

Bureau meets in Kyiv ahead of OSCE Ministerial Council



The OSCE PA Bureau meeting on the eve of the 20th Ministerial Council meeting in Kyiv.

The leadership of the Assembly convened Wednesday in Kyiv for its annual consultation on the eve of the OSCE Ministerial Council. Following welcoming remarks by the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office, Ukraine's Foreign Minister Leonid Kozhara, and the head of the PA's Ukrainian Delegation, Oleg Zarubynskyi, the Bureau members heard reports by the PA President, Secretary General, and the Treasurer.

Minister Kozhara thanked the PA for its co-operation during Ukraine's 2013 OSCE Chairmanship, praised the renewed co-operation between the PA and ODIHR over the past year, and reported on the goals of the Ukrainian Chairmanship, particularly its efforts in resolving the Transdnistria protracted conflict. The human dimension should remain at the core of comprehensive security, he said. The minister also took questions from the PA Bureau members, including inquiries about the current political situation in Ukraine.

In his remarks to the Bureau, President Ranko Krivokapic spoke about his recent trip to the United States, where he and Secretary General Spencer Oliver met with UN Secretary-

General Ban Ki-moon, and other high-level officials.

Secretary General Oliver reported to the Bureau about recent election observation missions and the Assembly's recent Autumn Meeting in Montenegro. He also informed parliamentarians about the plans to hold a series of seminars in preparation for observation of the 40th anniversary of the Helsinki Final Act in 2015, when the Annual Session will be held in Helsinki's Finlandia Hall.

The Bureau meeting included a budget report from Treasurer Roberto Battelli, who said that the Assembly remains in good financial health but that a modest increase to the budget may be needed to maintain the PA's high level of activities and take on important new initiatives.

Members also heard a report from the leader of the recent election observation mission to Tajikistan, Gordana Comic (Serbia). Possible themes for the 2014 Annual Session in Baku were also discussed, although no decisions were made.

President Krivokapic will address the Ministerial Council Thursday morning.

President Krivokapic meets Verkhovna Rada Speaker in Kyiv



President Ranko Krivokapic meets Volodymyr Rybak, Speaker of the Verkhovna Rada.

OSCE PA President Ranko Krivokapic held a bilateral meeting with Verkhovna Rada Speaker Volodymyr Rybak Wednesday in the Ukrainian Parliament. The two had an open and candid discussion about the current situation in Ukraine, the challenges of democratization, and Ukraine's important role in the OSCE and in the Parliamentary Assembly.

President Krivokapic encouraged Ukraine to continue its pursuit of democracy and underscored the importance of state institutions. "The path to real democracy is not easy. We

would like to see Ukraine invest more in the future of democratization, face all of the challenges that come with it, and stay the course," Mr. Krivokapic said.

"Every challenge for state institutions is a new chance for those institutions to rise to the occasion. We would like to see the current situation be resolved peacefully, through dialogue and through those institutions," he added.

President Krivokapic also congratulated Ukraine on its 2013 Chairmanship of the OSCE. He urged close co-operation between Ukraine and the Parliamentary Assembly in the future, especially as the Assembly pursues reform and greater transparency within the OSCE.

Speaker Rybak emphasized the importance of dialogue between Ukraine's political parties in resolving the current situation in the country.

"Speaker Rybak informed me that he has personally requested that the Ukrainian Prosecutor General carry out a swift investigation into the weekend's violence," Mr. Krivokapic said. Mr. Rybak also welcomed the OSCE PA's monitoring of elections and its support for reform in his country.