

Parliamentary Team supports OSCE work in Moldova

The OSCE PA's Parliamentary Team on Moldova expressed hope for greater co-operation between Chisinau and Tiraspol today upon concluding a three-day visit to the country.

The delegation led by Walburga Habsburg Douglas (Sweden) visited Chisinau and Tiraspol 6-8 March 2011 for meetings with Speaker of Parliament and Acting President Marian Lupu, Prime Minister Vlad Filat, Minister of Foreign Affairs and European Integration Iurie Leanca, the Delegation of Moldova to the OSCE PA, negotiators on both sides of the Nistru river, representatives of the Supreme Soviet in Tiraspol as well as key members of the international community.

In their meetings, the team expressed hope for co-operation with representatives from Chisinau and Tiraspol through the OSCE's parliamentary dimension and explored ways to add to the OSCE Mission's work to build trust between all parties in the country.

"We are here in solidarity with our parliamentary colleagues, and to lend support to the important work done by the OSCE Mission to Moldova," Ms. Habsburg Douglas said. "We have enjoyed fruitful discussions in Chisinau and Tiraspol. We look forward to discussing the situation in Moldova at our annual session this summer in Belgrade as well as possibly hosting a separate event to build contacts between the parliament of Moldova and the Transnistrian Supreme Soviet."

Members of the Parliamentary Assembly delegation



Ambassador Philip Remler, Canan Kalsin, Walburga Habsburg Douglas, Francois-Xavier De Donnea and Alf Dubs listen to interlocutors in Chisinau

included Mr. Francois-Xavier de Donnea (Belgium), Ms. Canan Kalsin (Turkey) and Mr. Alf Dubs (UK). The OSCE Mission to Moldova coordinated the visit in cooperation with the parliament of Moldova.

"The engagement of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly is a great opportunity for opening channels of communication and building confidence between the sides," said Ambassador Philip N. Remler, Head of the OSCE Mission to Moldova. "Ms. Habsburg Douglas has come forward with new initiatives that have interested both sides, and we will follow up."

Established in 2000, the mandate of the Parliamentary Team on Moldova calls for promoting peace, stability and the rule of law in Moldova, while affirming the unity of the state and promoting dialogue between parties and organizations representing different sections of the Moldovan population. The OSCE PA's delegation was accompanied by Programme Officer Anna Chernova.

Danish Parliament debates OSCE, Ambassador visits Secretariat

The Danish Parliament – the Folketing – held its annual debate on the OSCE last week, with participation of Minister for Foreign Affairs Lene Espersen. As background for the lengthy debate, the Foreign Ministry had prepared a report on OSCE activities in 2010, focusing primarily on the results of the Astana Summit, the Danish initiative to update the Vienna Document, election observation and recent developments in Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Belarus.

The report expressed appreciation for the work done by Members of Parliament, particularly in election observation, and emphasized the Danish Government's position that there is a need to strengthen co-operation between the OSCE PA and the governmental structures of the OSCE.

In the response delivered on behalf of the Head of the Danish Delegation to the OSCE PA, Peter Juel Jensen, focus was put on the Astana Summit, the role of the field missions and election observation. He stressed the need to ensure that the ODIHR lives up to the 1997 Co-operation Agreement including sharing of information. PA Vice-President Pia Christmas Moeller shared her experience from her visits to

Central Asia and asked the Minister for more regular meetings with the OSCE PA Delegation in order to better exchange information and views, to which the Minister agreed.

Both Ms. Christmas-Moeller and Mr. Jensen's reports asked that the Danish Government push the OSCE Chairmanship to apply a transparent competitive process for the selection of the next Director of ODIHR. MP Jens Christian Lund highlighted election observation as one of the most important aspects of the OSCE's work and emphasized that the co-operation problems between the OSCE PA and ODIHR go against the spirit of the OSCE, adding that ODIHR should share information with the PA in a transparent way.

Deputy Secretary General Tina Schoen and Presidential Advisor Andreas Baker attended the debate.

The following day, 4 March, the Danish Ambassador to the OSCE, John Bernhard, visited the International Secretariat in Copenhagen where he met with Secretary General Spencer Oliver and staff. He provided a briefing on the work and priorities in the Permanent Council and discussed the strengths and weaknesses of the OSCE.