

OSCE parliamentarians getting ready for Astana

“Transparency in the OSCE” is the main theme of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly’s Annual Session in Kazakhstan’s capital Astana from 29 June to 3 July 2008.

It is the first time the Annual Session will be held in Central Asia. Almost 300 parliamentarians from most of the 56 OSCE states are expected to participate. A substantial increase over last year’s Annual Session is anticipated, including full participation from the two largest delegations, the United States and the Russian Federation, who will be sending 17 and 15 Members of Parliament respectively.

The 17th Annual Session in Kazakhstan follows the 2007 session in Ukraine and precedes the 2009 session in Lithuania.

“We in the Parliamentary Assembly look forward to holding a major meeting in Kazakhstan and involving Central Asia fully in all of our activities,” said OSCE PA President Goran Lenmarker when announcing the decision to hold the 2008 Annual Session in Kazakhstan.

Besides the main theme of transparency and further reform of the OSCE, including the reinforcement of parliamentary participation in the organization, the Astana Annual Session will consider issues such as water management, trade, combating sexual exploitation of children and violence against women, cyber security and migration. A series of regional

issues will also be discussed, such as Afghanistan and Georgia. Other issues on the agenda include election observation and human rights issues affecting the OSCE area such as human trafficking.

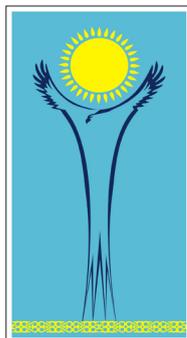
The Annual Session will adopt a final document, called the Astana Declaration, which will include recommendations on these and related issues.

Besides OSCE PA President Goran Lenmarker, the speakers at the session include Nursultan Nazarbayev, President of Kazakhstan; Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, Speaker of the Senate of the Kazakh Parliament; Aslan Mussin, Speaker of the Mazhilis of the Kazakh Parliament; Alexander Stubb, Foreign Minister of Finland, and Chairman-

in-Office of the OSCE; Marc Perrin de Brichambaut, OSCE Secretary General; and Knut Vollebaek, OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities.

Elections will be held for new Assembly officers, including a new President of the Assembly as President Lenmarker has completed the maximum two one-year terms.

The Annual Session will take place at the “Radisson SAS” hotel in Astana. All documents, resolutions and general information on the OSCE PA can be found at www.oscepa.org.



17th Annual Session
ASTANA, 29 June - 03 July 2008

OSCE PA
Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY

OSCE PA to observe re-run elections in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

Vice-President Pia Christmas-Møller will lead a small OSCE PA delegation which will return to the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia to observe the re-run elections to be held on 15 June. Voting is being re-run in a number of polling stations following decisions by the State Election Commission.

On 2 June, Ms. Christmas-Møller, who was appointed by the OSCE Chairman-in-Office as Special Co-ordinator for the OSCE, reported that “Violence and attempts to manipulate the campaign sadly cast a shadow over otherwise well-run elections that gave most voters a real choice between an array of political forces. The violence we noted in the ethnic Albanian areas is an unacceptable breach of peace and peoples’ democratic rights.”

Ms. Christmas-Møller will be accompanied by OSCE PA Presidential Advisor Andreas Baker.



Pia Christmas-Møller at a polling station in Skopje, 1 June

Deadlines Reminder

We kindly remind all Delegations that deadlines are approaching for the Seventeenth Annual Session to be held in Astana, Kazakhstan, from 29 June to 3 July. Please make a note of the following dates:

- **Sunday 15 June** - Deadline for submission of amendments to Draft Resolutions
- **Sunday 22 June** - Deadline for submission of amendments to Supplementary Items