

## Heath: Real progress in BiH elections

Delivering the conclusions of the International Election Observation Mission to the 1 October general elections held in Bosnia and Herzegovina, David Heath (United Kingdom) announced that the elections were generally administered in line with international standards and represented further progress in the consolidation of democracy and the rule of law.

Appointed Special-Co-ordinator for the short-term observation mission, Heath said that "Real progress toward democracy in Bosnia and Herzegovina was made" and he congratulated "the country and its people for conducting a fair electoral process in which representatives could be freely chosen". These were the first elections since the Dayton Peace Agreement to be fully administered by BiH authorities.

In addition to leading the OSCE short-term observation mission, Heath led the delegation of some 40 parliamentarians from the OSCE PA. The OSCE PA delegation, which also included Vice-President João Soares (Portugal), Special Representative Roberto Battelli (Slovenia), Third Committee Rapporteur Jesús López-Medel (Spain), and former Vice-President Nevzat Yalcintas (Turkey), worked in close co-operation with the OSCE/ODIHR and the delegation from the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe.



From the International Secretariat, the OSCE PA Delegation was accompanied by Secretary General Spencer Oliver, Deputy Secretary General Tina Schøn, Ambassador Andreas Nothelle, Programme Officer Anna Chernova and Press Officer Andreas Baker.

## Lenmarker meets with incoming Chairman-in-Office

On 29 September President Göran Lenmarker paid a visit to Madrid, Spain. Spain will hold the Chairmanship of the OSCE in 2007. During his stay Lenmarker and Secretary General Spencer Oliver met with the Spanish Delegation to the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, headed by Isabel Pozuelo. During this meeting in the Spanish Parliament Mr. Lenmarker discussed with the Spanish parliamentarians current activities and issues pertaining to the Assembly including the upcoming Fall Meetings in Malta and election observation missions.

In the afternoon President Lenmarker and Secretary General Oliver, who were joined by Vice-President João Soares (Portugal) and the Chair of the Ad Hoc Committee on Transparency and Accountability in the OSCE, Solomon Passy (Bulgaria), met with Spanish Foreign Minister Miguel Angel Moratinos. The incoming Chairman-in-Office informed the Members about the priorities for the Spanish Chairmanship of the OSCE. President Lenmarker informed the Minister about the activities, aims, and objectives of the Assembly and assured that the Assembly is ready and willing to support the Spanish Chairmanship during 2007. The issues of migration and the situation of the Middle East that the Assembly will be discussing in Malta coincide with some of the priorities the Spanish Chairmanship will address next year.

At the invitation of the Ambassador of Sweden in Madrid, the PA Delegation also met with officials from the Spanish Foreign Ministry, led by Ambassador López Jorrín, who will form the OSCE Chairmanship team in Madrid.

In Madrid, the PA Delegation was accompanied by Åsa Ekwall from the Swedish Parliament and Gustavo Pallarés from the Assembly's Secretariat.

## Vice-President Haering appointed to lead short term OSCE observation mission in Latvia

Barbara Haering, President of the Defence Committee in the Swiss Parliament and Vice-President of the OSCE PA, has been appointed to lead the short term OSCE observation mission to the parliamentary elections in Latvia on 7 October. Haering was appointed Special Co-ordinator for the mission today by the OSCE Chairman-in-Office, Belgian Foreign Minister Karel De Gucht. The Chairman-in-Office welcomed the deployment of a delegation by the Assembly.

Haering, who has extensive experience in OSCE election monitoring, including leading the OSCE observation mission to the 2004 Presidential election in the United States, will lead the delegation of parliamentarians from the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly.