

News from Copenhagen

Number 24

Current Information from the OSCE PA International Secretariat

20 March 2001

OSCE PA President Adrian Severin meets EP and PACE Presidents in Strasbourg

On March 15 2001 President Severin paid a visit to Strasbourg in response to an invitation by the President of the European Parliament Mme. Nicole Fontaine. During a working lunch, also attended by OSCE PA Vice-President Tana de Zulueta and Secretary General Spencer Oliver as well as European Parliament Vice-Presidents Renzo Imbeni and Jan Kees Wiebenga, several topics of mutual interest were discussed including election monitoring and the parliamentary dimension of the Stability Pact. On election monitoring President Severin proposed creating a tri-parliamentary working group involving the OSCE PA, the European Parliament and the PA of the Council of Europe, which would co-ordinate activities related to election monitoring missions.

In the afternoon a meeting took place in the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) Headquarters between President Severin, Vice-President de Zulueta and Lord Russell-Johnston, President of PACE. The idea that each institution (OSCE PA, PACE, EP) should appoint a member to join each of the working tables of the Stability Pact was discussed and agreed. These appointees will ensure that the parliamentary dimension is represented in the implementation of the Stability Pact. Following this meeting the three Secretaries General of the three



President Adrian Severin is welcomed by Lord Russell-Johnston, the President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, for discussions on parliamentary co-operation

parliamentary bodies, Mr. R. Spencer Oliver, Mr. Bruno Haller, and Mr. Julian Priestly met at Mr. Priestly's invitation on the premises of the European Parliament. It was the first time that these senior officials had met together to discuss issues related to the parliamentary dimension of international organizations, as well as the prospects for further enhancing the existing co-operation between the three

parliamentary bodies. It was agreed that election monitoring is a key area for such co-operation, and that the establishment of a working group among the three Assemblies would constitute an important framework for the monitoring of elections. The three Secretary Generals agreed to meet on a more regular basis to discuss areas of current and future co-operation.

Parliamentary Troika Visits Belarus

The Parliamentary Troika, composed of members of the European Parliament and the Parliamentary Assemblies of the Council of Europe and the OSCE, visited Belarus on 5 - 7 March 2001. The delegation was chaired 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 Terry Davis, Chairman of the Political

Affairs Committee of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe. Other members of the European Parliament and the Parliamentary Assemblies of the OSCE and the Council of Europe were also part of the delegation.

The visit of the delegation took place as part of a continuing, joint effort of the three Parliamentary institutions to "further democratic developments in Belarus, and on the basis of a profound wish to integrate

Belarus and its people in the democratic structures of Europe". The Members of the Delegation had a large number of meetings with representatives of the Government and the institutions of the Republic of Belarus, as well as with representatives of the political opposition and civil society, in order to be informed about the situation in the country after the Parliamentary Elections of October 2000 and in the run-up to the Presidential Elections that will take place later this year.