

## Danish parliamentarians debate Foreign Ministry's report on the OSCE



Following his remarks, Danish Head of Delegation Peter Juel Jensen (left) speaks with Foreign Minister Martin Lidegaard.

Lawmakers from seven parties from across the political spectrum participated in a debate on the OSCE in the Danish Parliament (Folketinget) on 7 April, with the participation of the Danish Foreign Minister, Martin Lidegaard. Head of the Delegation to the OSCE PA Peter Juel Jensen led the debate, which included interventions by several active Members of the Assembly, including Ane Halsboe-Joergensen, Liv Holm Andersen and Lars Barfoed.

Discussing the Danish Foreign Ministry's annual report on the OSCE, parliamentarians stressed the increasingly important role that the Organization is playing in the OSCE area. While largely applauding the attention to Ukraine, MPs emphasized that the focus on the crisis there should not detract the OSCE from work in other fields.

Parliamentarians, several of whom discussed their

personal participation in recent election observation missions, stressed the importance of parliamentary leadership of election observation activities. The Foreign Minister thanked the Danish MPs for their contribution in this field, applying their personal knowledge and experience in elections to the benefit of the observation missions.

Parliamentarians posed a number of questions to Lidegaard, including on the logic of supporting the very restrictive mandate given to the OSCE's observer mission on the Ukrainian-Russian border.

As host of the OSCE PA's International Secretariat, Denmark is by far the largest financial contributor to the Assembly, and the Minister recognized the important role that the PA plays as an independent OSCE Institution.

Director of Elections Andreas Baker from the Secretariat attended Tuesday's debate in Copenhagen.



Member of Danish Delegation Lars Barfoed



Danish Foreign Minister Martin Lidegaard

## Kanerva issues statement on intimidation of OSCE monitors in eastern Ukraine

OSCE PA President Ilkka Kanerva (MP, Finland) issued a statement Wednesday calling for an immediate end to the intimidation of OSCE monitors in Ukraine. He further reiterated the need for the monitors to have unfettered access throughout the country.

"The illegal separatists have threatened OSCE staff on the ground in Ukraine and I especially deplore [Tuesday's] extreme example, in which a fighter from the so-called Donetsk People's Republic opened fire toward an OSCE monitoring patrol. This situation cannot continue as is, and I am even more convinced of the need to seriously consider an international peacekeeping mission to eastern Ukraine in support of the OSCE's civilian mission," Kanerva said.

The president also noted the continuing restrictions placed by illegal separatists and Ukrainian Armed Forces personnel on the movement of OSCE monitors and the effect of those restrictions on their reporting capacity.

"OSCE participating States unanimously agreed to dispatch an observer mission to Ukraine, but monitors must be allowed full access, with safety guarantees, to all areas if we are to get a full picture of what's happening on the ground. I also call on OSCE States to help ensure that the Special Monitoring Mission is as well-equipped as possible to perform its critical job," Kanerva added.

The Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine was deployed in March 2014 and was extended last month until March 2016.

## Special Rep Cardin hosts discussion on Jewish communities in OSCE area

United States Senator Ben Cardin, the OSCE PA's recently appointed Special Representative on Anti-Semitism, Racism and Intolerance, hosted civil society leaders from several OSCE participating States on 8 April for a discussion on Jewish communities in the OSCE area. The telephone conference served to provide an update on recent developments and trends relating to anti-Semitism and facilitated an exchange of ideas and perspectives, including on how to effectively combat

intolerance. Representatives of the OSCE/ODIHR's Tolerance and Non-Discrimination Department and a representative of the Council of Europe's European Commission against Racism and Intolerance also participated.

The discussion was the first of several consultations that Special Representative Cardin will hold in the coming months with civil society leaders and officials as he prepares his report to the PA on anti-Semitism, racism and intolerance.