

News from Copenhagen

Efthymiou to speak on OSCE at U.S. universities

In an effort to raise greater awareness of the OSCE and its critical role in transatlantic security, PA President Petros Efthymiou will deliver a series of speeches in Washington, New York and Boston next month.

The series, sponsored by the Onassis Foundation, will begin 18 April at George Washington University in Washington, D.C., and include stops at the Harvard Kennedy School, Columbia University and the Center for Transatlantic Relations at Johns Hopkins University.

President Efthymiou will speak on the OSCE's role in a new politico-military security architecture in Europe and discuss the state of human rights, media freedom and rule of law in the region and the importance of reforming the Organization to better fulfill its potential.

An outspoken proponent of OSCE reform, Mr. Efthymiou addressed the issue in his recent speech at the OSCE Summit

in Astana. "Change must begin at the political level, with true political initiatives," he said. "Political change must rebuild trust among members of the Organization and create a genuine 'security community' – a comprehensive architecture for security in the entire Euroatlantic and Eurasian area."

During next month's visit President Efthymiou is expected to meet with U.S. politicians and media representatives.

Petros Efthymiou is currently the chief whip of the political party PASOK, which holds a majority in the Greek Parliament. First elected to the Greek Parliament in 2004, Efthymiou was re-elected in 2007 and 2009. In 2010, his peers in the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly elected him president.

Mr. Efthymiou is also a former Minister of Education and former Member of the European Parliament. He was the political editor of the newspaper *To Vima* from 1986-1999 and newsdirector for TOP FM from 1988 to 1990.

Picula to head 80 PA observers to Kazakhstan election

The OSCE PA observation mission to Kazakhstan next week will include more than 80 participants from 26 countries.

The delegation to observe the 3 April presidential election will be led by Tonino Picula (Croatia), Rapporteur of the PA's General Committee on Political Affairs and Security.

OSCE Chair-in-Office and Lithuanian Foreign Minister Audronius Azubalis appointed Mr. Picula Special Co-ordinator to lead the OSCE short-term observer mission in a letter to OSCE Parliamentary Assembly President Petros Efthymiou.

Mr. Picula recently led the OSCE election observation mission in Moldova. He served as the Foreign Minister of Croatia from 2004-2008 and currently serves on the Foreign Policy Committee of the Croatian Parliament.

In accordance with the 1997 Co-operation Agreement between the OSCE PA and the OSCE, Mr. Picula will deliver the post-election statement on behalf of the OSCE in Astana.

Walburga Habsburg Douglas (Sweden) and Matteo Mecacci (Italy) will serve as deputy heads of the observation mission, which will assess the elections for their conformity with the OSCE commitments as stated in the 1990 Copenhagen Document, to which Kazakhstan has subscribed.

Secretary General Spencer Oliver, Deputy Director of Field Operations Roberto Montella, Programme Officer Anna Chernova, Logistics Officer Petra Jezkova, and Communications Director Neil Simon from the International Secretariat will support the observation mission.

OSCE PA, European Parliament to strengthen co-operation



President Efthymiou and EP President Jerzy Buzek

President Efthymiou visited the European Parliament 17 March to meet with President Jerzy Buzek. They discussed how to strengthen co-operation between the two parliamentary bodies, the current situation in the Mediterranean, and future election observation missions.

Mr. Efthymiou proposed to increase co-ordination through direct contact between European Parliament Vice-President

Libor Roucek, who is responsible for liaising with the OSCE PA, and Francois-Xavier De Donnea, Head of the Belgian Delegation to the OSCE PA, who along with Pia Christmas-Moeller and Tony Lloyd has been asked by President Efthymiou to review election observation within the OSCE.

President Efthymiou also addressed the European Parliament's Election Co-ordination Group and answered questions from its Members.

In his presentation, Mr. Efthymiou stressed the role that parliamentarians play in election observation and emphasized that parliamentarians have a special political responsibility to lead such missions.

President Efthymiou was accompanied by Deputy Secretary General Tina Schoen and Presidential Advisor Andreas Baker from the International Secretariat.