

President Lennmarker visits the European Parliament

President Göran Lennmarker met with the President of the European Parliament, Hans-Gert Pöttering and the EP's Election Co-ordination Group - co-chaired by Josep Borrell Fontelles (Spain) and Jacek Saryusz-Wolski (Poland) on 17 April 2007 in Brussels. The Election Co-ordination Group is responsible for the election observation missions conducted by the European Parliament.

The main focus of discussion was the need for political leadership of election observation by parliamentarians.

Members of the Election Co-ordination Group shared their experiences with regard to their co-operation with the Governmental structures of the EU in election observation and highlighted the importance of having long term observations by experts combined with political judgements



Lennmarker with the Head of the EP Election Co-ordination Group, Josep Borrell.

by parliamentarians. President Lennmarker briefed the Group on the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly's perspective on these issues. All interlocutors agreed that political judgement by experienced parliamentarians must play a central role in observation missions. President Pöttering and Members of the Election Co-ordination Group welcomed establishing even closer co-operation between international parliamentary

bodies in election observation. In this regard, the importance of the international community speaking with one unified voice was underlined.

Secretary General Spencer Oliver and Deputy Secretary General Tina Schøn accompanied the President on his visit to Brussels, as did Åsa Ekwall from the Swedish Parliament.

Grossruck and Battelli in Zagreb

OSCE PA Vice President Wolfgang Grossruck (Austria) and the PA's Special Representative on South East Europe, Roberto Battelli (Slovenia) represented the OSCE PA at the Sixth Conference of South East Europe Cooperation Process (SEECP) Speakers of Parliament on "New South East Europe; Role of the Parliaments", which took place in Zagreb, Croatia, on April 15 and 16, 2007.

In his statement, Mr. Battelli congratulated and thanked the Croatian Chairmanship of the SEECP for their "admirable" work. "The guidance of the Chairmanship in instituting the necessary architecture for co-operation, namely the creation of the basic elements for a Regional Co-operation Council and a Secretary General of the Council, was especially useful. The recognition of the SEECP's role by NATO and the EU is testament to its success," Mr. Battelli said.

He also once again drew the attention of the participating Speakers and Presidents of Parliament to the upcoming events organized by the OSCE PA in the framework of its chairmanship of the Parliamentary Troika of the Stability Pact.

The future of regional cooperation in South East Europe after the handing over of the Stability Pact to the countries of the region at the end of this year was widely discussed.

The delegation was accompanied by Ambassador Andreas Nothelle from OSCE PA's Vienna Liaison Office and by the Secretary of the Austrian PA Delegation, Lukas Mussi.

Tingsgaard on Pre-Election Visit in Armenia

Vice-President Tone Tingsgaard (Sweden) traveled to Yerevan from 12-13 April 2007 as a part of her leadership of the OSCE PA election observation mission to the 12 May elections in Armenia. The visit was intended to gain an overview of the ongoing electoral campaign and the preparations for the upcoming elections.

The visit was closely co-ordinated with a delegation from the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly, and parts of the programme were conducted jointly. Ms. Tingsgaard met with the President of Armenia, Robert Kocharian; the Speaker of the National Assembly, Tigran Torosyan; the Chairman of the Central Election Commission, Garegin Azaryan; representatives of a wide range of political parties; the OSCE/ODIHR long-term observation mission; and other observer groups.

Ms. Tingsgaard was accompanied by Deputy Secretary General Tina Schøn and Press Officer Andreas Baker.



The Chairman of the CEC demonstrated voting procedures to Vice-President Tingsgaard