

News from Copenhagen

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Current Information from the International Secretariat

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Parliamentarians attend OSCE Implementation Meeting in Warsaw

Mr. Gert Weisskirchen, MP (Germany), Chair of the Assembly's Third General Committee, Senator Dorota Simonides (Poland) Vice-Chair of the Committee and Ms. Elena Mizulina, MP (Russia), Rapporteur of the Committee, represented the Assembly at the OSCE Implementation Meeting on Human Dimension Issues in Warsaw on 19 October. Mr. Weisskirchen addressed the Implementation Meeting during the debate on the prevention of torture. The delegation was accompanied by Mr. Pentti Väänänen, Deputy Secretary General.

During the Implementation Meeting the representatives of the OSCE PA held a side meeting with a number of NGOs. During this meeting the NGOs, in particular those from Central Asia, informed the parliamentarians about current regional issues and expressed their wish for political support.

While in Warsaw the Bureau of the Third General Committee met to discuss the report to be presented at the Tenth Annual Session in Paris in July 2001.



President Severin visits Belgrade

The President of the OSCE PA, Mr. Adrian Severin, visited Belgrade from 19 to 20 October 2000. During the visit he met with the President of the FRY, Mr. Vojislav Kostunica; His Holiness Patriarch of Serbia Pavle; President of the Chamber of the Republic of the FRY, Mr. Srdja Bozovic; and Deputy Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Zoran Novalovic. President Severin also met with other officials and representatives of NGOs as well as with Ambassadors of several OSCE States stationed in Belgrade. At the end of his visit, President Severin held a press conference. He was accompanied on this trip by Deputy Secretary General of the OSCE PA, Mr. Vitaly Evseyev.

Parliamentary Troika in Belarus

The Parliamentary Troika, composed of the European Parliament and the Parliamentary Assemblies of the OSCE and the Council of Europe, visited Belarus from 12 – 16 October 2000 on the occasion of the parliamentary elections which were held on 15 October. This visit took place as part of the continuing endeavours of the three institutions to encourage the development and consolidation of the democratic process in Belarus. The delegation was headed by Mr. Adrian Severin, President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, Mr. Jan Marinus Wiersma, Chairman of the European Parliament Delegation for Relations with Belarus and Mr. Wolfgang Behrendt, Rapporteur on Belarus of the Council of Europe's Parliamentary Assembly.

During the visit, the Parliamentary Troika held meetings with the Belarusian President, Foreign Minister, Chairperson of the Central Election Commission, as well as with representatives of opposition parties, human rights groups,



domestic election observers and members of the diplomatic corps to discuss developments with regard to the democratisation process. On 16 October, the Troika issued a report on the results of the visit and held a press conference.

In this report, the Troika welcomed the fact that some efforts were made by the authorities to satisfy the democratic demands of the European Institutions, but conveyed its disappointment that the Belarus authorities were, in the end, unable to use the window of opportunity offered by the organisation of these parliamentary elections to make satisfactory progress. The Troika also voiced its regret that the Belarusian authorities did not recog-

nise the desire for democratic change expressed by significant parts of the Belarus population. Nonetheless, the Parliamentary Troika declared its intention to continue in the future to offer its support, and the support of the institutions it represents, to the strengthening of the democratic process in Belarus that will lead to the normalisation of the country's relations with the Council of Europe, the European Parliament, and the OSCE.

Mr. Kimmo Kiljunen (Finland) also travelled to Minsk from 14-15 October on behalf of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly. Both Mr. Severin and Mr. Kiljunen were accompanied by Paul LeGendre, Programme Officer at the International Secretariat.

Elections Update

The OSCE PA will send 20 parliamentarians to monitor the parliamentary elections in Azerbaijan on 5 November 2000.

Mr. Bruce George, Vice-President of the Assembly, will head

a delegation to Bosnia & Herzegovina to monitor the parliamentary elections on 11 November 2000. For further information please contact Ms. Tina Schøn for Azerbaijan and Mr. Pentti Väänänen for Bosnia & Herze-

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