

## OSCE PA and PACE Presidents meet in Madrid



Joao Soares

OSCE PA President Joao Soares met on 15 April in Madrid with the President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) Mr. Lluís M. De Puig. The meeting took place in the premises of the Senate of Spain of which Mr. De Puig is a Member.

The meeting was also attended by Mateo Sorinas, Secretary General of the

PACE, Gustavo Pallares, Deputy Secretary General of the OSCE PA and Nuno Paixao, Advisor to the President in the Portuguese Parliament and Secretary of the Portuguese Delegation to the OSCE PA. Discussions focused on the co-operation between the two parliamentary assemblies mainly in the field of election observation. Both Presidents agreed on the essential role and legitimacy that parliamentarians bring to election observation and the assessment of electoral processes based on their unique experience.

Mr. Soares and Mr. De Puig agreed on the need to improve

election observation missions including the need to enhance cooperation among the different parliamentary assemblies in order to produce a comprehensive and balanced statement. The international community, it was stressed, should speak with one voice for the benefit of the countries in transition.

Both Presidents expressed their concern with problems encountered in co-operation with ODIHR in the field, especially as ODIHR seems reluctant to take into consideration the views and judgment of parliamentarians.

Presidents De Puig and Soares also discussed the important role that parliamentarians play in both the Council of Europe and the OSCE. Again the need to improve relations between the parliamentary and governmental branches of both international organizations was underlined.

In Madrid, President Soares also met the Head of the Spanish Delegation to the OSCE PA Ms. Isabel Pozuelo.



Lluís M. De Puig

## OSCE parliamentarians meet on labor migration in Tajikistan

A regional parliamentary seminar on labor migration took place 16 April in Tajikistan's capital Dushanbe. The seminar was jointly organized by the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and the Parliament of Tajikistan with the support of the OSCE Office in Tajikistan.

Legislators from several OSCE States participated, including Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Finland, Norway, Poland, France and Germany. Participants discussed regional labor migration issues, with particular attention paid to the effects of migration on the region in the context of the current financial crisis.

Managing labor migration on a regional level was

discussed, as well as aspects of trafficking in human beings. The seminar touched on legislative reforms, regional frameworks and policies of host countries. Special emphasis was placed on the protection of workers' rights.

The OSCE Special Representative for Central Asia, Mr. Kimmo Kiljunen, Vice-President of the OSCE PA and Member of the Finnish Parliament, facilitated the meeting along with Ms. Shojoat Hasanov, Deputy Chairperson of the Parliament of Tajikistan.

Speakers included representatives of leading international organizations on the subject, including the International Organization for Migration, as well as relevant state authorities and experts, such as the Migration Services of the Russian Federation and Tajikistan.

The OSCE PA strongly encourages the participation of Central Asian parliaments in OSCE activities. Mr. Kiljunen was appointed OSCE PA Special Representative for Central Asia in 2007 to facilitate and encourage interaction between parliamentarians from this region and their counterparts from across the OSCE area.

A series of regional seminars were envisaged to facilitate this dialogue. In 2007, together with the Nordic Council, the OSCE PA organized a seminar with Central Asian parliamentarians to discuss energy and the environment, which was hosted by the Norwegian Parliament in Oslo.

### OSCE PA Bureau to meet in Lisbon

The 2009 Spring Bureau Meeting will this year take place in Portugal, the home country of President Joao Soares, following his special invitation.

The 19-20 April Meeting is hosted by the Parliament of Portugal and will be addressed by the Speaker of the Parliament, Jaime Gama.

Members of the Bureau, Heads of Delegation, Special Representatives, Heads of Working Groups and Members of the Sub-Committee on Rules of Procedure will all be participating.