

News from Copenhagen

Harstedt, Kanerva visit OSCE PA headquarters for talks with SG and staff



Kent Harstedt meets with Roberto Montella and staff, 26 January.



Ilkka Kanerva meets with Roberto Montella and staff, 31 January.

Assembly President Emeritus Ilkka Kanerva (MP, Finland) and Vice-President Kent Harstedt (MP, Sweden) have visited the OSCE PA's International Secretariat in Copenhagen over the past week for discussions on recent and upcoming Assembly work.

Vice-President Harstedt was in the office on 26 January, holding talks with Secretary General Roberto Montella and senior staff members. He discussed his recent visit to Minsk to present the OSCE/ODIHR's final report on the 11 September 2016 Belarusian parliamentary elections, during which he served as Special Co-ordinator of the short-term OSCE observers. Briefing Montella on his meetings with President Alexander Lukashenko, election officials, stakeholders, and civil society representatives, Harstedt emphasized the openness of the authorities to engage in dialogue. Harstedt also briefed Montella on a thematic meeting on Belarus which he will be chairing in Vienna on 3 February.

Montella, Harstedt and PA staff also discussed preparations for the upcoming Annual Session to be held in Minsk 5-9 July 2017 under the theme "Enhancing mutual trust and co-operation for peace and prosperity in the OSCE region."

President Emeritus Kanerva visited the Secretariat on 31

January for talks that focused on his recent visit to Moscow following up on the 18 September 2016 parliamentary elections in the Russian Federation. Kanerva, who served as Special Co-ordinator of the short-term OSCE observer mission for the elections, briefed Montella and staff on meetings that he and senior ODIHR representatives held with Russian authorities, civil society, and the international community.

Also discussed during Kanerva's visit to the Secretariat this week was his work as OSCE PA Special Representative on Mediation. In this regard, he noted that he and the OSCE PA Finnish Delegation plan to host a side event at the Winter Meeting later this month in Vienna focused on the human security aspects of conflict mediation.

In both Kanerva's and Harstedt's visits, conversations focused on the preparations for the PA's Winter Meeting and the agendas for the general committee meetings to be held 23-24 February. The First Committee will discuss "Transnational security in the OSCE area: confronting terrorism;" the Second Committee will discuss "Managing natural resources, addressing water security and combating climate change;" and the Third Committee's debate will be held on "Protecting human rights amid growing populism."

OSCE security official visits OSCE PA Secretariat to discuss enhanced co-operation

In a working visit to the International Secretariat, Criostoir Leaney, Head of Security Management at the OSCE, held extensive meetings Wednesday with Bo Hjorth Nielsen, General Services Manager for the OSCE PA, to discuss enhanced co-operation on security matters between the OSCE's executive structures and the Parliamentary Assembly. The sides explored avenues of co-operation to improve, inter alia, modalities for assisting the OSCE PA's staff based in Copenhagen and Vienna.

A meeting that included Secretary General Roberto Montella, Deputy Secretary General Gustavo Pallares, Chief of the Executive Office Andreas Baker, Head of Administration for Election Observation Iryna Sabashuk, and Executive Assistant Anna Di Domenico focused on ways to enhance security support for the OSCE PA. The sides discussed how the PA can benefit from existing OSCE security mechanisms, particularly when conducting field visits and

election observation missions.

Other topics of discussion included matters related to the training of PA staff, the security of PA premises, and the "Saving Lives Together" programme organized by the United Nations in conjunction with other international organizations and NGOs. Last October, Nielsen, who has been designated as the OSCE PA's focal point for security-related matters, participated in the 13th annual meeting of OSCE security officials in Vienna.



Criostoir Leaney meets with Roberto Montella and staff, 1 Feb.