordinator, Senator Consiglio Di Nino (Canada), arrived on 19 July in Bishkek. He is joined by 25 other OSCE parliamentarians.

"I am delighted to be here at this important time," said Senator Di Nino upon his arrival. "International observers have an important role to play as this election is crucial for the future of Kyrgyzstan. I and my fellow observers are closely watching events throughout the country, and hope for a calm and constructive election."

The OSCE Special-Co-ordinator for the 29 July

parliamentary elections in Moldova, Petros Efthymiou (Greece), concluded a three-day pre-visit to Moldova last week, in preparation for the international observation mission for the elections.

"In all my meetings – with Acting President Voronin, with senior officials, and with political party leaders – I stressed the responsibility to ensure that Moldova live up to its international commitments to hold free and fair elections in which all contestants compete on a level playing field," Mr. Efthymiou said in a statement after the pre-visit. He returns to Moldova this coming weekend.

The two OSCE parliamentarians were appointed Special Co-ordinators by the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office, Greek Foreign Minister Dora Bakoyannis, following President Joao Soares' appointments of them as leaders the Assembly's election observation missions.

As Special Co-ordinators, they will lead the OSCE short-term observer missions and deliver the preliminary post-election statements. The statement on Kyrgyzstan will be issued at a press conference on 24 July in Bishkek, while the statement on the Moldovan elections will be issued at a press conference in Chisinau on 30 July.

