

# News from Copenhagen

## Vigenin appointed OSCE PA Special Representative on the South Caucasus

PA President Ilkka Kanerva (MP, Finland) has appointed Bulgarian parliamentarian Kristian Vigenin to serve as the Assembly's Special Representative on the South Caucasus. The position will focus the Assembly's efforts to support confidence-building measures, promote reconciliation and the implementation of OSCE commitments in the region.

The mandate of the Special Representative on the South Caucasus includes following the overall political situation in the region and seeking to promote dialogue in all segments of society, in particular at the parliamentary level, in order to encourage reconciliation of the protracted conflicts in the region. Working closely with the OSCE, the OSCE Office in Yerevan, the Minsk Group, its Co-chairmanship and the Chairman-in-Office's Personal Representative on the Conflict Dealt With by the Minsk Group, the Special Representative follows the developments in the Geneva International Discussions and considers ways in which confidence-building



measures could be introduced.

In his home country, Vigenin served as Minister of Foreign Affairs in 2013-2014 and is currently a member of the Foreign Policy Committee and the European Affairs and Oversight of European Funds Committee in the Bulgarian parliament. He also serves as Deputy Head of the Bulgarian Delegation to the OSCE PA. Vigenin most recently visited the South Caucasus in late January as a member of high-level OSCE PA delegations to Azerbaijan and Georgia.

## Special Rep Muttonen holds talks on regional co-operation in Central Asia



Following her appointment in January 2016, the OSCE PA's Special Representative for Central and Eastern Asia, Vice-President Christine Muttonen, has held a series of high-level meetings, including talks with the EU Special Representative for Central Asia, Amb. Peter Burian, that focused on identifying new formats for co-operation. She has met with all OSCE ambassadors from Central Asia and Mongolia, as well as OSCE Secretary General Lamberto Zannier, to discuss ways of strengthening joint action between the OSCE's governmental and parliamentary sides in Central Asia, and new strategies for increasing the OSCE's

visibility and promoting its co-operative spirit in Eastern Asia. Muttonen also held informal meetings at the Chinese Embassy in Vienna.

Additional topics of discussion have included ways for parliamentarians to support the OSCE field presences in the region, promote border management and strengthen intra-regional co-operation through regular contacts with the OSCE PA's Central Asian parliamentary delegations.

She has additional activities planned for the weeks to come, including a meeting with the Head of the Conflict Prevention Centre, Amb. Marcel Pesko, as well as several trips to the region and participation in the observation mission in Kazakhstan for the early parliamentary elections scheduled for 20 March.

### Deadline reminder

Delegations are advised that the deadline for registering for the Kazakhstan EOM is Friday, **19 February**. Registration forms should be sent to [eom@oscepa.dk](mailto:eom@oscepa.dk).

## SG Montella and PA staff hold meetings at ODIHR headquarters in Warsaw

Secretary General Roberto Montella, Special Representative Amb. Andreas Nothelle, Director of Elections Andreas Baker and Operations Officer Iryna Sabashuk visited OSCE/ODIHR headquarters in Warsaw on Wednesday, meeting with Director Michael Link and senior ODIHR staff from various departments. In meetings, the delegation discussed areas of common interest and ways to improve co-operation, including through joint projects on human rights, democratization, tolerance and non-discrimination. The sides also exchanged views on election observation and ways to further enhance



existing co-operation in this area. On Thursday, the Secretariat team will meet the OSCE PA's newly appointed delegation of Poland and will brief the delegation on PA activities.