

# News from Copenhagen

## In Minsk, Tsereteli underlines need for democratic reform, parliamentary oversight



George Tsereteli with Aleksandr Lukashenko, 29 April 2019 (Photo credit: belta.by)

OSCE PA President George Tsereteli (Georgia) and Vice-President Azay Guliyev (Azerbaijan) met Monday with Belarusian President Aleksandr Lukashenko for discussions that focused on the importance of close co-operation between Belarus and the PA, efforts to put an end to the armed conflict in eastern Ukraine through the Minsk negotiating process, and the status of democratic reforms.

The conversation also considered the proposal to convene a summit aimed at strengthening the Helsinki principles and preventing conflicts in the OSCE area. President Lukashenko encouraged such a high-level meeting as a way to break the deadlock in a number of challenging areas for the Organization.

In Minsk, President Tsereteli also met with the Chairman of the Council of the Republic of Belarus, Mikhail Myasnikovich; Chairman of the House of Representatives, Vladimir Andreichenko; and the Head of the Delegation of Belarus to the OSCE PA, Boleslav Pirshtuk. Talks focused on co-operation between the PA and the Belarusian parliament, as well as ways to strengthen parliamentary democracy. President Tsereteli encouraged his counterparts to make use of OSCE instruments and increase the contributions of civil society to deepen democratic reforms.

The PA President met Tuesday with the Belarusian Helsinki Committee, a national human rights public association.



Participants at Silk Road Support Group meeting in Minsk, 29 April 2019. (Photo credit: Belarusian House of Representatives)

## Broad PA participation in Silk Road Support Group meeting

While in Minsk, Tsereteli participated in the parliamentary conference of the Silk Road Support Group, hosted by the National Assembly of the Republic of Belarus under the theme “Belt and Road: Deepening Cooperation for Sustainable Development and Prosperity.” The event was attended by parliamentarians and business leaders from Austria, Azerbaijan, Italy, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Russia, Serbia, Turkey, and Switzerland, including the participation of several members of the OSCE PA.

In opening the conference, President Tsereteli noted concerns regarding the growing influence of China in the OSCE area and welcomed the opportunity to encourage greater parliamentary oversight over Belt and Road projects.

“As representatives of our citizens, we all have their best interest at heart. It is our ambition to have our populations benefit to the fullest from new projects and investments,” said President Tsereteli. “This requires transforming any initiative to connect our countries more closely into a joint project with co-ownership for all participating States, and to make sure that local workers are hired to multiply the economic benefits of these investments.”

## Featured tweets @oscepa



Azay Guliyev @AzayGuliyev · Apr 29

Today the II International Conference of the [@srg\\_oscepa](#) has been launched. Hope to see productive and interesting discussions on the broad range of issues presented in our agenda. Good luck to all participants! [@oscepa](#)



This week, OSCE PA Vice-President Azay Guliyev and Special Representative on Anti-Semitism, Racism and Intolerance Ben Cardin tweeted about the Silk Road Group and a tragic shooting at a synagogue in California, respectively.



Senator Ben Cardin [@SenatorCardin](#)

Following

Synagogue, church, mosque or other house of worship, this should not keep happening. We need prayers. We need action. We need to love thy neighbor. The violence and the hate must end.

Senator Ben Cardin [@SenatorCardin](#)

A house of worship should be a sanctuary for the faithful— free from hate and terror. On this Easter Day, my prayers are with all those in #SriLanka and all those touched by this tragedy.

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