

Muttonen welcomes Russian engagement with PA in Moscow meetings



Christine Muttonen, Valentina Matvienko and Roberto Montella, Moscow, 30 Nov. 2016

OSCE PA President Christine Muttonen (MP, Austria) met with Russian Federation Council Chairperson Valentina Matvienko and State Duma Deputy Chair Petr Tolstoy in Moscow this week for talks that focused on Russian involvement in the work of the PA and developments in and around Ukraine. The sides exchanged views on the OSCE's assessment of recent Russian elections and discussed conclusions from the PA's Annual Session in Tbilisi last July. Muttonen was accompanied by Secretary General Roberto Montella and Deputy Secretary General Semyon Dzakhaev.

Nikolay Kovalev, member of the Russian delegation to the OSCE PA and Special Representative on Anti-Terrorism, participated in Tuesday's meeting with President Muttonen and Deputy Chair Tolstoy, who was representing State Duma Chairperson Vyacheslave Volodin while he was on unforeseen travel outside of the Russian Federation. Muttonen welcomed information shared by Tolstoy regarding the recent

appointment of a new Russian delegation to the OSCE PA following September's elections to the State Duma.

"Russian contributions in all areas of our work – parliamentary diplomacy, conferences, election observation – are highly valued," Muttonen said. "Participation by the Russian delegation ensures meaningful dialogue in the Assembly. It also gives the Russian delegation the opportunity to pursue its declared objective of preventing dividing lines or reducing visa barriers."

The President also underlined the OSCE PA's longstanding position on the crisis in and around Ukraine. "We support the Minsk Agreements, and have regularly called for their full implementation," Muttonen said.

At the meeting with Matvienko on Wednesday, President Muttonen expressed support for the Chairperson's proposal to organize an international parliamentary conference on combating international terrorism in St. Petersburg on 28 March 2017 and expressed the readiness of the Assembly to co-organize this conference jointly with the CIS Interparliamentary Assembly.

Muttonen, who was accompanied by Amb. Brigitte Brenner and Lukas Mussi from the Austrian Parliament, noted that her dialogue with Russian officials will continue in Hamburg next week in a meeting scheduled with Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov and said that she looked forward to seeing Matvienko again at an upcoming IPU summit in Abu Dhabi.

Guliyev addresses PABSEC in Belgrade



Azay Guliyev speaking at PABSEC's 48th General Assembly.

OSCE PA Vice-President Azay Guliyev (MP, Azerbaijan) spoke on Wednesday at the Parliamentary Assembly of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation's 48th General Assembly in Belgrade. In wide-ranging remarks that touched on issues including protracted conflicts, terrorism and migration, Guliyev stressed that parliamentary diplomacy is a vital tool for promoting stability and co-operation.

"The challenges we face are truly global and require a multilateral, comprehensive and strategic response and this is why we need the close co-operation with each other," he said. "Parliamentary diplomacy has a special role in dealing with ongoing challenges and I think today's session gives us great opportunity to address some of them."

Dobesova addresses OSCE seminar in Prague



Ivana Dobesova addressing OSCE seminar in Prague.

OSCE PA Third Committee Vice-Chair and Head of the PA's Czech Delegation Ivana Dobesova spoke on Monday at a seminar held by the OSCE Documentation Centre in Prague entitled "Options for Returning to Comprehensive and Co-operative Security in Europe: What Can OSCE Do to Increase Security in Europe?"

In her remarks, Dobesova regretted that the security climate is deteriorating and is characterized by "growing and widespread mistrust as well as a dangerous erosion of international tools and mechanisms conceived to promote peaceful coexistence, stability and the respect for basic rights." She stressed that as an OSCE parliamentarian she feels a strong responsibility to work to reverse this trend.