

Preparations begin for 2010 Fall Meetings in Palermo

In order to begin preparations for the Assembly's 2010 Fall Meetings, a team of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly's International Secretariat led by Secretary General Spencer Oliver visited Palermo, Italy from 2 to 4 December.

In Palermo, Secretary General Oliver, Deputy Secretary General Gustavo Pallares, Senior Counsellor Semyon Dzakhayev and Programme Officer Roberto Montella were hosted by the Hon. Riccardo Migliori, Head of the Italian Delegation to the OSCE PA, and the staff of the Italian Chamber of Deputies responsible for the OSCE PA.

During their stay in the Sicilian capital the OSCE PA delegation met with the President of the Regional Assembly of Sicily, Francesco Cascio and the staff of the Regional Assembly. The 2010 Fall Meetings will take place on the premises of Palazzo dei Normanni, site of the Sicilian legislature.

The team also visited various hotels that will host participants, met with the airport authorities and discussed the programme



Francesco Cascio, Riccardo Migliori and Matteo Mecacci at the 2009 Fall Meetings in Athens

and other organizational matters for the Meetings.

Taking place 8-11 October 2010, the Fall Meetings will include a parliamentary conference on issues related to the fight against transnational organized crime and corruption, a meeting of the Standing Committee and the Assembly's Mediterranean Forum.

Kyrgyz political leaders visit Finland and Norway

A group of political leaders from Kyrgyzstan are on a study visit to Finland and Norway this week. The visits are organized by the OSCE Centre in Bishkek and the Delegations of Finland and Norway to the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, in close co-operation with the Foreign Ministries.

The Delegation includes representatives of a wide range of political parties in Kyrgyzstan, including the ruling party – Ak-Jol, and opposition parties, such as – the Social Democratic Party, Ak-Shumkar, Ata Meken and the Green Party, as well as a national NGO – the Parliament of Political Parties, which works to regularly bring together and capacity-build parties in and out of the Kyrgyz Parliament.

In Helsinki, the Delegation met with national parliamentarians in Finland, including the OSCE PA Special Representative for Central Asia, Kimmo Kiljunen. The Kyrgyz politicians met with a wide range of Finnish political parties,

parliamentary administrators and communications staff, election administrators, the ombudsman office, the Foreign Ministry, and observed a plenary session in Parliament.

The Delegation discussed the legislative process in Finland, the role of parliament in foreign relations, the importance of political dialogue, election administration issues, political party development – including funding and organization, coalition building in and out of parliament, transparency and media relations, constituency work and approaches to gender and minority representation in national parliaments.

The Delegation continued to Oslo on 9 December 2009, where they were hosted by the PA's Norwegian Delegation and will have a wide range of meetings in Parliament, as well as with the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities.

OSCE PA Programme Officer Anna Chernova participated in the visit.

President Soares calls for action on climate change

On the eve of the COP15 climate summit taking place in Copenhagen 7-18 December, PA President Joao Soares called on members of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly to take decisive action in reducing carbon emissions.

"We all have to use our influence on our respective Parliaments and show our Governments that we are committed to this issue," he said in a statement posted on the Assembly's website. "Together, the 56 participating States of the OSCE have considerable influence that can positively impact the Copenhagen conference. We have among us some of the main fossil fuel producers and consumers."

The President stated that any agreement "that does not define concrete measures aimed at reducing polluting emissions into the atmosphere and does not involve all States - developed

and emerging economies - has to be considered a failure or even a step backward."

Pointing to possible solutions to climate change, he noted that "it is essential to create more global incentives to reinforce the use of cleaner energy such as biofuels, solar energy and wind and wave power. Nuclear power, for peaceful purposes, also needs to be discussed as an alternative."

Mr. Soares also highlighted the resolutions on climate change and environmental security that have been adopted by the OSCE PA. "These resolutions call for global action, taking into account the various aspects of the problem: political, economic and human dimensions," he said.

The full text of the President's statement is available at www.oscepa.org.