

“Remaining challenges,” says OSCE Special Co-ordinator during OSCE PA’s pre-election visit to Moldova



Special Co-ordinator Petros Efthymiou and Ambassador Philip Remler, Head of the OSCE Mission to Moldova, at a press conference in Chisinau

Greek parliamentarian Petros Efthymiou said during a visit to Chisinau from 15-17 March 2009 to prepare for the Assembly’s election observation mission that he sees “some remaining challenges” in the run-up to the 5 April parliamentary elections in Moldova.

Mr. Efthymiou, chairman of the OSCE PA General Committee on Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and Environment and head of the OSCE PA observer mission, has also been appointed by the OSCE Chair-in-Office as the Special Co-ordinator to lead the OSCE short-term observers and deliver the post-election statement on behalf of the OSCE at a press conference in Chisinau on 6 April. The Assembly’s pre-election delegation included Canan Kalsin and Pawel Kowal from the Turkish and Polish parliaments, respectively.

Having started preparations in January, including a visit by OSCE PA President Joao Soares, the OSCE PA will deploy an election observation mission composed of 76 observers including more than 50 Members of Parliament.

The OSCE PA delegation stressed that the upcoming elections will be an important test for democracy in Moldova. Mr. Efthymiou noted the considerable pluralism in the political landscape of Moldova and reiterated the call made by Mr.

Soares last month to ensure that these upcoming elections are conducted in a democratic manner in accordance with OSCE commitments for free and fair elections.

“I also see some remaining challenges during the electoral campaign such as allegations of pressure or intimidation and the accuracy of the voter register,” noted Mr. Efthymiou. “I would like to emphasize that in accordance with OSCE commitments for democratic elections, broadcast media needs to be objective and provide equal and fair coverage to all contestants in the elections.”

During the visit, the delegation met the Speaker of Parliament, Minister of Interior, Minister of Justice, Chairman of the Central Election Commission, leaders of political parties participating in these elections, and representatives of civil society. It also met with the OSCE Mission to Moldova and the OSCE ODIHR Election Observation Mission’s Core Team and long-term observers in Chisinau.

The delegation was accompanied by OSCE PA Deputy Secretary General Tina Schoen and Programme Officer Anna Chernova, from the International Secretariat, and by the Secretary of the Greek Delegation to the OSCE PA, Chara Papazouidi.

OSCE Chair-in-Office appoints three OSCE Special Co-ordinators to upcoming elections

The OSCE Chair-in-Office, Greece’s Foreign Minister Dora Bakoyannis, has appointed three OSCE Special Co-ordinators to lead the OSCE short-term observers of upcoming elections in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM), Montenegro and Moldova.

The three are Danish parliamentarian Pia Christmas-Moeller (FYROM), Slovene MP Roberto Battelli (Montenegro), and Petros Efthymiou from Greece (Moldova).

The three parliamentarians, who will lead the OSCE PA observation missions to FYROM on 22 March, Montenegro on 29 March and Moldova on 5 April, are experienced election observers. In their capacity as Special Co-ordinators,

they will take overall political responsibility of the short-term OSCE mission and deliver the preliminary post-election statement on behalf of the OSCE at a press conference on the day after each election. They will also work closely with the OSCE ODIHR On-site Co-ordinator in accordance with the 1997 Co-operation Agreement.

Ms. Christmas-Moeller is a Vice-President of the Parliamentary Assembly and she led its observations missions to the last two elections in FYROM. Mr. Battelli is the Assembly’s Special Representative on South Eastern Europe, and Mr. Efthymiou is Chairman of the Assembly’s Second Committee.