

Special Rep Haider in Turkmenistan for meetings, OSCE-focused events



Roman Haider (right) meeting with Deputy Foreign Minister Vepa Hajiyev in Ashgabat, 15 April 2019.



L-R: CPC Director Marcel Pesko, Head of OSCE Centre in Ashgabat Natalya Drozd, OSCE Secretary General Thomas Greminger and OSCE PA Special Representative Roman Haider

The OSCE PA's Special Representative on Central Asia, Austrian parliamentarian Roman Haider, is in Turkmenistan this week, where he has attended the OSCE Regional Meeting of Heads of OSCE Field Operations in Central Asia and a conference at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs dedicated to the 20th anniversary of the opening of the OSCE Centre in Ashgabat. He has also met with Turkmen officials and members of the international community.

In discussions, Special Representative Haider has stressed the importance of socio-economic and democratic development and welcomed the participation of Turkmenistan in the activities of the OSCE PA.

In a meeting with Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Vepa Hajiyev, the sides discussed the improved co-operation between Turkmenistan and the OSCE PA since Turkmenistan resumed regularly participating in the PA's statutory meetings in 2014. This renewed participation reflects the heightened level of international co-operation between the parliament and international organizations, Hajiyev said.

The discussions explored prospects for further engagement of Turkmenistan in the activities of the OSCE PA, including in the field of election observation. Other topics included regional security and promoting stability in Afghanistan, tackling common security challenges such as trafficking in narcotics, weapons and human beings, as well as countering terrorism.

In a meeting with Deputy Chairperson of the Mejlis (Parliament) of Turkmenistan Kasymguly Babayev and a number of members of Turkmenistan's delegation to the OSCE PA, the sides discussed enhancing Turkmenistan's inter-parliamentary relations as well as action plans to address gender equality, combating trafficking in human beings, and human rights.

Haider also had exchanges with the EU Special Representative for Central Asia Ambassador Peter Burian, the Special Representative of the UN SG for Central Asia and Head of UNRCCA Natalia Gherman, and the Head of the EU Liaison Office in Turkmenistan, Chargé d'Affaires Lubomir Frebort. On Wednesday, he participated in the Joint Session of OSCE Heads of Field Operations and EU Heads of Delegation in Ashgabat. Topics of discussion included co-operation with OSCE Institutions and the Parliamentary Assembly, including on the Human Dimension.

The conference marking the 20th anniversary of the OSCE Centre on Tuesday was attended by representatives of the Mejlis of Turkmenistan, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ombudsman of Turkmenistan, the Rector of the International University of Humanitarian Sciences and Development, as well as representatives from the international community.

Haider has been accompanied by Farimah Daftary from the International Secretariat and Lukas Mussi from the Austrian Parliament.

PA to deploy more than 80 observers for elections in Ukraine and North Macedonia

The OSCE PA is deploying two election observation missions this weekend – one for the presidential election in North Macedonia and one for the second round of the presidential election in Ukraine. This week, Dimitrije Todoric from the International Secretariat is participating in the OSCE/ODIHR's Needs Assessment Mission to Kazakhstan for the 9 June presidential election.

Nearly 50 observers, including 31 parliamentarians, will be in North Macedonia for the 21 April presidential election. The OSCE Chairperson-in-Office has appointed Sereine Mauborgne (France) as Special Co-ordinator to lead the short-

term OSCE observer mission. Reinhold Lopatka (Austria) will lead the OSCE PA's delegation of observers. They will deliver the preliminary findings and conclusions at a press conference in Skopje on 22 April.

The Ukraine election observation mission will consist of 34 observers, including 27 members of parliament. OSCE PA President George Tsereteli (Georgia) has been appointed Special Co-ordinator to lead the short-term OSCE observer mission and Treasurer Doris Barnett (Germany) will lead the PA's delegation of observers. They will deliver the post-election findings and conclusions in Kyiv on 22 April.