

News from Copenhagen

De Donnea and Mecacci to lead election observation missions to Armenia, Serbia



The OSCE Chairperson-in-Office, Irish Deputy Prime Minister Eamon Gilmore, has appointed François-Xavier De Donnea of Belgium and Matteo Mecacci of Italy to serve as special co-ordinators to lead the OSCE election observation missions to the 6 May elections in Armenia and Serbia, respectively.

In accordance with the 1997 Co-operation Agreement, De Donnea and Mecacci will deliver the post-election statements on behalf of the OSCE at news conferences in Yerevan and Belgrade on 7 May.

A former Belgian Minister of Defence, De Donnea serves as head of the Belgian delegation to the OSCE PA, and is a member of the OSCE PA's Parliamentary Team on Moldova and the Ad Hoc Committee on Transparency and Accountability in the OSCE. He wrote a special report on election

observation for the Belgian OSCE Chairmanship in 2006 and has participated in several election observation missions over the years. In January 2010, he served as deputy head of the OSCE PA's election observation mission to the Ukrainian presidential election.

Mecacci serves as chair of the OSCE PA's General Committee on Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions, having previously served as the committee's rapporteur. He has participated in 11 OSCE election observation missions, most recently to the 4 March presidential election in the Russian Federation. He served as deputy head of the election observation mission to the presidential election in Kazakhstan last April.

Since 1993, the PA has deployed more than 4,000 parliamentarians to observe 113 elections across the OSCE area.

2012 Fall Meetings to be held in Tirana, Albania

At the invitation of the Speaker of the Albanian Parliament, Josefina Topalli, the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly will hold its 2012 Fall Meetings in Tirana, Albania from **Friday 28 to Sunday 30 September**.

On behalf of the Assembly, President Petros Efthymiou has accepted the invitation of the Albanian Parliament, reiterating the great interest and commitment of Albania to the work and activities of the OSCE PA. In her letter of invitation Speaker Topalli highlighted the fact that the 2012 OSCE PA Fall Meetings will coincide with the 100th anniversary of the independent Albanian State.

Previous Fall Meetings have been held in Rome, Rhodes, Sveti-Stefan, Valetta, Portoroz, Toronto, Athens, Palermo and Dubrovnik.

More detailed information about this year's Fall Meetings, including the topical theme of the parliamentary conference, the draft agenda and registration information, will be circulated to all delegations well in advance of the Monaco Annual Session in July.

New video showcases 20 years of OSCE PA

Ahead of the 20th anniversary of the first major meeting of the OSCE PA, the Assembly last week unveiled a web video highlighting its work to strengthen commitments on human rights, energy, environmental and security commitments through parliamentary dialogue and democratic action.

From the Assembly's ongoing work to uphold fundamental freedoms to its declarations that have resulted in creation of such key OSCE positions as the Representative on Freedom of Media, the video provides a concise overview of Assembly functions and accomplishments since 1992.

"Whether it is leading an election observation or hosting a meeting with hundreds of parliamentarians, the Assembly has played a critical role in keeping the spirit of the Helsinki Final Act alive in parliaments throughout the region," said Secretary General Spencer Oliver. "With a generation of new elected officials now leading countries across our region, it's critical that we use new media tools to communicate."

Watch the video at www.oscepa.org, or at the Assembly's YouTube channel: www.youtube.com/oscepa.