

U.S. Ambassador to OSCE visits Assembly headquarters in Copenhagen



Left to right: Gustavo Pallares, Spencer Oliver and Daniel Baer

U.S. Ambassador to the OSCE Daniel Baer visited OSCE Parliamentary Assembly headquarters in Copenhagen on Monday, where he discussed goals and expectations for the organization in the year ahead.

Meeting with OSCE PA staff, including Secretary General Spencer Oliver, Deputy Secretary General Gustavo Pallares, Senior Counsellor Semyon Dzakhaev and the research and communications teams, Amb. Baer talked about U.S. priorities for the OSCE, the Helsinki +40 process, the outgoing Ukrainian Chairmanship and the incoming Swiss Chairmanship.

Amb. Baer and Secretary General Oliver discussed the origins of the Parliamentary Assembly, which was first proposed by U.S. President George H. W. Bush as one of the four original CSCE Institutions to be established by the Charter of Paris in November of 1990 and was praised in the 1999 Istanbul

Summit document as “one of the most important OSCE institutions continuously providing new ideas and proposals.”

They discussed the fact that the Parliamentary Assembly, as the only OSCE institution which still exists in its original form, has substantially increased its participation in OSCE activities, including the deployment of several thousand parliamentarians as election monitors in partnership with the OSCE/ODIHR. Amb. Baer expressed his personal views and United States policy on a wide range of issues related to the OSCE’s work. He expressed his opinion that the organization would be well served to focus more on substance than on process, which could help to raise its profile.

Amb. Baer assumed his post as U.S. Representative to the OSCE on 10 September 2013. A video of an interview that he gave in conjunction with his visit to Copenhagen is available at www.oscepa.org.

OSCE PA human rights chair Isabel Santos meets with Aleksandr Pavlov

Isabel Santos (Portugal), Chair of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly’s General Committee on Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions, met with Aleksandr Pavlov on 30 December in Madrid and raised concerns over his possible extradition to Kazakhstan.

“I met with Mr. Pavlov today and he is in good health. He denied all accusations leveled against him. I am deeply concerned about the possibility that Mr. Pavlov’s fundamental rights may be violated in order to obtain a ‘confession’ should he be extradited to Kazakhstan. All countries, including Spain, must ensure that extradition does not put an individual at risk of ill-treatment, and that they do not become party to the abuse of Interpol by any country for possible political motives,” Santos said.

Santos had requested to visit Pavlov in custody in Madrid in October, but was denied.

Aleksandr Pavlov formerly served as chief of security to Mukhtar Ablyazov, a Kazakh businessman and prominent opposition figure. He was detained by Spanish authorities in 2012 on an Interpol warrant requested by Kazakhstan, which accuses Pavlov of financial and terrorism-related crimes. Spain has also denied Pavlov’s request for asylum.

On 18 November, the country’s high court approved Pavlov’s extradition. The final decision in the case will be

made by Spain’s Council of Ministers.

Santos added: “I will continue to monitor this case. I will also maintain close contact with my Spanish colleagues, several of whom have also voiced their concerns about Mr. Pavlov’s possible extradition. I remain troubled by setbacks to the rule of law in several OSCE Participating States, as exemplified by this case and others like it.”

Ignacio Sánchez Amor, the Deputy Head of the Spanish Delegation to the OSCE PA, said:

“A group of Spanish MPs from four political groups, including myself, have been in contact with Mr. Pavlov’s lawyers. We have had interviews with high-level governmental officials and we have sent the Ministry of Justice a letter asking that the extradition not take place. We applaud and support the moves of our Portuguese colleague, Isabel Santos, who has shown enormous patience with the Spanish authorities in seeking to visit Mr. Pavlov.”



Isabel Santos