

News from Copenhagen

Leaders of OSCE Election Observation Mission to the US visit Washington



The leaders of the OSCE Election Observation Mission to the 2 November elections in the United States visited the U.S from 6-10 October 2004. Barbara Haering, Vice-President of the OSCE PA has been appointed by the OSCE Chairman-in-Office to lead the short term OSCE observers and Giovanni Kessler, Vice-President of the OSCE PA has been appointed by the C-i-O to be the Deputy Head. Rita Süßmuth, Former Speaker of the German Bundestag, serves as Head of the Election Observation Mission of OSCE's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights. After meetings at the U.S. Congress, the U.S. State Department, the Electoral Assistance Commission,

the Federal Election Commission and the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES), the three leaders gave a press conference at the National Press Club in Washington on 7 October. Barbara Haering emphasized that the Election Observation Mission takes place on the invitation of the US Government and that "the credibility of the OSCE Election Observation is based on the fact, that we foster the commitments that have been agreed to by all OSCE participating States in the Copenhagen Document of 1990". She explained that on October 28 and 29 some sixty parliamentarians will be briefed in Washington D.C. as well in the States to which they

will be deployed. "We are working on a deployment plan that will offer a balanced picture of the election process in the USA", she said. As soon as possible after election day Ms. Haering will deliver the OSCE preliminary post-election statement in Washington.

On 8 October Barbara Haering and Giovanni Kessler traveled to Columbus, Ohio for an extensive briefing by key Officials working on the elections in this State. The briefings in Columbus were hosted by Secretary of State for Ohio, J. Kenneth Blackwell. Immediately after the briefings in Columbus, Mrs. Haering and Mr. Kessler traveled to St. Louis, Missouri where they attended the Presidential Debate.