

## More than 100 OSCE PA observers to deploy to Türkiye for elections



Michael Georg Link and Farah Karimi



The OSCE PA is deploying an election observation mission to Türkiye for the general elections taking place 14 May 2023. Michael Georg Link (MP, Germany) has been appointed by the OSCE Chairman-in-Office as Special Co-ordinator and Farah Karimi (MP, Netherlands) will serve as Head of the OSCE PA delegation. The OSCE PA observers will work closely with observers from the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe and the mission deployed by the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR). Headed by Ambassador Jan Petersen, ODIHR's mission consists of 14 experts, 28 long-term observers, and an expected 350 short-term observers.

On Tuesday, the EOM leaders, together with Secretary General Roberto Montella and other OSCE PA staff, met with Amb. Petersen and the Deputy Head of the ODIHR mission, Marcell Nagy. During the video call, the ODIHR representatives briefed Link and Karimi on ODIHR's pre-election observations, and discussed details of the mission as observers prepare for deployment next week.

In a press release issued on Tuesday, Link and Karimi said that the large delegation of observers underlines the international community's strong interest in Türkiye's democratic development and solidarity with the Turkish people following the recent devastating earthquake in the country.

"Türkiye's important place on the international scene ensures that these elections will be closely watched," said Link, who serves as Vice-President of the OSCE PA and Deputy Head of the German Delegation. "As international observers, however, we will set aside any political opinions we may have and focus exclusively on the process of the elections, which we will assess to the best of our capacity and knowledge."

"I look forward to leading the large delegation of my colleagues from the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly as we return for our sixth election observation mission in Türkiye," said Farah Karimi, who serves as Vice-Chair of the OSCE PA's human rights committee and Head of the Dutch Delegation. "The strong interest in observing these elections from politicians representing a wide range of political views from across the OSCE area is a positive sign. I am confident that we will work well together to reach an unbiased and accurate assessment of the conduct of these elections."

Observers will be briefed by election administrators, experts, political party representatives, and civil society representatives for two days prior to election day. Incorporating input of the ODIHR short- and long-term observers, the preliminary findings and conclusions for the elections will be presented at a press conference in Ankara on 15 May.

The elections will be assessed against democratic commitments contained in the OSCE's 1990 Copenhagen Document. Key provisions include free voting procedures, a fair and free campaign atmosphere, access to media, and honest and accurate reporting of results.

## Upcoming Call for Action - Helsinki +50 meetings

In the framework of the Call for Action – Helsinki +50 Initiative, the OSCE PA and the Parliament of Turkmenistan are holding a Central Asia Regional Seminar on "The Role of Neutral States in Strengthening Security, Stability and Dialogue in the OSCE Area," which will take place on 16 May in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan. Later in the month, the PA will hold an online meeting entitled "Call for Action-Helsinki +50 meeting: future challenges for the OSCE." Following up on a previous discussion on the impacts of the war in Ukraine on the OSCE, the 31 May meeting will focus on defining a clear vision for the future of the organization, so that it retains its unique role as a space for interaction among non-like-minded international actors.

Registration for the 31 May event will take place via the OSCE PA Registration Portal, which can be accessed here: <https://oscepa.event-sair.com/registration/osce-pa-member-directory/registration>. The deadline for the registration is Tuesday, 30 May 2023, at 14:00 CET. A detailed agenda and the Zoom link to the event will be distributed closer to the date.

## Featured tweets @oscepa



On 27 April, Head of the OSCE PA's Armenian Delegation Sargis Khandanyan tweeted about a meeting held in Madrid on 26 April with members of the OSCE PA's Spanish Delegation, led by Pere Joan Pons, Vice-President of the OSCE PA and Special Representative on the South Caucasus.

"We had a good meeting with the Spanish delegation to @oscepa," Khandanyan wrote, "and discussed the upcoming activities of the Annual session in Vancouver and the security situation in our region."

Pons also tweeted about the meeting, noting that it was a "Rich exchange of views" on "the current challenges of the South Caucasus region."

The meeting, which took place at the Spanish Parliament, included several members of each delegation.