

# News from Copenhagen

OSCE PA

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## In Turkey, Kanerva and Santos visit refugee camp near Syria border



Ilkka Kanerva, centre, speaks to the press at the Harran Refugee Camp.

OSCE PA President Ilkka Kanerva (Finland), Third Committee Chair Isabel Santos (Portugal) and Secretary General Spencer Oliver have been on a visit to Turkey this week, visiting a refugee camp in Harran, near the country's border with Syria, to observe conditions and raise awareness of the worsening human toll of the Syrian crisis.

At the Harran camp, which currently houses 14,500 Syrian refugees, the delegation was briefed by camp administrators, spoke to refugees, and visited a social centre where refugees learn skills and trades, including rug-making and computer training. The delegation examined the housing, medical and educational facilities in the camp, and met with local NGO representatives working on the refugee issue.

Santos and Kanerva stressed the importance that the Parliamentary Assembly attaches to increasing the commitment and co-operation of the international community toward

addressing the Syrian refugee crisis. While commending the work of the Turkish authorities on the national, regional and local levels, the OSCE PA delegation also recognized the need for further international assistance to share Turkey's burden.

On the invitation of PA Vice-President Emin Onen, Santos met in Ankara on Tuesday with Ayhan Sefer Ustun, Chair of the Human Rights Examination Commission of Turkey's Grand National Assembly, and Deputy Prime Minister Numan Kurtulmus, who is in charge of the refugee programme in the country. On Wednesday Santos and Oliver were joined by President Kanerva along with Onen and Third Committee Vice-Chair Mehmet Sevki Kulkuloglu for additional meetings and briefings in Sanliurfa and the Harran Refugee Camp, including by senior regional and local officials.

In meetings, the PA delegation heard details from interlocutors on the Turkish efforts to care for the refugees including by providing for their housing, education and safety. The delegation was briefed on the significant financial commitment that Turkey has made toward meeting the humanitarian challenges of the civil war in Syria. Since 2011, the Turkish government has spent approximately 5 billion euros and currently hosts 1.6 million refugees, the PA delegation was told.

The PA's visit to Turkey was supported by Director of Presidential Administration Roberto Montella.

## Oliver holds high-level meetings in Georgia, prepares for 2016 Annual Session

On 17-19 January, OSCE PA Secretary General Spencer Oliver met with a range of high-ranking government and parliamentary officials in Tbilisi. In discussions with Georgian Prime Minister Irakli Garibashvili, President Giorgi Margvelashvili, Minister of Foreign Affairs Tamar Beruchashvili, and Parliament Chairperson David Usupashvili, topics included the economy and the territorial integrity of Georgia, as well as prospects for enhanced co-operation between Georgia and the Parliamentary Assembly.

The sides discussed plans for Georgia's hosting of the PA's 2016 Annual Session and toured the site where the meeting will be held, with Oliver expressing satisfaction with the facilities and appreciation for Georgia's contribution to the Assembly's work.

The OSCE PA Secretary General also met with First Deputy

Minister of Foreign Affairs David Dondua, PA Vice-President George Tsereteli, Acting Head of the Georgian Delegation to the OSCE PA Victor Dolidze, Georgian MP Zurab Abashidze, Chair of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Georgian Parliament Tedo Japaridze, and First Deputy Chair of the Georgian Parliament Manana Kobakhidze.

Oliver was accompanied on the visit by Director of Presidential Administration Roberto Montella.



Prime Minister Irakli Garibashvili and Secretary General Spencer Oliver

## PA participates in opening of OSCE Chairmanship in Vienna

After attending OSCE Chairperson-in-Office Ivica Dacic's opening address, OSCE PA officials participated in discussions and working group sessions that took place at OSCE headquarters on 15-16 January. The PA was represented by Secretary General Spencer Oliver, Deputy Secretary General Gustavo Pallares, Special Representative Andreas Nothelle,

Director of Presidential Administration Roberto Montella, Senior Policy Analyst Francesco Pagani, Deputy Director of Administration Marc Carillet, and Programme Officer Maria Chepurina. The PA team discussed various aspects of their work with representatives of the Serbian Chairmanship, the OSCE Secretariat, field missions, and OSCE Institutions.