

Lopatka appointed Special Representative for Parliamentary Dialogue on Ukraine

OSCE PA President Margareta Cederfelt (Sweden) appointed Vice-President Reinhold Lopatka (Austria) last week as the Assembly's Special Representative for Parliamentary Dialogue on Ukraine. Accepting the appointment, Lopatka stated that he is humbled by the trust placed in him. "There is no greater challenge facing the OSCE – and indeed the world – than the war in Ukraine," he said. "It is incumbent on all of us to do what we can to bring this senseless violence to an end, halt the escalatory rhetoric, and return to the spirit of dialogue at the heart of the OSCE."

In her appointment letter, Cederfelt called on Lopatka "to explore all available avenues to foster dialogue, as appropriate and feasible, to support the peaceful resolution of the war and addressing the direct and indirect impact of the war."

In his first activity as Special Representative, Lopatka met



Reinhold Lopatka meets with Secretariat staff, 17 May 2022.

Tuesday in Vienna with OSCE PA Secretary General Montella and several staff members, for talks that focused on possible next steps for his work. The sides discussed where Lopatka should focus his efforts, including possible upcoming visits and meetings, and Montella assured Lopatka of the International Secretariat's support for his work.

OSCE PA South East Europe envoy Azay Guliyev concludes regional visit

Wrapping up a three-country tour of the region last week, OSCE PA Special Representative Azay Guliyev (Azerbaijan) was in Montenegro on 11-13 May, where he welcomed efforts in promoting rule of law and the fight against organized crime. Joined by the Head of the OSCE Mission to Montenegro, Amb. Dominique Waag, Guliyev met in Podgorica with Prime Minister of Montenegro Dritan Abazović, Foreign Minister Ranko Krivokapić, President of the Parliament Danijela Đurović, Secretary General of the Parliament Aleksandar Klarić, Head of the Delegation of the European Union to Montenegro Amb. Oana Cristina Popa, representatives of the Democratic Montenegro Party, and the Montenegrin Delegation to the OSCE PA.

Interlocutors outlined Montenegro's EU integration priorities and its future steps. The meetings in Podgorica highlighted the importance of the OSCE as a strategic partner in the region, including in implementing reforms and further



Azay Guliyev and Dritan Abazović in Podgorica, 12 May

strengthening parliamentary capacity.

The Special Representative commended the OSCE PA Delegation for its active participation in the Assembly and called for further dialogue and cross-party dialogue in the months to come. During the regional visit, which included stops earlier in the week in Albania and North Macedonia, Guliyev proposed the idea of an inter-parliamentary forum with the participation of OSCE PA Delegations from South East Europe – an initiative that was positively welcomed.

In Vienna, President Cederfelt speaks at Supplementary Human Dimension Meeting

OSCE PA President Margareta Cederfelt (Sweden) addressed the 2nd Supplementary Human Dimension Meeting on Monday, taking part in a session on the "Role of national and local institutions as guardians of democracy in times of crisis." On the sidelines of the meeting, the President also met with several Permanent Representatives to the OSCE.

Speaking at the SHDM, President Cederfelt stressed the importance of ensuring the continuity and functionality of democratic processes during crises. Recalling the experience of parliaments during the COVID pandemic, she stated: "We have been reminded, once again, that it is crucial to always keep legislative and policy frameworks up to date and in line

with relevant international commitments."

The President added that any failure to maintain the work of parliaments, including ensuring robust oversight functions, during a state of public emergency risks turning every crisis into a larger crisis of democracy. In order to ensure that this doesn't happen, she recommended preparing for all possibilities and following best practices.

During bilateral meetings with the Polish OSCE Chairmanship, as well as Permanent Representatives of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Germany, President Cederfelt discussed the war in Ukraine and its consequences.

OSCE PA's Conference Team visits Birmingham, host of the Annual Session

In preparation for the 29th Annual Session, hosted by the United Kingdom's Parliament and scheduled to take place 2-6 July 2022, several members of the International Secretariat were on an assessment visit in London and Birmingham last week to take stock of progress. Gustavo Pallares, Odile Lelarge, Stephen Paul and Dimitrije Todoric met with staff of the UK Parliament to discuss logistical, technical and

security aspects of the meeting.

During the visit, the PA's team visited the Birmingham International Convention Centre, where the Session will take place, and positively assessed the premises, the programme and events for the Session. Deadlines and the draft programme for the Session, as well as several resolutions, have been posted on the PA's website.