

Special Representative and VP Pia Kauma visits Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan



Pia Kauma meeting Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Kyrgyzstan Dinara Kemelova, Bishkek, 22 April



Pia Kauma meeting Maulen Ashimbayev and members of the Senate, Nur-Sultan, 25 April

OSCE PA Vice-President and Special Representative on Central Asia Pia Kauma (Finland) on Tuesday completed an official visit to Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan, with the objective of strengthening the engagement of parliamentarians from the two countries in the work of the PA, listen to their issues and concerns, and identify areas where the Assembly can offer support.

Her visit to Kyrgyzstan last week included meetings with Deputy Speaker Zhamilya Isaeva and members of parliament, Deputy Foreign Minister Dinara Kemelova, and Ombudsman Atyr Abdrakhmanova. Kauma also visited the OSCE Programme Office in Bishkek, headed by Ambassador Alexey Rogov, to learn more about the projects carried out by the OSCE in all three dimensions. Addressing students of the OSCE Academy in Bishkek on 22 April, Kauma discussed how to promote stability, peace and democracy in the OSCE region.

In Kazakhstan on 25-26 April, Kauma met with the Chair-

man of the Senate of the Parliament of the Republic of Kazakhstan and Head of the Delegation of Kazakhstan to the OSCE PA Maulen Ashimbayev, Chairman of the Legislative Chamber Yerlan Koshanov, as well as members of the delegation of Kazakhstan to the OSCE PA including Deputy Senate Chairman and OSCE PA Vice-President Askar Shakirov. Meetings were also held with Minister of Justice Kanat Musin, Prosecutor General Berik Asilov and Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Mukhtar Tileuberdi focusing on political reforms, reform of the judiciary, and official investigations into the events of January 2022.

Prior to her official meetings, Kauma met with civil society representatives in Bishkek, Almaty and Nur-Sultan as well as with representatives of the international community. Throughout the meetings, she welcomed the strong engagement of both countries in the work of the OSCE PA and explored areas for further co-operation while also highlighting the important contribution of OSCE field operations on the ground.

OSCE PA members engage on human trafficking



Johan Buser addresses conference in Berlin, 27 April

Combating human trafficking has been the focus of OSCE PA work in recent days, with high-level field visits and speaking engagements concentrating attention on the subject. Today, Third Committee Rapporteur Johan Buser (Sweden) participated in a conference in Berlin entitled "Addressing Human Trafficking and All Forms of Sexual Exploitation: Measures to Strengthen Responses of Destination Countries."

In his address, Rapporteur Buser focused on the impact of the Russian invasion of Ukraine and the displacement of more than five million people, noting that this challenge puts the capacity of European anti-trafficking measures to the test.

Buser said that Europe is now faced with a human tragedy of epic proportions, emphasizing that Swedish police have already launched at least six preliminary inquiries of crimes against Ukrainian refugees. Noting that most refu-

gees are women and children, he pointed out that the risks of trafficking cannot be overstated and urged greater co-ordination from the OSCE and parliamentarians from across the region on this topic.

Last week, OSCE PA President Margareta Cederfelt visited Moldova with OSCE Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings Valiant Richey for discussions focused on countering the risks of human trafficking amid the humanitarian crisis caused by the attack on Ukraine. The two-day visit included meetings with Minister of Foreign Affairs and European Integration Nicu Popescu, and with interim General Prosecutor Dumitru Robu. The talks focused on reducing the risks of human trafficking in the country in light of the flows of people seeking refuge from Ukraine and strengthening Moldova's response to these challenges, including in collaboration with the OSCE Mission to Moldova.

On 21 April, Cederfelt and Richey visited an Anti-Trafficking and Gender Technical Co-ordination Meeting held by the OSCE Mission's Office in Chisinau. Participants discussed how the current humanitarian crisis also creates greater risks of gender-based violence, in particular, trafficking in human beings and sexual abuse. Cederfelt and Richey also visited Palanca Border Crossing Point and Police Officers at Tudora reception centre, and met with the Head of the Human Rights Coordination Department and Social Dialogue at the State Chancellery, Diana Doros; the Chair of the Parliamentary Committee on Social Protection, Health and Family, Dan Perciun; the Interim Deputy General Prosecutor, Eduard Bulat and others.