

News from Copenhagen

President Muttonen in Minsk for Annual Session preparation, high-level talks



Christine Muttonen and Vladimir Andreichenko sign the Annual Session agreement in Minsk on 15 March 2017.

OSCE PA President Christine Muttonen began a three-day visit to Belarus on Wednesday, meeting with Chairman of the House of Representatives of the National Assembly Vladimir Andreichenko and signing the official agreement between the Belarusian Parliament and the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly for the 26th Annual Session.

In discussions with Chairman Andreichenko, President Muttonen noted her belief that the upcoming Annual Session will open up new opportunities for developing inter-parliamentary dialogue and expressed appreciation to the Belarusian Parliament for agreeing to host the Annual Session in Minsk.

The Session, taking place at the President Hotel on 5-9 July

2017, is expected to include the participation of some 300 parliamentarians from North America, Europe and Asia. The theme is “Enhancing mutual trust and co-operation for peace and prosperity in the OSCE region.”

In her meeting with Andreichenko, Muttonen stressed that the theme is inclusive and forward-looking, noting that it should resonate well with the people of Belarus and other OSCE countries. Muttonen also noted that Chairman Andreichenko personally leading the Organizing Committee of the Annual Session demonstrates the importance that Belarus attaches to the activities of the Parliamentary Assembly.

She also urged the authorities to show restraint in responding to protests that are taking place across the country and noted the OSCE PA’s expectation that the rights of freedom of peaceful assembly and speech are respected.

Muttonen’s visit continues Thursday with meetings scheduled with President Alexander Lukashenko and Foreign Minister Vladimir Makei. She is accompanied in the Belarusian capital by OSCE PA Secretary General Roberto Montella, Deputy Secretary General Gustavo Pallares, Presidential Advisor Maria Chepurina and advisor Lukas Mussi from the Austrian Parliament.

VP Santos speaks on migration at Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean



Isabel Santos addresses the PAM in Porto, Portugal, on 23 Feb. 2017.

OSCE PA Vice-President Isabel Santos participated in the 11th Plenary Session of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean, held in Porto, Portugal, on 23-24 February, speaking at the panel on “Migration,

Co-operation and Security.” Vice-President Santos focused her remarks on the high level of attention that the OSCE has given to this topic in its agenda.

She stressed however that there is a need for greater political

will to address the current crisis in migration management. “The problems of managing the response to this migratory movement are only a result of the lack of political leadership, vision and courage that can lead us to face together, in an orderly and sustainable way, a problem that no country can clearly face alone,” she said.

In her speech, Santos addressed the importance of co-operation with the Mediterranean countries and the urgency of using the OSCE as a platform that “can and should be intensified in the interaction with other regional organizations, helping to reduce tensions, correct prejudices, and promote co-operation throughout the Euro-Mediterranean region.” Vice-President Santos concluded with an appeal for “the spirit of solidarity and co-operation to prevail among us, leaving no one behind.”

Norwegian staff-level delegation visits OSCE PA International Secretariat

The staff of the Norwegian Parliament’s International Section visited the OSCE PA’s International Secretariat on 10 March for briefings on the work of the Assembly, including a detailed discussion of election observation activities. Some 20 Norwegian staff members participated in the study visit, which included presentations by Secretary General Roberto Montella, Deputy Secretary General Gustavo Pallares, Chief of the Executive Office Andreas Baker, and Head of Administration for Election Observation Iryna Sabashuk.



Roberto Montella addresses group of Norwegians, 10 March.