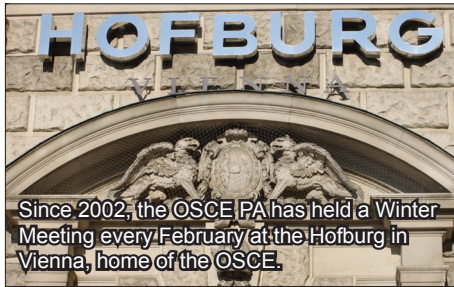


News from Copenhagen

OSCE Parliamentary Assembly preparing for busy start to 2015



Since 2002, the OSCE PA has held a Winter Meeting every February at the Hofburg in Vienna, home of the OSCE.

The new year is off to a busy start for the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, with a number of diplomatic visits planned, the Winter Meeting scheduled next month in

Vienna, and an election observation mission being organized for the 1 March parliamentary elections in Tajikistan. This week, several senior staff members are participating in the opening of the Serbian Chairmanship in Vienna.

On Thursday, the opening address by the new OSCE Chairperson-in-Office Ivica Dacic will be attended by Secretary General Spencer Oliver, Deputy Secretary General Gustavo Pallares, Special Representative Andreas Nothelle, Director of Presidential Administration Roberto Montella, Senior Policy Analyst Francesco Pagani, Deputy Director of Administration Marc Carillet, and Programme Officer Maria Chepurina. Following the inaugural address, PA staff members will participate in various discussions and working group sessions taking place in the Hofburg on 15-16 January.

On 20 January, Oliver and Third Committee Chair Isabel Santos (Portugal) will meet with a Deputy Prime Minister of Turkey in Ankara. They will be joined for the second leg of the visit by OSCE PA President Ilkka Kanerva (Finland) and will meet on 21 January with a local governor and representatives of NGOs in Sanliurfa, in the home district of OSCE PA Vice-President Emin Onen (Turkey). The delegation also plans to visit a number of refugee camps on the Turkey-Syria border. The delegation will be supported by Director of Presidential Administration Roberto Montella.

The OSCE PA's Winter Meeting will take place 18-20 February at the Congress Center of the Hofburg in Vienna.

This year, in addition to meetings of the Standing Committee, each General Committee, and joint sessions of the three General Committees, the Winter Meeting will also include the OSCE PA's Mediterranean Forum on 18 February.

Expected to address the plenaries are OSCE Chairperson-in-Office and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Serbia Ivica Dacic, and OSCE Secretary General Ambassador Lamberto Zannier, followed by question and answer sessions. President Kanerva will address the joint session on 19 February and OSCE PA Special Representative on Gender Issues Hedy Fry (Canada) will present her report at the joint session on 20 February.

The special debate on a topical theme will take place on 20 February. The Austrian Parliament will offer a reception for the members of the Parliamentary Assembly on the evening of 19 February after the meetings have concluded for the day.

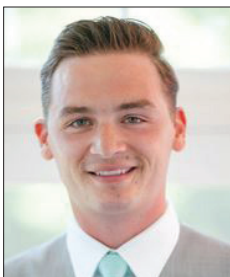
Following the Winter Meeting, the Assembly will be deploying election observers to Tajikistan for the 1 March parliamentary elections. The election observation mission is being organized by OSCE PA Director of Elections Andreas Baker, Programme Officer Maria Chepurina and Operations Officer Iryna Sabashuk.

The International Secretariat is also continuing preparations for the OSCE PA's Helsinki +40 Project. With successful seminars held last year in Moscow and Washington, the Project continues in 2015 with seminars culminating in the final colloquium this July, to be held in Helsinki in conjunction with the 24th Annual Session.



U.S. Congressman Christopher Smith (centre) speaks at the Helsinki +40 seminar in Washington on 18 November 2014, with U.S. Senator Benjamin Cardin to his right.

Secretariat welcomes new staff



Programme Officer Loic Poulain (France) joined the OSCE PA's International Secretariat on 13 January. A former OSCE PA Research Fellow, he previously worked on electoral assistance and rule of law projects from Washington, DC, and co-ordinated the OSCE PA's U.S. election observation missions in 2012 and 2014. Poulain holds

a master's in International Relations from the Institut d'Etudes Politiques de Lyon (France) and also studied at the University of Virginia (USA) and Vilnius University (Lithuania).

Dates set for 2015 Assembly meetings

The following dates have been set for Assembly meetings this year:

- Winter Meeting, Vienna, 18-20 February
- Bureau Meeting, Copenhagen, 26-27 April
- Annual Session, Helsinki, 6-10 July
- Autumn Meeting, Ulaanbaatar, 16-18 September
- Bureau Meeting, Belgrade, 2 December

Members attending the Winter Meeting are kindly asked to register no later than **16 January**.