

News from Copenhagen

President Kanerva urges zero impunity for violations in Ukraine



Ilkka Kanerva speaks during his meeting with Ukrainian Parliament Chairman Oleksandr Turchynov.

Speaking at the European Conference of Presidents of Parliament in Oslo last week, OSCE PA President Ilkka Kanerva (MP, Finland) called for a zero impunity policy when OSCE principles are violated in the Ukrainian conflict.

“In recent years we have been reminded that there has been too much democratic backsliding on our continent and in recent months we have witnessed flagrant violations of sovereignty and growing threats to security even right here in Europe,” Kanerva said in his 11 September speech before nearly 60 heads of parliament.

The OSCE PA President went on to call for zero impunity in the face of such violations, pointing to Russia’s actions in the Ukrainian crisis.

In his address, President Kanerva also underscored the continuing importance of co-operation between the OSCE PA and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE), which hosted the event along with the Norwegian Parliament.

The OSCE PA President also held several bilateral meetings on the sidelines of the two-day event, including with Ukrainian Parliament Chairman Oleksandr Turchynov and PACE President Anne Brasseur, as well as with the Speaker and Secretary General of the Danish Parliament, Mogens Lykketoft and Carsten U. Larsen, respectively.

On 11 September, President Kanerva and OSCE PA Secretary General Spencer Oliver met bilaterally with Turchynov for wide-ranging discussions. Topics included the President’s recent visit to Moscow; the status of the ceasefire; the security situation in and around Mariupol, Ukraine; the need to secure Ukraine’s borders; plans for the Interparliamentary Liaison Group; and the OSCE PA’s mission to monitor the country’s parliamentary elections next month.

Kanerva was supported in his visit to Oslo by Programme Officer Maria Chepurina.

Jensen represents OSCE PA at Arctic parliamentary conference in Yukon

Peter Juel Jensen, Head of Denmark’s OSCE PA Delegation, represented the Assembly at the 11th Conference of Parliamentarians of the Arctic Region in Whitehorse, Yukon (Canada) on 9-11 September. Jensen, who participated the conference at the request of President Ilkka Kanerva, attended various sessions, as well as a meeting of the Standing Committee of Parliamentarians of the Arctic Region.

At the close of the conference, the parliamentarians representing Canada, Denmark/Greenland, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Russia, Sweden and the United States of America, in collaboration with the indigenous peoples of the Arctic, adopted a statement noting “the transformative change now occurring in the Arctic driven by the forces of climate

change and globalization resulting in tighter economic and geopolitical links.” The parliamentarians called, *inter alia*, to “support cross-border and trans-border economic and human co-operation in the Arctic” and “support the development of renewable energy suitable for the Arctic region to drastically reduce black carbon emissions.”

The PA’s engagement on Arctic issues dates back to 2005, when more than 80 parliamentarians from across the OSCE region gathered to debate challenges faced by Arctic States at a parliamentary conference in Tromsø, Norway. The Assembly has also adopted a number of resolutions dealing with the security, economic and environmental concerns specific to the Arctic region.

Battelli and Tidei to lead OSCE observers of Bosnia and Herzegovina elections

On the recommendation of OSCE PA President Ilkka Kanerva, OSCE Chairman-in-Office Didier Burkhalter has appointed Roberto Battelli of Slovenia as Special Co-ordinator of the short-term election observation mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina for the 12 October general elections. Battelli, who serves as both PA Treasurer and Special Representative on South East Europe, has observed more than 20 elections across the OSCE area, most recently serving as Special Co-ordinator for the March parliamentary elections in Serbia.

The President has also appointed Marietta Tidei (MP, Italy) to be Head of the OSCE PA Delegation in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Tidei was elected Rapporteur of the Second Committee at the 23rd Annual Session in Baku.

The registration deadline for the election observation mission is 26 September. The mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina is being co-ordinated by Special Representative Amb. Andreas Nothelle, Senior Policy Analyst Francesco Pagani and Operations Officer Iryna Sabashuk.

Since 1993, more than 5,100 OSCE parliamentarians have observed more than 130 different elections.