

## PA recommendations on OSCE budgetary process distributed in Vienna



Ahead of an informal Ambassadorial discussion on reforming the budget cycle on 21 March, the OSCE PA circulated a document to delegations in Vienna reiterating the Assembly's long-standing recommendations on improving the OSCE's budgetary process.

The OSCE PA was represented at the meeting by Deputy Director of Administration Marc Carillet. The OSCE PA's written contribution to the Ambassadorial discussion includes recommendations that have been adopted at Assembly Annual Sessions, as well as proposals that have been advanced by the OSCE PA Special Representative on the OSCE Budget Petur Blondal (MP, Iceland).

The proposals include:

- To prevent recurrent delays in the adoption of the budget, the PA recommends modifying the consensus rule for

decision-making in the budgetary field. This might mean, for example, making decisions contingent on an approximate consensus.

- To overcome a perceived lack of strategic direction of the budget, the PA proposes that budgeting and planning be done on a multi-year basis to pursue longer term strategies which would encourage the co-operation among multiple chairmanships. The upcoming Swiss and Serbian Chairmanships could provide an opportunity to experiment in this regard by using a bi-annual programme and financial plan.
- To increase the legitimacy and transparency of the budgetary process, the OSCE PA should be given an oversight role on the OSCE budget.

These recommendations can be found in Assembly Declarations from Annual Sessions in Belgrade (2011), Vilnius (2009), Astana (2008), Edinburgh (2004), and St. Petersburg (1999).

The OSCE PA Liaison Office has already received positive feedback on its proposals from a number of national delegations in Vienna, particularly on changing the consensus rule for budgetary decisions.

The informal Ambassadorial discussion is an initiative of the Irish Chairmanship to explore ways to improve the OSCE Unified Budget process.

## PA participates in OSCE Public Affairs Roundtable

OSCE PA Communications Director Neil Simon joined representatives from the OSCE Secretariat, Institutions and field presences for the 22nd Public Affairs Roundtable 19-20 March in Vienna.

Participants discussed best practices in media relations, latest trends and efforts in social media, and received a training session aimed at message development to promote a stronger voice for the OSCE.

The Parliamentary Assembly reported on its expanded use of video and photo-sharing online and growing co-operation with other Institutions to stream live video during special events, including election observation news conferences. Simon also told counterparts that the Assembly can be a resource to field presences that could use an elected official to help boost the OSCE's message in a particular region.

"When one of our parliamentary delegations visits a country, we always enjoy great co-operation with the OSCE field presence," Simon said. "We want to be sure that those OSCE offices know we may also be able to help arrange for local parliamentarians to spread an OSCE message after those visits."

## Registration opens for OSCE PA Economic Conference in Batumi

Hosted by the Parliament of Georgia, the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly Economic Conference will take place in Batumi from 12 to 14 May 2012. Entitled "Fostering Economic Co-operation and Stability in the OSCE Region," the conference will focus on modern economic problems, energy security, and best practices in regional co-operation.

Georgian Airways has scheduled a special direct round-trip flight between Vienna and Batumi for OSCE PA delegates. A flight will depart from Vienna on 11 May return on 14 May. Delegations are encouraged to confirm travel arrangements as soon as possible. Georgian Airways will block the seats until **16 April**, after which they will go on general sale.

"Vice-Chairman of the Georgian Parliament George Tsereteli and the rest of the Georgian PA delegation have arranged a great programme for the conference," said Secretary General Spencer Oliver, who visited the site in November.

Information on reserving seats on the flights, hotel rooms and registration forms for the Economic Conference can be found at [www.oscepa.org](http://www.oscepa.org).

Delegations are kindly asked to register for the conference no later than **17 April**.