

News from Copenhagen

Santos addresses Human Dimension Implementation Meeting in Warsaw

Isabel Santos, Chair of the Assembly's Third General Committee, co-introduced the Human Dimension Implementation Meeting's session on the subject of election observation together with ODIHR Director Janez Lenarcic. In her presentation on 1 October, Ms. Santos stressed that parliamentarians, with their detailed and personal knowledge to the electoral processes, bring invaluable insight and experience to election observation missions.

"I know I speak for all 323 of my colleagues from the PA when I say we are all interested in ways in which we can share this knowledge with other OSCE Institutions," she said. Ms. Santos called for increased co-operation between the PA and ODIHR based on the 1997 Co-operation Agreement, which in her view would further strengthen the position of the OSCE as a bearer of democracy. She also called for further co-operation with civil society and media professionals when it comes to promoting democratic elections, during and after missions.

In addition, she called for improving follow-up after elections and reminded participants that the standard by which the OSCE measures the quality of elections is the 1990 Copenhagen Document. Ms. Santos expressed appreciation for the statement by the US delegation which recognized that the OSCE PA contributes a political leadership to raise the profile of the results of election observation missions and make them more accessible. The US considers that the ODIHR and the Parliamentary Assembly serve complementary roles under the leadership of the Special Coordinator.

"It is vital that both institutions maintain an active and open working relationship, including the earliest possible co-ordination when drafting preliminary findings. Additionally, participating States must be consistent in acknowledging that both ODIHR and the OSCE PA contribute to the success of election observation missions. Such joint efforts should be



Isabel Santos delivers remarks at the 2013 HDIM in Warsaw.

collectively referred to as those undertaken by the OSCE, and not separate endeavors," the statement reads.

On 30 September, Deputy Secretary General Tina Schoen moderated a side event entitled "Enhancing Public Trust in Parliaments: The Role of Gender Equality and Parliamentary Ethics."

In keynote speeches, the ODIHR presented its two studies on professional and ethical standards for parliamentarians and structures for women MPs in the OSCE region. Representatives of Transparency International Georgia and the OSCE Mission to Serbia discussed the practical implications and implementation of the recommendations. Participants at the side event discussed parliaments' role in overseeing professional and ethical standards, and enhancing gender equality in elected office. Participants also debated how to promote more gender-sensitive parliaments with respectful and equal treatment of men and women. Participants stressed the importance of developing codes of ethics covering both MPs and parliamentary staff.

On behalf of the International Secretariat, Programme Director Anna Chernova is covering and participating in the two-week HDIM, this week supporting Ms. Santos.

PA to gather in Budva for debates on Syria, transnational threats and human rights

Nearly 200 parliamentarians from 50 countries have registered for the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly's 2013 Fall Meetings, to be held in Budva, Montenegro, on 13-15 October, hosted by the Parliament of Montenegro.

Consisting of a Mediterranean Forum, meetings of the Bureau and Standing Committee, and a parliamentary conference, the Fall Meetings will take place at the Hotel Splendid Conference Center. The Mediterranean Forum, to be held on 13 October, will include a special debate on the situation in Syria. Under the theme "The Mediterranean: A Union of Civilizations," the debate will be moderated by OSCE PA President Ranko Krivokapic, following his opening remarks, and will include the participation of Montenegro's Foreign Minister, Igor Luksic.

On 14 October, President Krivokapic will open the

parliamentary conference on "Addressing Transnational Threats and Protecting Human Rights: The Role of the OSCE," which will include the participation of Alexey Lyzhenkov, Co-ordinator of Activities to Address Transnational Threats at the OSCE Secretariat.

The sessions of the conference will be chaired by OSCE PA Vice-Presidents Alain Neri (MP, France), George Tsereteli (MP, Georgia) and Isabel Pozuelo (MP, Spain). Session three will include an address by the OSCE's new High Commissioner on National Minorities, Astrid Thors.

Since 2002, the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly has held a set of Fall Meetings to enhance inter-parliamentary dialogue on important topics related to OSCE commitments. Previous Fall Meetings have been held in Slovenia, Malta, Spain, Greece, Italy, Canada, Croatia and Albania.