

News from Copenhagen

Fall Meetings focus on good governance and integration

More than 130 parliamentarians met on 5-7 October in Tirana, Albania for the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly's 2012 Fall Meetings, discussing topics such as good governance and integration, multicultural societies and the economic crisis. Speakers at the Fall Meetings included PA President Riccardo Migliori, Speaker of the Albanian Parliament Jozefina Topalli, OSCE Secretary General Lamberto Zannier, Albanian Prime Minister Sali Berisha and Foreign Minister Edmond Panariti. Meeting on 6 October the Standing Committee of Heads of Delegations heard reports about ongoing Assembly work and adopted an urgent resolution regarding Syria and the violence along the Syria-Turkey border.

President Migliori opened the meetings by speaking of the value of Albania's efforts to strengthen relations between communities of diverse religious backgrounds and the importance of the OSCE taking a more proactive approach to global challenges. In their opening addresses, host officials focused on issues central to freedom, recalling the OSCE's work in promoting progress in South East Europe and urging global co-operation to promote freedom in places like Syria.

Prime Minister Berisha expressed gratitude to the OSCE for its assistance and contributions over the years that saw Albania's economy grow from being among the poorest country in the world to one of the fastest growing in the region. "It is a road full of holes and bumps, but we are more determined than ever to speed up development of my country," he said.

Zannier drew parliamentarians' attention to the developing Helsinki +40 debate on reforming and updating the agenda of the organization and on the preparations for the December Ministerial Council in Dublin.

In sessions on multicultural societies, the financial crisis,



The opening session of the 2012 Fall Meetings on 5 October.

and the media's role in promoting good governance, key speakers at the Fall Meetings included heads of OSCE Missions in the region, international leaders and experts in the fields of finance, media and tolerance.

Meeting in the plenary chamber of the Albanian Parliament, the Standing Committee heard reports from Treasurer Roberto Battelli and OSCE PA Secretary General Spencer Oliver, both of whom reported that the OSCE PA has just completed its fiscal year within its approved budget for the 20th year in a row. The Standing Committee also heard from OSCE Secretary General Lamberto Zannier, as well as OSCE PA Ad Hoc Committees and Special Representatives. Deputy Secretary General Tina Schoen and Special Representative Andreas Nothelle offered reports on recent election observation missions, including critical remarks about the ODIHR's failure to respect the 1997 Co-operation Agreement.

Standing Committee members adopted a resolution calling for all OSCE participating States to strongly condemn the deadly Syrian mortar attack on civilians in the Turkish town of Akcakale.

Migliori and Habsburg Douglas on pre-election visit to Ukraine



Walburga Habsburg Douglas and Riccardo Migliori meet with presidential administration advisor in Kyiv.

OSCE PA Vice-President Walburga Habsburg Douglas, leader of the short-term OSCE observer mission to Ukraine, and PA President Riccardo Migliori are on a preliminary visit to Ukraine this week ahead of the country's 28 October parliamentary elections. Meeting with leadership of parliament, the

OSCE Project Co-ordinator's Office, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Central Election Commission and political parties, the PA delegation has heard a wide range of views on the preparations for the elections and the current campaign environment.

President Migliori said that holding free and fair elections is important as the country assumes the 2013 OSCE Chairmanship. "As the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly noted in a resolution adopted at our Annual Session in Monaco, Ukraine, as Chair of the OSCE next year, has a particular responsibility to provide a positive example with regard to respecting its election-related OSCE commitments," said Migliori.

The delegation's visit is supported by Programme Director Anna Chernova and Director of Presidential Administration Roberto Montella from the International Secretariat.