

Roberto Montella begins new five-year term as OSCE PA Secretary General



Roberto Montella, Isabel Santos, Margareta Kiener Nellen and Michael Georg Link in Berlin, 10 July 2018

OSCE PA Secretary General Roberto Montella started a second five-year term at the beginning of the year, following his re-election by the Assembly's Standing Committee at the 2019 Luxembourg Annual Session. In a letter to all 323 members of the OSCE PA, he expressed gratitude for their trust and support, and offered an assessment of where the Assembly stands since he first took over as Secretary General five years ago.

Highlighting a number of important developments that have directly affected the work of the OSCE and the PA, Montella pointed out that the Assembly has striven to be proactive and effective in its responses. "We have always tried to react promptly trying to ask ourselves some fundamental questions

such as 'how should we react?', 'how can we contribute?', in each of these challenging circumstances, and 'where is the specific added value of parliamentarians and of the Parliamentary Assembly representing more than one billion people?', Montella wrote.

In this regard, he pointed to initiatives undertaken to adapt the Assembly's work through ad hoc committees and targeted activities, and to establish better relations with the OSCE's government representatives in Vienna and its executive structures. "With regular co-ordination at all levels on programmatic activities, positions and statements, truly providing a distinct parliamentary added value in the framework of the wider 'OSCE family' product," Montella said, "we made the Parliamentary Assembly a politically lively and dynamic body, always engaged."

The Secretary General holds general responsibility for managing the affairs of the OSCE PA; implementing the decisions of the Bureau, the Standing Committee and the Assembly; and overseeing the Secretariat's offices in Copenhagen and Vienna. Along with the Treasurer, he is responsible for the management of the Assembly's financial resources. The Secretary General's mandate is for five years and may be renewed twice.

Year-end video highlights OSCE PA activities in 2020

2020's challenges didn't stop OSCE PA members from remaining engaged in parliamentary diplomacy while exploring new ways of working, communicating and connecting. Watch a video wrapping up the work of the Assembly throughout the year: <https://youtu.be/2OweFN97iV0>

OSCE PA observers to deploy for elections in Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan

Nearly 50 election observers from the OSCE PA are traveling to Kyrgyzstan this week for the presidential vote on Sunday. The OSCE PA observers will deploy for election day in the capital, Bishkek, and in the surrounding area, and will work closely with the long-term observers from the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights.

Peter Juel-Jensen (Denmark) has been appointed Special Co-ordinator to lead the short-term OSCE observer mission and deliver the statement of preliminary findings and conclusions, which is planned for a press conference in Bishkek on 11 January. The OSCE PA observers are led by Head of Delegation Reinhold Lopatka (Austria).

The OSCE PA will deploy seven parliamentarians and staff from five countries to observe the parliamentary elections in Kazakhstan this Sunday. The PA's observer team will focus its efforts in the capital, Nur-Sultan, and will work closely



with long-term observers deployed by the OSCE/ODIHR. Altogether, the OSCE will have some 30 observers in the country.

Kristian Vigenin (Bulgaria) has been appointed Special Co-ordinator to lead the short-term OSCE observers and deliver the statement of preliminary findings and conclusions, which will take place at a press conference in Nur-Sultan on 11 January.

Outgoing OSCE Chair Rama signs the PA's OSCE Call for Action

As the 2020 OSCE Chairmanship came to a close last week, the Chair for the year, Albanian Prime Minister Edi Rama, signed the PA's "OSCE Call for Action." In doing so, Rama joined his predecessors as well as other leaders of OSCE institutions, former Secretaries General and OSCE PA Presidents in calling for streamlining and refocusing OSCE activities to confront key challenges in fields where the Organization has deep expertise and a comparative advantage.

"In this final act of the Albanian Chairmanship, we add our

voice to those who have signed this call to help ensure that the OSCE remains strong and in a position to foster comprehensive and co-operative security," said Prime Minister Rama.

OSCE PA President Peter Lord Bowness, High-Level Expert Lamberto Zannier, and Secretary General Roberto Montella welcomed Rama's signature. "To realize our shared vision declared over 45 years ago in the Helsinki Final Act, we must all work together to ensure that our commitments are fully implemented," said President Bowness.