Autumn Meeting closes in Bishkek

OSCE PA Standing Committee meeting in Bishkek, 5 Oct.

Some 300 delegates including 160 parliamentarians participated in the OSCE PA's Autumn Meeting last week, hosted by the Jogorku Kenesh (Parliament) of the Kyrgyz Republic. Speakers at the event included President of the Kyrgyz Republic Sooronbay Jeenbekov, Speaker of the Jogorku Kenesh (Parliament) of the Kyrgyz Republic Dastanbek Dzhumabekov, Kyrgyzstan's Minister of Foreign Affairs Erlan Abdyldaev, PA President George Tsereteli, representatives of OSCE field operations in Central Asia, and a representative of the Chairmanship of the OSCE Contact Group with the Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation.

The Autumn Meeting featured a Parliamentary Conference on the theme of "Promoting Security Dialogue in Central Asia and Beyond." The Mediterranean Forum discussed "Geopolitics of Central Asia and the Mediterranean: Addressing Migration, Trade and Environmental Challenges." Sessions were chaired by OSCE PA Vice-President Kari Henriksen (Norway), Vice-President and Special Representative on Mediterranean Affairs Pascal Allizard (France), and Special Representative on Gender Issues Hedy Fry (Canada).

The OSCE PA's Standing Committee met and heard reports from President Tsereteli, Secretary General Roberto Montella, Chair of the Sub-Committee on the Rules of Procedure and Working Practices Peter Bowness, Treasurer Doris Barnett, and Special Representatives.

OSCE PA observes BiH elections

OSCE PA observers at a polling station in Sarajevo, 7 Oct.

The 7 October general elections in Bosnia and Herzegovina were genuinely competitive but characterized by continuing segmentation along ethnic lines, observers concluded in a statement issued at a press conference in Sarajevo on Monday. Deficiencies in the legal framework remain and recent discussions on reform were stalled by political disagreements, the observers said. Voters were presented with a wide choice of candidates but they focused more on personal attacks than on providing political alternatives, the statement says.

"We saw polling station commissions, many of them made up of young women and men, who showed eagerness to cope with the complex system during a long election day," said Makis Voridis (Greece), the Special Co-ordinator of the short-term OSCE observer mission. Noting the complexity and deficiencies of the post-Dayton system, he urged authorities to immediately tackle the necessary reforms.

"We cannot change the past, but we can shape the future," said Pia Kauma, head of the OSCE PA mission. "People of this country, and especially the younger generations, deserve more political alternatives."

The 27-member delegation from the OSCE PA worked closely with colleagues from PACE, the European Parliament, NATO PA and the OSCE/ODIHR. The OSCE/ODIHR long-term observers were led by Head of Mission Ambassador Peter Tejler.

Tsereteli addresses Eurasian Speakers of Parliament in Antalya

OSCE PA President George Tsereteli (Georgia) spoke at the Third Meeting of Speakers of Eurasian Countries' Parliaments in Antalya on Tuesday, emphasizing the need to respect international commitments for the sake of economic development. He encouraged co-operation on issues such as environmental protection, water management and cross-border economic projects, and urged parliaments to maintain strong engagement with the OSCE PA.

The meeting, hosted by the Grand National Assembly of Turkey, was held under the theme "Economic Cooperation, Environment and Sustainable Development in Eurasia" and brought together the parliamentary leadership of 39 countries.

On the margins, Tsereteli held several bilateral meetings, including with Turkish Speaker Binali Yildirim, Slovak

George Tsereteli speaking at the Third Meeting of Speakers of Eurasian Countries' Parliaments in Antalya, 9 Oct.

Speaker Andrej Danko, Kazakh Speaker Nurlan Nigmatulin, and Uzbek Speaker Nurdinjon Ismoilov. He also exchanged with Belarussian Speaker Vladimir Andreichenko, Kyrgyz Speaker Dastanbek Dzhumabekov, South Korean Speaker Moon Hee-sang and with Heads of Delegation from Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Mongolia.