

News from Copenhagen

PA President Grossruck holds high-level meetings in Kyiv



The PA delegation meeting with President Viktor Yanukovich and Foreign Minister Leonid Kozhara.

On 22-23 April 2013, OSCE PA President Wolfgang Grossruck (MP Austria) paid a two-day visit to Kyiv, following an invitation by the OSCE's Chairperson-in-Office, Ukrainian Foreign Minister Leonid Kozhara. During his visit, besides having intensive discussions with the Chairperson-in-Office in a series of meetings, with the new Head of the Ukrainian PA Delegation, Oleh Zarubynskyi, he had talks with the highest representatives of the country, President of Ukraine Viktor Yanukovich, Speaker of the Ukrainian Parliament Wolodymyr Rybak and Prime Minister Mykola Azarov.

All meetings took place in a very cordial, welcoming and constructive atmosphere. President Grossruck highly appreciated this strong signal of respect for and recognition of the important role the OSCE PA plays in the Organization. The Chairman-in-Office accepted his invitation to address the opening plenary of the 22nd Annual Session taking place in Istanbul on 29 June – 3 July.

The Ukrainian leaders informed Grossruck about the country's priorities during its OSCE Chairmanship, focusing, among other issues, on the conflicts in Moldova and the Caucasus, energy security, arms control and human rights issues. The PA President thanked Ukraine for assuming the Chairmanship and strongly leading the organization until the end of 2013.

There was further discussion regarding the EU association

agreement, including the visa regime, and Ukraine's electoral law reform. The talks also offered an opportunity to exchange views on political issues of Ukraine and the relationship between Ukraine and Austria. In his talks, Grossruck stressed that he has "taken note of the signals that the government has sent out regarding imprisoned politicians." He added that he had understood "that the government is continuously working on reforming the judicial and the detention sector, so we look forward to seeing further positive signals in this regard."

In his meetings with Minister Kozhara, Grossruck had an opportunity to extensively discuss institutional matters of the OSCE, among them the role of the OSCE's Special Co-ordinator and parliamentary leadership in election observation. In addition, they addressed a wide range of political questions that relate to the OSCE's three dimensions of security. Grossruck also briefed the Chairman-in-Office on the PA's Bureau Meeting that took place from 14-15 April in Copenhagen, and discussed other ongoing work of the Assembly.

During his stay in Kyiv, President Grossruck also met with the Senior Project Officer at the OSCE Project Co-ordinator's office in Ukraine, Rene Louis Bebeau, who briefed the delegation about the office's work, and Austrian diplomats.

The president was accompanied on his visit to Ukraine by PA Special Representative Ambassador Andreas Nothelle and Senior Advisor of the Austrian Parliament Lukas Mussi.

Delegation from the OSCE in Kyrgyzstan visits Copenhagen

Four staff members from the OSCE Centre in Bishkek held three days of meetings in Copenhagen last week as part of a wider effort to build the capacity the Parliament of Kyrgyzstan. The delegation included the OSCE Centre's Institution-Building Officer, George Katcharava, Senior Programme Assistant Guljamal Tokombaeva, and OSCE consultants to the Parliament, Saltanat Usunbalieva and Kyzsaikal Isakova.

The OSCE PA's International Secretariat staff, including Secretary General Spencer Oliver, Deputy Secretaries General Tina Schoen and Gustavo Pallares, Senior Counsellor Semyon Dzakhaev and Programme Director Anna Chernova, briefed the delegation in detail on the organizational modalities of the OSCE PA.

The Kyrgyz delegation also met with the Secretary and Co-Secretary of the Danish Delegation to the OSCE PA, Eva Esmarch and Charlotte Faber, who discussed the workings of the Parliament and administrative aspects of supporting the OSCE PA's Danish Delegation.

The delegation also held meetings with the Danish Institute for Human Rights and the Central Asia desk at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark. The visit concluded with a tour of the Danish Parliament, the Folketing.

In last year's Monaco Declaration, the OSCE PA called for developing closer contacts with the parliament of Kyrgyzstan, including through greater and more consistent engagement with the OSCE field presences in Bishkek and Osh.