

# News from Copenhagen

Number 20

Current Information from the OSCE PA International Secretariat

8 February 2001

## OSCE PA Vice-President Moderates Round Table in Kazakhstan

Mr. Ihor Ostash (MP, Ukraine), Vice-President of the OSCE PA, moderated the Second Round Table on Elections in Astana, Kazakhstan on January 25. The first Round Table was held on September 2, 2000. The Round Table was conducted in conjunction with the OSCE Centre in Almaty and the OSCE/ODIHR and in collaboration with the Kazakh government. The round table participants, who included representatives from the CEC, the Kazakh parliament and opposition parties, discussed ways in which the electoral legislation, in particular as concerns the formation and independence of election commissions, could be improved. In his closing remarks, Mr. Ostash noted that the discussions, though at times difficult, had taken place in an open format and that there was agreement on key areas among participants on necessary electoral changes. He urged all the participants to submit their proposed changes to Zagipa Balieva, head of the CEC and chair of a Government Working Group on improving election legislation, who was tasked by the Round Table with compiling recommendations and preparing them for discussion at the next Round Table, tentatively scheduled for May. Mr. Omirbek Baigeldy, the head of the Kazakh delegation to the OSCE PA also attended the Round Table.

## President Severin Addresses Preparatory Seminar for the OSCE Economic Forum

On 30 January 2001, the President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, Mr. Adrian Severin addressed the preparatory seminar for the OSCE Economic Forum 2001 in Brussels entitled "Good Governance in the Public and Private Sectors against the Background of Globalization." In his speech Mr. Severin focused the parliamentary dimension of good governance and the critical role that parliamentary assemblies have to play in the arena of international economics, when faced with an irreversibly globalizing world. Parliamentarians can promote consistent international norms and regulations which contribute to the ease of all international economic transactions, just as consis-

tent national laws contribute to the prosperity within a nation. Mr. Severin further emphasized that the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly has long argued that the economic dimension is far too neglected within the OSCE's framework for security. "A comprehensive bolstering of this aspect of security is required: the assets at the disposal of the OSCE Economic and Environmental Co-ordinator must be increased, the activities of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly must be encouraged and co-operation with regional economic organizations strengthened."

Mr. Severin held meetings in Brussels with the President of the European Parliament Mrs. Nicole Fontaine, Mr. Elmar Brok, Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Commission of the European Parliament; Mr. Bodo

Hombach, Special Coordinator for the Stability Pact and Mr. Tom Price, OSCE Economic and Environmental Co-ordinator.

On 31 January, President Adrian Severin met with the President of the Belgian Senate Armand de Decker and Mr. Charles Janssens, Head of the Belgian Delegation to the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly. Mr. Severin also participated in a lengthy discussion of OSCE issues with the Belgian Delegation in a meeting with the Belgian delegation of the Parliamentary Assembly, which was also attended by former Foreign Minister Eric Derijcke and former Prime Minister Mark Eyskens. Following the meetings, President de Decker hosted a luncheon in Mr. Severin's honour.

## President Severin addresses Seminar in Italy

From 2 to 3 February 2001 OSCE PA President Adrian Severin addressed a Seminar entitled "Post Communist Transition Ten Years Later: Challenges and Outcomes for Europe and the Role of CEI" in Forli. The Seminar, organized jointly by the University of Bologna and the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs under the aegis of the Italian Presidency of the Central European Initiative (CEI), focused on the present challenges in the Central and Eastern European Region and on the future role of the Central European Initiative in the regional co-operation process.

In conjunction with his visit to Italy President Severin had meetings with the President of the Senate Mr. Nicola Mancino and the President of the Chamber of Deputies Mr. Luciano Violante as well as with the Italian delegation to the OSCE PA, headed by Senator Antonio Duva.

## Preparations for the 10th Annual Session in Paris

Mr. Vitaly Evseyev, Deputy Secretary General, Ms. Gina Dark, Conference Co-ordinator and Mr. Kurt Andersen, General Services Officer visited Paris from 29-30 January, in order to see the premises of the next Annual Session of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly. Organizational arrangements of the Session were discussed with the French hosts and it was agreed that the Inaugural and Plenary Sessions would take place in the Hemicycle, Palais Bourbon, the historical meeting room of the Assemblée Nationale. The text of the Agreement between the OSCE PA and the French Parliament was discussed, as well as other documents pertaining to the Session.