

# News from Copenhagen

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## CALL FOR WOMEN TO HIGH LEVEL OSCE POSITIONS

On the occasion of International Women's Day Tone Tingsgård, Vice-President of the OSCE PA and Special Representative on the Gender Issue, reminded the OSCE Chairman-in-Office of the need to make sure that women are involved and responsible at all levels within the OSCE. In a letter addressed to the C-i-O, Bulgarian Foreign Minister Solomon Passy, Ms. Tingsgård emphasizes that unequal gender representation at the highest levels of the Organization remains a particular concern. At the three highest levels of the Organization, women make up only seven percent of the staff. In addition, the recruitment

system of the OSCE appears not to give equal opportunity for employment to men and women. In her letter Ms Tingsgård also mentioned that several high level OSCE positions will become vacant this year. She urges the C-i-O to ensure that the barriers within the OSCE's recruitment procedures, working against women, be removed. She also asks him to urge participating States to propose women as candidates for the positions. With the aim of promoting action at the national level as well, Ms. Tingsgård has also distributed copies of her letter to the Heads of all OSCE PA Delegations.

### Tone Tingsgård leads second PA Field Visit to Ukraine

From 14-16 March 2004, OSCE PA Vice President Tone Tingsgård (Sweden) will lead a small delegation to Kiev to visit the OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine in the framework of the OSCE PA's programme to visit OSCE field presences. The delegation includes Bjorn Hernaeas (Norway), Nebahat Albayrak (Netherlands), and Hugo Coveliens (Belgium). Programme Officer Paul LeGendre will accompany the delegation. It is anticipated that the delegation will meet with the OSCE Project Co-ordinator and his staff, partner organizations, Ukrainian parliamentarians, Foreign Ministry and other government officials as well as representatives of the diplomatic corps. A similar OSCE PA field visit to Ukraine was conducted in January 2002 and the delegation then recommended the active continuation of the work of the OSCE Project Co-ordinator. OSCE PA Presi-

dent Bruce George also echoed these views during subsequent visits to the country. On this occasion, the delegation will follow-up on the 2002 visit by seeking to better understand the current work and challenges of the Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine. Delegation members will also seek to exchange views with their interlocutors on the general political situation in the country in light of the forthcoming presidential elections, which will be observed by the Parliamentary Assembly. The initiative to organize regular field visits of parliamentarians to OSCE Field Missions became operational in late 2001. These visits enable parliamentarians to observe the activities of the OSCE in the field and to support the important work of the Missions. Since the beginning of the programme more than hundred parliamentarians have visited OSCE presences in eleven countries.

Visit the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly at its new web address:  
<http://www.oscepa.org>

### Heads of Mission Meeting in Tashkent

Programme Officer Paul LeGendre participated in the Central Asian Regional Heads of Mission Meeting in Tashkent, Uzbekistan on 2-3 March 2004. The meeting was attended by the Heads of Centre of the five Central Asian States and chaired by the Conflict Prevention Centre. The OSCE Chairmanship and representatives of OSCE Institutions also took part. Forthcoming parliamentary elections in the region were among the principle topics

of discussion during the meeting. In this regard, Mr. LeGendre noted that the OSCE PA would closely follow the pre-electoral processes in the countries concerned and would consider observing the elections. The schedule of parliamentary elections is currently as follows:

Kazakhstan - October 2004  
Uzbekistan - December 2004  
Kyrgyzstan - February 2005  
Tajikistan - February 2005

### Election Observation Mission to Georgia

To this date 15 OSCE parliamentarians from Estonia, Germany, Lichtenstein, Romania, Turkey and the United Kingdom have registered to observe the parliamentary elections in Georgia on 28 March. The OSCE PA Observer Team will be headed by President Bruce George, who will also act as Special Co-ordinator of the OSCE Chairman-in-Office for the Observation Mission in Georgia. The deadline for registration is 18 March.

### ODIHR Director to visit OSCE PA Headquarters

On 17 March Ambassador Christian Strohal, Director of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) will pay a visit to the International Secretariat of the OSCE PA in Copenhagen. He will be briefed by Secretary General Spencer Oliver and senior staff about current and upcoming activities of the Assembly. Co-ordination and co-operation between the two Institutions will also be discussed. On 8 September 2003 OSCE PA President Bruce George paid a working visit to the ODIHR headquarters in Warsaw.

### Preparations under way

From 18- 20 March, Secretary General Spencer Oliver and Deputy Secretary General Vitaly Evseyev will pay a preparatory visit to Washington DC for the 14th Annual Session of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly in July 2005. Deputy General Vitaly Evseyev and General Services Officer Kurt Anderson will visit Edinburgh from

15-16 March to further prepare for the 13th Annual Session this July. The main theme of the Edinburgh Annual Session is "Co-operation and Partnership: Coping with New Security Threats". Draft resolutions on this theme will be discussed during the meeting of the Assembly's Expanded Bureau from 22-23 April in Copenhagen.