

News from Copenhagen

OSCE PA

Number 540 Current Information from the OSCE PA International Secretariat

22 October 2014

Harstedt concludes Ukraine pre-election visit, staff members arrive in Kyiv



Staff members from the International Secretariat are arriving in Kyiv this week in preparation for a large delegation of OSCE PA observers of Ukraine's 26 October parliamentary elections. The PA's observation mission

is expected to include more than 80 OSCE parliamentarians from nearly 30 countries, who will deploy across Ukraine for election day observation.

In a preparatory visit last week, OSCE PA Vice-President Kent Harstedt, the OSCE Special Co-ordinator of the short-term OSCE observer mission, visited Kyiv, Kharkiv and Luhansk oblasts.

Supported in the visit by Director of Elections Andreas Baker, Harstedt met senior government officials in Kyiv; the Governor of Kharkiv oblast; the leadership of Ukraine's Central Election Commission; district-level election commission officials; candidates from several political parties; long-term OSCE election observers; OSCE monitors; and other interlocutors between 13 and 17 October.

"I am encouraged to see that Ukraine's authorities are working in earnest, despite the difficult circumstances, to give citizens the chance to vote freely and safely across as much of the country as possible. Having seen the difficult circumstances for voters and election officials in parts of the east of Ukraine, I am impressed by their determination to make this a successful election," Harstedt said.

Harstedt also welcomed efforts to facilitate voting by people displaced as a result of the ongoing violence and expressed the Parliamentary Assembly's willingness to monitor voting by Ukrainian citizens at Ukrainian embassies or consulates abroad on election day.

On 15 October in Kyiv, Harstedt met with Crimean Tatar leader Mustafa Dzhemilev to discuss voting possibilities and the human rights situation for members of the community. The Special Co-ordinator visited Luhansk oblast on 17 October for meetings with local election officials.

Harstedt will lead some 700 short-term OSCE election observers. The OSCE PA's delegation is headed by Assembly Vice-President Doris Barnett (MP, Germany). The Assembly's staff support for the mission includes Deputy Secretary General Gustavo Pallares, PA Special Representative Amb. Andreas Nothelle Ambassador, Director for Political Programmes Roberto Montella, Director of Elections Andreas Baker, Communications Director Richard Solash, Deputy Director of Administration Marc Carillet, and Operations Officer Iryna Sabashuk.

The mission will assess the elections against commitments contained in the OSCE's 1990 Copenhagen Document.



Nothelle participates in Ambassadorial Retreat ahead of Ministerial Council

This week, diplomatic representatives from the participating States and OSCE ambassadors from Vienna held a two-day Ambassadorial Retreat in Langenlois, Austria, in preparation for the 2014 OSCE Ministerial Council. The retreat was structured in two working sessions on 20-21 October in which OSCE PA Special Representative Amb. Andreas Nothelle actively participated, "Crisis in the OSCE area, Opportunity for the OSCE? The Basel Ministerial at a Time of Instability;" and "Not 'Business as Usual': A New Style of Ministerial."

Specific topics of discussion included how best to assist in de-escalating the crisis in and around Ukraine, how to frame a political declaration to promote consensus, and how the Ministerial Council can give new impetus to the Helsinki +40 process. Amb. Nothelle offered the Assembly's views on a number of subjects, including the need to be clear on

the implementation of fundamental OSCE principles by participating States, for real dialogue, and for an effective use of the OSCE's toolbox in the face of the current crisis. In particular, he stressed the importance of strengthening the involvement of the PA, its President and its members in the work of the organization.

Nothelle also reminded participants of the OSCE PA's ongoing Helsinki +40 Project, a series of seminars held in conjunction with several prominent think tanks in Russia, the United States, Sweden and Finland, which is providing independent expert input in the planning for the OSCE's future.

The 2014 Ministerial Council will take place in Basel, Switzerland, on 4-5 December 2014 and will be addressed by OSCE PA President Ilkka Kanerva.