

Tsereteli and Barnett wrap up pre-electoral visit to Ukraine

PA President George Tsereteli (Georgia) and Treasurer Doris Barnett (Germany) visited Kyiv on 26-28 February, meeting with electoral stakeholders, election administrators, and representatives of the international community, civil society and the media ahead of the observation mission to be deployed for the 31 March presidential election.

The OSCE PA delegation, which included Secretary General Roberto Montella, Special Representative Ambassador Andreas Nothelle, and Presidential Advisor Loic Poulain, met with Andriy Parubiy, Speaker of the Verkhovna Rada and Head of the OSCE PA Delegation Artur Gerasymov. They held talks with presidential candidates Yulia Tymoshenko, Yuriy Boyko and parliamentarian Svitlana Zalishchuk representing Anatoliy Grytsenko.

The PA delegation took note of concerns regarding the campaign including allegations of misuse of state resources and vote-buying. Tsereteli and Barnett said that every allegation needs to be fact-based, substantiated and addressed to the appropriate state bodies. They praised the co-operation they have received and encouraged all authorities and stakeholders to send a clear signal that electoral violations will not be tolerated.

“Holding a competitive, peaceful and well-administered presidential election next month is vital to advance the democratic development of Ukraine and promote stability and security in the OSCE region,” said President Tsereteli.

“We look forward to continuing our strong co-operation with the authorities in Ukraine as we prepare to deploy a



robust observation mission for this important election,” said Barnett.

Meetings were also held with Tatyana Slipachuk, Chair of the Central Election Commission; Ambassador Peter Tejler, Head of the ODIHR election observation mission; and Ambassador Henrik Villadsen, OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine. The PA delegation lauded the PCU’s efforts to assist Ukraine in ensuring that the elections are in line with international standards and to advance a broad package of reforms.

President Tsereteli appointed Barnett to lead the OSCE PA’s delegation of observers to the 31 March election and President Emeritus Ilkka Kanerva (Finland) was nominated to serve as Special Co-ordinator. It is expected to be one of the biggest election observation missions the OSCE PA has ever deployed. The PA has previously observed 12 elections in Ukraine.

Moroccan Delegation visits Secretariat



Roberto Montella and Abdelouahid Khouja sign 2019 Autumn Meeting agreement in Copenhagen, 28 February.

Members of the Moroccan Delegation visited the International Secretariat on 28 February for meetings with Secretary General Roberto Montella and staff, and to sign the host agreement for the 2019 Autumn Meeting, being held in Marrakech on 3-6 October. The visit included Head of Delegation Mohamed El Bakkouri, Senator Abdelkrim El Hams, and Secretary General of Morocco’s House of Councilors Abdelouahid Khouja. Also participating were Director of Human Resources and Finance El Assad Zerouali and Secretary of Delegation Hatim El Fethouni.

Swedish election observation seminar



A seminar in Stockholm for members of parliament featured participation of experienced observers from the PA and ODIHR.

At the invitation of the Speaker of the Swedish Parliament, some 80 Members of the Riksdag participated in a special seminar on election observation on 27 February. Speaker Andreas Norlén gave opening remarks at the seminar, which was also addressed by Vice-President Margareta Cederfelt and Head of the PA’s Swedish Delegation Johan Buser, who shared personal experiences from observing elections. Andreas Baker from the Secretariat gave a presentation that provided an overview of election observation by parliamentarians, as well as what a typical observation mission consists of.