

News from Copenhagen

PA President welcomes priorities of German OSCE Chairmanship

Following the opening of the German Chairmanship of the OSCE, Assembly President Ilkka Kanerva (MP, Finland) issued the following statement:

“It was with great interest that I listened to the opening address of the new OSCE Chairperson-in-Office, Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier, on 14 January. I welcome the Chairmanship’s focus on resolving protracted conflicts, particularly the attention being paid to the tragic situation in and around Ukraine, as well as the acknowledgement that this crisis has shown both the OSCE’s strengths and weaknesses.

“I look forward to working with the Chairmanship this year in advancing its priorities, including by strengthening and reforming the OSCE. As the minister stated, it is important that the OSCE enhance its legal personality, which was also a key recommendation of the OSCE PA’s Helsinki +40 Project.

“Hearing the Chairperson-in-Office so clearly state his view that we must not shy away from calling breaches of

OSCE commitments by name was a welcome relief. I share Minister Steinmeier’s conviction that we need clear goals and a compass for reaching those goals – and that the compass that we have is the Helsinki Final Act and the principles on which it is based. When these principles are violated, as they have been by the Russian Federation’s illegal annexation of Crimea and its involvement in the Ukraine conflict, it undermines and discredits the OSCE itself.

“I also welcome the focus on countering the ongoing and evolving terrorist threat, which is bringing death and tragedy to far too many people in the OSCE area, and the emphasis on ensuring a just, balanced and humane approach to addressing the refugee and migrant crisis. There is much overlap between the Chairmanship’s priorities and the Parliamentary Assembly’s agenda for the coming year, and we stand ready to work with Minister Steinmeier and all OSCE Institutions to achieve these goals.”

Michel Voisin appointed Special Representative for Mediterranean Affairs



Michel Voisin

President Ilkka Kanerva has appointed French parliamentarian Michel Voisin to serve as the PA’s Special Representative for Mediterranean Affairs. The position will help enhance the OSCE’s Mediterranean dimension, including through organizing the OSCE PA’s Mediterranean Forum and by

maintaining contacts with Mediterranean Partners.

Voisin has served as a Member of the French Delegation to the OSCE PA since 1993 and since January 2014 has been

Head of Delegation, a post he previously held from 1997 to 2012. He is one of the founding members of the OSCE PA Mediterranean Forum and since 1988 has been a member of the Defence and Armed Forces Committee in the French National Assembly. He is also the Assembly’s former Special Representative for Afghanistan.

The mandate of the Special Representative for Mediterranean Affairs includes encouraging meetings and exchanges with the OSCE Contact Group and the Mediterranean Partners, providing regular reports to the Assembly, and representing the PA at the OSCE’s Annual Mediterranean Conference.

PA staff participates in Chairmanship opening, holds team-building seminar



PA staff members at team-building seminar in Skodsborg, Denmark

PA staff members, including Secretary General Roberto Montella and Deputy Secretary General Gustavo Pallares, were in Vienna last week for the official opening of the OSCE German Chairmanship. After a day of meetings on 13 January, Montella and other PA officials attended the opening address of OSCE CiO Frank-Walter Steinmeier and participated in various discussions and working group sessions.

In addition to Montella and Pallares, the PA was represented by Special Representative Andreas Nothelle,

Senior Policy Analyst Francesco Pagani, Deputy Director of Administration Marc Carillet, Director of Elections Andreas Baker, Operations Officer Iryna Sabashuk and Programme Officer Maria Chepurina. The PA team discussed aspects of their work with representatives of the German Chairmanship, the OSCE Secretariat, field operations, and OSCE Institutions.

Following the Chairmanship opening, staff from the Vienna OSCE PA Liaison Office travelled to Copenhagen for three days of staff meetings, including a two-day training session focused on promoting practical skills to improve the efficiency of the Secretariat to better service Members of the Assembly.

Vacancy announcement

The International Secretariat has announced a vacancy for the position of General Services Manager/Part-time Driver. Further details are available at www.oscepa.org.