

Second Committee Chair Guliyev meets with OSCE counterparts in Vienna



Azay Guliyev with colleagues in Vienna, 18 March 2024

OSCE PA Second Committee Chair Azay Guliyev (Azerbaijan) visited the headquarters of the OSCE and the PA Office in Vienna for a series of engagements on Monday. The visit helped familiarize Guliyev with governmental efforts aimed at boosting economic and environmental security in the OSCE region, ensuring that executive and parliamentary agendas in this context are duly aligned, and to jointly explore possible synergies for the coming months.

A special emphasis was placed on climate change in view of several high-level upcoming events, including an OSCE conference in Malta and COP 29 which will take place in Baku later this year. Guliyev noted that artificial intelligence is also a top priority of the OSCE PA's Second Committee, and shared

information about the upcoming conference in Lisbon focused on this theme. Other priority topics included the environmental impact of war in Ukraine, anti-corruption, green energy transition, energy security, and connectivity.

Guliyev was welcomed by the new Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities, Bakyt Dzhusupov, with his two deputies, Ralf Ernst and Sylvie Goyet. He was briefed by the Economic Governance Unit and Environmental Co-operation Unit on the wide range of ongoing activities, including in the areas of bridging digital divides and promoting wider access to digital technologies and skills, climate resilience and mitigation, combating corruption and enhancing food security. Discussions with the Planning and Co-ordination unit provided an opportunity to exchange plans on upcoming events.

Guliyev also explored ways to foster synergies with representatives of the 2024 Maltese OSCE Chairpersonship, including Giulia Buhagiar, Head of Economic and Environmental Dimension. At the meeting with the Maltese Chairpersonship in the OSCE PA Vienna Office, Guliyev welcomed the recent consensus on the agenda of the 2024 Economic and Environmental Forum. They explored ways to deepen co-operation on future activities, especially in the context of fighting climate change and in view of COP 29.

President Kauma publishes op-ed on Russian election

On Monday, OSCE PA President Pia Kauma (Finland) published an op-ed expressing regret that the PA was unable to observe the Russian presidential election because OSCE observers were barred from entering the country, and criticized the holding of "elections" on occupied Ukrainian territory. Click here to read: <https://bit.ly/3ToaoST>

Migration Committee holds follow-up discussion and debrief on Italy visit

Following the visit of the Ad Hoc Committee on Migration to Rome and Lampedusa together with OSCE PA Special Representative on Combating Organized Crime Eugenio Zoffili (Italy) and President Pia Kauma (Finland) on 6-8 March, Committee Chair Daniela De Ridder (Germany) moderated an online meeting on 15 March to follow up on discussions concerning combating trafficking in human beings (THB) along the Central Mediterranean route. Members shared their observations from the visit to Lampedusa and discussed recommendations to be presented to the OSCE PA Annual Session in Bucharest in July.

The discussion included Dr. Kari Johnstone, OSCE Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings, and Dejan Kladarin, Head of the UNHCR Vienna

Liaison Office. Committee Vice-Chairs Kyriakos Hadjiyianni (Cyprus), Farah Karimi (Netherlands), Gudrun Kugler (Austria) and Member Kristian Klinck (Germany) who had participated in the Lampedusa visit, also took part in the discussion.

Dr. Johnstone emphasized the need to differentiate between THB and human smuggling and urged parliamentarians to press their governments to give civil society organizations access to people on the move as they are inherently less likely to trust officials and share their experience of trafficking.

Discussions also touched on the need to ensure legal pathways for migrants, the human rights implications of the agreements between the EU and North African countries, and the EU Migration Pact's potential impact on anti-trafficking policies.

Vice-President Charalambides addresses Women Political Leaders in Athens



President of the Hellenic Republic Katerina Sakellariopoulou and OSCE PA Vice-President Irene Charalambides, Athens, 20 March

OSCE PA Vice-President Irene Charalambides (Cyprus) is participating in the Women Political Leaders Summit, taking

place in Athens from 19-21 March. She spoke today at the policy session 'Stop Sexual Violence in Conflict Zones,' noting that the OSCE PA considers the gender dimension as a core component of the peace and security agenda. Highlighting OSCE PA work in this regard, Charalambides stressed the need to encourage women to claim their position in the political arena, particularly in the role of peace negotiations. She also emphasized that international commitments to combat sexual violence in conflict zones must be translated into tangible action by reinforcing implementation mechanisms.

Held under the auspices of the President of the Hellenic Republic, the WPL Summit convenes global political leaders to champion the role of women in advancing democracy.

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