

## Soares pays Presidential visit to Turkey

OSCE PA President Joao Soares held meetings with senior government and parliamentary officials during a three-day visit to Turkey this week. Hosted by the Head of the Turkish delegation to the OSCE PA, Alaattin Buyukkaya, the visit was organized to further enhance ties with the Turkish Parliament. President Soares welcomed the invitation by the Turkish Grand National Assembly (parliament) for the OSCE PA to hold its 2013 Annual Session in Istanbul.

The delegation, which also included Secretary General Spencer Oliver, held meetings in Ankara and Istanbul from 1 to 3 June. In all meetings, Mr. Soares applauded the excellent work being conducted by the Turkish Delegation to the OSCE PA, particularly by Mr. Buyukkaya and by Canan Kalsin, Vice-Chair of the Assembly's First General Committee.

Given recent events in the eastern Mediterranean, discussions focused on relations between Turkey and Israel. President Soares expressed his deep concern for the tragic loss of life, and urged all sides to remain calm and to maintain the traditional good relations between the two countries. Such incidents, he noted, underlined the importance of work by organizations like the OSCE and its Parliamentary Assembly.

The delegation also discussed priorities for the future and foreign relations, in which particular emphasis was placed on the recent process of rapprochement between Armenia and Turkey – President Soares urged continued positive movement in normalizing relations between the two countries.



He underlined the leading role that Turkey can play within the OSCE, and welcomed increasing engagement by Turkey in the Caucasus and Central Asia. The delegation was also briefed on current developments regarding Turkey's energy transit relations.

Mr. Soares and the delegation held a range of meetings, including with the Speaker of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey, Mehmet Ali Sahin; the Minister of National Defence, Vecdi Gonul; the Chairman of the Committee on Foreign Affairs in Parliament, Murat Mercan; Members of the delegation to the OSCE PA; senior representatives of several political parties, and representatives of civil society. President Soares also took the opportunity to meet with his counterpart from the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, President Mevlut Cavusoglu, in Ankara.

The delegation, which is accompanied by Presidential Advisor Andreas Baker, will continue to Turkmenistan.

## Preparations for Oslo Annual Session in the final phase

Preparations for the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly's Nineteenth Annual Session to be held in Oslo from 6 to 10 July, are intensifying, as the various deadlines rapidly approach. Hosted by the Parliament of Norway, the Storting, the Annual Session's theme is "Rule of Law: Combating Transnational Crime and Corruption," and the programme is now nearly final.

Registration will open on the premises of the Oslo Congress Centre at noon on Monday, 5 July. The Standing Committee will meet at 09:00 on Tuesday, 6 April, followed by the Inaugural Plenary Session.

All proceedings of the Session will be streamlined live on the Storting's website, [www.stortinget.no](http://www.stortinget.no).

At the request of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office, Kanat Saudabayev, a special plenary will be held on Thursday, 8 July, where Mr. Saudabayev will address the parliamentarians and answer questions from the floor, as have all previous OSCE Chairpersons-in-Office under established practice. A working



lunch on gender issues will follow, hosted by the Storting. The concluding plenary session is expected to end at 12:30 on Saturday, 10 July, with the elections of the Assembly officers, including a new President of the Assembly.

All participants are asked to register no later than **Friday, 4 June**. In addition, participants should note the following deadlines:

Supplementary Items must be received at the International Secretariat in Copenhagen no later than on **Tuesday, 15 June**.

A compromise draft resolution must be received at the International Secretariat in Copenhagen no later than **Tuesday, 22 June**. Amendments to the three General Committees Draft Resolutions also must be received at the International Secretariat in Copenhagen no later than **Tuesday, 22 June**.

Amendments to supplementary items must be received at the International Secretariat in Copenhagen no later than **Tuesday 29 June**. Draft Resolutions and Supplementary Items will be posted at [www.oscepa.org](http://www.oscepa.org) as they become available.