

News from Copenhagen

Human rights in focus in Vice-Chair Link's visit to Washington



Vice-Chair Michael Georg Link and Special Representative Ben Cardin in Washington, 6 March 2019.



Michael Georg Link with staff of the U.S. Helsinki Commission in Washington, 4 March 2019.

OSCE PA Third Committee Vice-Chair Michael Georg Link (Germany) visited Washington, DC, last week where he met with Senator Ben Cardin, OSCE PA Special Representative on Anti-Semitism, Racism and Intolerance; Vice-Chair of the OSCE PA Ad Hoc Committee on Countering Terrorism Congressman Richard Hudson; and Helsinki Commission staff.

Discussions centered on the OSCE's work in the human dimension and the threat posed to this work by recalcitrant participating States, preparations for the OSCE PA's July Annual Session in Luxembourg, and issues in U.S-German

and transatlantic relations as a whole.

Link and his interlocutors expressed concern about the rise of the far right in the OSCE region, noting that even rhetoric which most people would consider "crazy" can nevertheless have serious real-world consequences. There was also an exchange of views on election observation and upcoming elections, including in Ukraine, and efforts to improve energy security through diversification of sources.

Potential reforms to the OSCE PA process, such as enhancing debates by including more guest speakers – including from the NGO community – were also discussed.

Election observation, Bureau meeting, ad hoc committee work top spring agenda



The OSCE PA's Bureau meets at the Folketing in Copenhagen every spring.

The OSCE PA's upcoming activities include election observation missions to Ukraine and North Macedonia, the annual Bureau meeting in Copenhagen, and a Leinsweiler seminar scheduled for May. Members of the OSCE PA's Ad Hoc Committee on Migration and the Ad Hoc Committee on Countering Terrorism are also planning activities in

the coming weeks, including a high-level contribution to the annual OSCE-wide Counter-Terrorism Conference in Bratislava, organized by the Slovak OSCE Chairmanship, and a possible migration-themed visit to Brussels.

The leadership of the election observation mission to Ukraine, for the 31 March presidential election, has been appointed. Following a nomination by President George Tsereteli (Georgia), the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office has designated PA President Emeritus Ilkka Kanerva (Finland) to serve as Special Co-ordinator of the OSCE short-term observers. Tsereteli has appointed PA Treasurer Doris Barnett (Germany) as Head of the PA's observation mission.

Tsereteli and Secretary General Roberto Montella will visit Luxembourg in the coming weeks and the President also expects to visit The Hague for meetings with OSCE HCNM Lamberto Zannier and leaders of the Dutch Parliament.

International Secretariat welcomes Stephanie Koltchanov and Guido Almerigogna

Two new staff members have joined the OSCE PA's International Secretariat. Stephanie Koltchanov started last month as the PA's first Junior Professional Officer and Guido Almerigogna started this week as Executive Advisor. Koltchanov, from France, is based at the OSCE PA's Liaison Office in Vienna and Almerigogna, seconded by Italy, is based in Copenhagen.



Roberto Montella, Marco Bonabello, Guido Almerigogna and Stephanie Koltchanov at recent Winter Meeting in Vienna.