

News from Copenhagen

300 OSCE Parliamentarians to Consider Current International Topics in Edinburgh

In addition to debating draft resolutions on "Co-operation and Partnership: Coping with New Security Threats", which forms the main theme of the 13th Annual Session of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly (Edinburgh, 5-9 July 2004), some 300 parliamentarians from more than 50 participating States will also consider draft resolutions on a number of supplementary items, including torture, the fight against racism, anti-Semitism and xenophobia, combating trafficking in human beings, Moldova, Ukraine, Kosovo, Belarus and the situation of national minorities in Latvia and Estonia.

Additionally, consideration will be given to draft resolutions on the total ban on anti-personnel landmines, the international status of Jerusalem as well as on several other specific OSCE issues, including the co-operation between the governmental and parliamentary dimensions of the OSCE and economic co-operation in the OSCE Mediterranean Dimension.

The opening Plenary Session, on Monday 5 July will be addressed by the OSCE Chairman-in-Office, Bulgarian Foreign Minister Solomon Passy who, in accordance with established tradition, will also answer

questions from the floor. OSCE Secretary General Jan Kubiš will also address the Assembly. The opening Plenary will be chaired by the President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, Bruce George, Chair of the Defence Committee of the British House of Commons. The Assembly will also hear reports from PA President Bruce George, PA Secretary General R. Spencer Oliver, and PA Treasurer Jerry Grafstein.

On Friday 9 July, the closing Plenary Session will adopt a Final Declaration. The Assembly will also elect its President and other Officers.

All documents and forms for the Edinburgh Session (application form for a press pass, programme, list of participants, draft resolutions etc.) can be downloaded from the OSCE PA Website at www.oscepa.org

Special Meeting on Gender Issues in Edinburgh

Terry Davis, Head of the UK Delegation to the OSCE PA and Tone Tingsgaard, Special Representative on the Gender issue, will host an informal working breakfast on Monday 5 July from 8.00 to 9.15 at the Sheraton Hotel in Edinburgh. The idea is to promote discussions on the OSCE PA 2004 Gender Balance Report in the general debate scheduled later, and also to have an opportunity to discuss gender issues within the OSCE in general. Members who are interested in participating in this event are requested to contact Programme Officer Tina Schøn at the International Secretariat (e-mail: tina@oscepa.dk).

Parliamentary Team visits Moldova

The Assembly's Parliamentary Team on Moldova, which is chaired by Vice-President Kimmo Kiljunen (Finland), visited Moldova on 16-17 June 2004. Mr. Kiljunen was joined by Roberto Battelli (Slovenia) and Anne-Marie Lizin (Belgium). Deputy Secretary General Pentti Väänänen accompanied the Team. Ambassador William Hill, Head of the OSCE Mission to Moldova, participated in all meetings.

On 16 June the Team held talks in Chisinau. They met with Deputy Speakers of Parliament Mihail Camerzan and Vadim Misin, representatives of the parliamentary factions and also Vasile Sova, Minister for Reintegration.

On 17 June the Team visited Tiraspol, where their meetings included Grigorij Maracutsa, Speaker of the Supreme Soviet, Evgenij Shevchuk, Deputy Speaker and Valerij Lickaj, the Transdnestrian Chief Negotiator.

In all meetings the Members of the Parliamentary Team expressed the OSCE PA's disappointment over the fact that no negotiations are



taking place at present to solve the conflict on the Transdnestrian region. They also expressed their concern for the lack of contact and dialogue between the Parliament of Moldova and the Supreme Soviet of Transdnestria. In order to facilitate such contact and to reopen a political dialogue, the Team suggested inviting Members of the Moldova Parliament and the Transdnestrian Supreme Soviet to a meeting hosted next autumn, preferably in September. At this meeting parliamentarians and politicians from both parties in the conflict would, together with Members of the OSCE PA, try to outline those relevant issues which need to be addressed and establish areas of common ground.

Both in Chisinau and Tiraspol, interlocutors expressed their readiness, in principle, to reopen dialogue. They also expressed their interest in the proposed meeting. However, it was pointed out that the meeting must be prepared carefully in order to guarantee success.

Both in Chisinau and in Tiraspol the discussions also dealt with the forthcoming Annual Session in Edinburgh. Members of the Parliamentary Team have presented a draft resolution on Moldova, which will be considered in Edinburgh.

Mission to Ukraine

From 9-12 June, Programme Officer Paul LeGendre joined an OSCE/ODIHR Needs Assessment Mission to Ukraine, which was organized to make a preliminary assessment of the pre-electoral situation in the country in light of the Presidential elections, scheduled for 31 October. The delegation was led by Ambassador Ahrens, who will head the ODIHR Election Observation Mission to the presidential elections in Ukraine. These elections are likely to generate significant international interest and the OSCE PA is considering to send an election observation mission. It is anticipated that such an observation mission will be coordinated with the ODIHR EOM as well as with the parliamentary assemblies of the Council of Europe, NATO and the European Parliament, which are also expected to send parliamentary observers. Delegations will be informed when more information is available about a potential OSCE PA observation mission.