

OSCE Chairman-in-Office appoints President Alcee L. Hastings to Lead OSCE Election Observation in Azerbaijan

The Chairman-in-Office of the OSCE, Slovenian Foreign Minister Dimitrij Rupel, has appointed President Hastings as his Special Co-ordinator for the Azerbaijani parliamentary elections to be held on November 6. As Special Co-ordinator, President Hastings will deliver the preliminary conclusions of the International Election Observation Mission at a press conference on November 7 in conjunction with other officials.

The OSCE PA is expected to deploy a large delegation on election day to observe the sealing of ballot boxes in the morning, conduct during the day, and the counting of ballots in the evening. The Assembly will work in close co-operation with the OSCE-ODIHR, the European Parliament, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council Europe, and with the

NATO Parliamentary Assembly.

Delegations are reminded of the change of deadline for confirming bookings with the hotel in Baku. On **10 October**, the Hyatt Hotel, where the International Secretariat has made a group booking, will release these rooms, making accommodation very difficult to obtain after this date. Members planning on participating in the observation mission to the parliamentary elections on November 6 are asked to complete and return the hotel registration form by 10 October.

Please also note that the final deadline for registering with the Central Election Commission of Azerbaijan is **20 October**. Delegations are kindly requested to complete and return the CEC forms to the International Secretariat by that date.

Vice-President Pia Christmas-Møller visits the International Secretariat



On 27 September, OSCE PA Vice-President Pia Christmas-Møller paid a visit to the International Secretariat together with the Secretary of the Danish Delegation, Jacob Otte. Mrs. Christmas-Møller, elected as Vice-President at the Annual Session in Washington in July, met with Secretary General Spencer Oliver and Deputy Secretary General Tina Schøn as well as other members of the staff.

Vice-President Christmas-Møller was briefed about developments in the OSCE, particularly with regard to the debate on reform of the organization. She was also briefed on the election observation missions to be deployed by the Assembly to Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan, scheduled for November and December respectively. Vice-President Christmas-Møller, who participated in the Election Observation Mission to Kyrgyzstan in July, highlighted her interest in the field of election observation. She stressed the importance of the Assembly's role in OSCE Election Observation Missions, enhancing the visibility and the independence of these important Missions.

Ms Lone Dybkjær, a new Member of the Danish Delegation to the Assembly, also visited the Secretariat on September 28 and was briefed by Secretary General Oliver and Deputy Secretary General Tina Schøn.

OSCE PA Participates in Human Dimension Implementation Meeting

Mr Gert Weisskirchen (MdB), was appointed by President Alcee L. Hastings to represent the OSCE PA at the OSCE Human Dimension Implementation Meeting in Warsaw last week. As Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairman-in-Office on Combating anti-Semitism, Mr. Weisskirchen addressed the meeting and urged direct engagement with political leaders and full investigation of all anti-Semitic attacks as important steps towards eradicating anti-Semitism in the OSCE. Mr Weisskirchen also particularly stressed the importance of recognizing anti-Semitism as a distinct phenomenon.

While pledging to work closely with the other Personal Representatives of the Chairman-in-Office dealing with intolerance, Mr Weisskirchen also noted that difficulties in co-ordinating their efforts should not stand in the way of effective and distinct action.

The work undertaken by Mr Weisskirchen and by the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly in combating anti-Semitism was applauded by participants in the meeting, which was focused on examining the implementation of OSCE commitments in the field of human rights.

Programme Officers Paul LeGendre and Andreas Baker from the International Secretariat also attended the meeting on behalf of the PA.

