

News from Copenhagen

Muttonen bids farewell to OSCE PA, conducts final visit to Canada

With a new Austrian Parliament convening this week, Christine Muttonen (Austria) is stepping down as OSCE Parliamentary Assembly President. In a letter to the OSCE PA's Standing Committee on 20 Oct., Muttonen stressed the importance of a smooth presidential transition and wished incoming acting President George Tsereteli (Georgia) success in his service of the PA. Reiterating the priorities of her presidency – including women's empowerment in international politics, the security implications of climate change, the use of culture as a peace-building tool, and closer relations with OSCE Partners for Co-operation – she expressed hope that these themes will continue to provide focus for the PA's work.

"These priorities build on our parliamentary culture of dialogue and offer equal opportunities for all our delegations to tackle together the challenges we face in the OSCE region," she wrote in her farewell letter. Muttonen also thanked PA members for their openness and ongoing commitment to dialogue. "It has been an immense honour to carry your voice



as your President," she said.

Muttonen's final trip as Assembly President was to Canada last week. She met on 2 Nov. in Ottawa with OSCE PA Special Representative on Gender Issues Hedy Fry (Canada) for discussions on the promotion of women's leadership in the OSCE, its Parliamentary Assembly and within national parliaments. Muttonen, Fry and other members of the Canadian Delegation to the OSCE PA also discussed climate change, nuclear disarmament and the importance of active Canadian engagement in the OSCE.

Special Representative on South East Europe Battelli speaks at NATO PA seminar



The OSCE PA's Special Representative on South East Europe, Slovenian parliamentarian Roberto Battelli, is participating in the NATO PA's 96th Rose-Roth Seminar on the Western Balkans taking place 7-9 November in Ljubljana, Slovenia. Battelli spoke Tuesday at the seminar, describing his

latest visit to South East Europe as Special Representative, in which he met with high-level officials in Albania, Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina. He noted that the goal of European Union integration has represented a powerful and effective incentive in advancing progress on numerous fronts, but regretted that in his view, progress has slowed down due to the EU being unable to follow through on its commitment to integrate the region.

He noted that he has recommended to the OSCE PA's Standing Committee that increased attention be paid to the situation and assistance given to the countries of the Western Balkans in order to reverse current negative trends.

PA participates in Ambassadorial Retreat



The Parliamentary Assembly was represented at the OSCE's Ambassadorial Retreat in Eisenstadt, Austria, on 6-7 Nov. by Secretary General Roberto Montella and Special Representative Amb. Andreas Nothelle. The gathering of ambassadors was convened by the Austrian OSCE Chairmanship to prepare for the OSCE Ministerial Council in Vienna next month. In discussions, Montella and Nothelle stressed that to be successful, the Ministerial Council must reaffirm OSCE values and provide for meaningful dialogue.

Visits to the OSCE PA International Secretariat



The upcoming OSCE Ministerial Council, OSCE election observation activities, the role of the PA in the organization and ongoing efforts to strengthen the organization's analytical framework were topics of discussion in two visits to the International Secretariat over the past week. On 2 Nov., OSCE desk officers from the Nordic and Baltic countries' Ministries of Foreign Affairs visited the office and today several Georgian parliamentarians and the country's ambassador to Denmark visited for talks with the Secretary General and staff.