

News from Copenhagen

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Current Information from the OSCE PA International Secretariat

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Seventh OSCE Prize for Journalism and Democracy goes to Friedrich Orter and Pavel Sheremet

During its meeting in Copenhagen 18-19 April 2002 the Bureau decided to share the 7th OSCE Prize for Journalism and Democracy between Austrian journalist Friedrich Orter and Belarusian journalist Pavel Sheremet.

Dr. Friedrich Orter, was commended for promoting OSCE Principles on human rights and democracy through his comprehensive and impartial reporting in the Balkans and lately in Afghanistan. Mr. Pavel Sheremet was praised for demonstrating admirable courage in his independent and reliable reporting on the lack of free expression in Belarus and on violations of human rights, including disappearances of opposition politicians and journalists.

The prize will be presented on the opening day of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly's 11th Annual Session in Berlin, 6-10 July 2002.

The Expanded Bureau Meeting also discussed draft

reports and resolutions for the three General Committees and heard reports on the ongoing preparations for the 11th Annual Session in Berlin. The Expanded Bureau was also addressed by the OSCE Chairmanship Co-ordinator, Ambassador Rosa La who outlined the priorities of the Portuguese OSCE Chairmanship and Special Representative of the Chairman-in-Office, Jan Trøjborg, who elaborated on OSCE's role in the international fight against terrorism. The Expanded Bureau heard activity reports from the President, the Treasurer and the Secretary General. Furthermore Mrs.

Isabel Tocino reported on the preparations for the Parliamentary Conference to be held in Madrid from 2-4 October 2002, whilst Vice-Presidents Bruce George and Rita Süsmuth reported on the monitoring of the Elections in Ukraine and on the activities of the Ad Hoc Committee on Transparency and Accountability in the OSCE respectively.



The winners of the 7th OSCE Prize for Journalism and Democracy
Mr. Pavel Sheremet (Left) and Dr. Friedrich Orter.

Parliamentary Field Visit to Uzbekistan

From 10-12 April, eleven Members of the Assembly took part in a three-day visit to the OSCE Centre in Tashkent. This was the third visit of a new initiative of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly to visit OSCE field presences in order to better understand the work of the OSCE and to determine ways in which the Assembly can better contribute to the work of the OSCE in the field. In December last year, nine Members of the Assembly visited the Missions to Latvia and Estonia and then in January, 10 Members visited the Office of the OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine.

The Delegation to Tashkent was headed by Ms. Elisabeth Meijer (Netherlands) and included Ms. Eleni Theocharous (Cyprus), Mr. Petr Sulak (Czech Republic), Mr. Jiri Karas (Czech Republic), Mr. Tjit Käbin (Estonia), Mr. Mart Nutt (Estonia), Mr. Jean-Pierre Kucheida (France), Mr. Giovanni Kessler (Italy), Mr. Zbigniew Kulak (Poland), Mr. Piotr Krzywicki (Poland), and Mr. Vasalie Mois (Romania). The Delegation was accompanied by Mr. Paul LeGendre, Programme Officer at the International Secretariat.

In Tashkent on 10-11 April, the Delegation was first briefed by the Head of the OSCE Centre in Tashkent Ambassador Gantcho Gantchev and had meetings with the Deputy Foreign Minister, Mr. Sadik Safaev Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Oliy Majlis (Parliament), Mr. Erkin Vakhidov, as well as representatives of NGOs and media outlets. In light of the parliamentary reform taking place in the country, the Delegation also met with Members of the Oliy Majlis, including committee chairs, to exchange views on parliamentary practices.

The Delegation also travelled to Samarkand on 12 April where the Members met with the Deputy Mayor of Samarkand as well as representatives of local NGOs.

President Severin Visits Germany

On 17 April 2002, President Severin visited Germany. During his stay Mr. Severin held meetings with the President of the Bundestag, Mr. Wolfgang Thierse and with the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Joschka Fischer. Mr. Severin also met with members of the German Delegation to the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly. Mr. Severin's talks in Berlin focused on recent developments in the OSCE and on the ongoing preparations for the Eleventh OSCE PA Annual Session to be held in Berlin from 6-10 July 2001. Mr. Severin was accompanied by Secretary General Spencer Oliver.

Secretariat visit to Rotterdam

From 10-11 April 2002, Secretary General Spencer Oliver, Deputy Secretary General Vitaly Evseyev and Councillor Jan Jooren visited Rotterdam to prepare for the 2003 Annual Session. The visit included meetings with the Head of the Dutch Delegation Mrs. Geertje Lycklama à Nijeholt, the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities, Mr. Rolf Ekeus and the Co-ordinator of the upcoming Dutch OSCE Chairmanship, Ambassador Daan Everts.