

President Kanerva holds high-level meetings in Moscow



Left to right: Ilkka Kanerva, Spencer Oliver and Valentina Matvienko



Ilkka Kanerva speaks during his meeting with Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov in Moscow.

In two days of high-level meetings in Moscow last week, OSCE PA President Ilkka Kanerva (MP, Finland) emphasized the need for meaningful action aimed at demilitarizing and de-escalating the crisis in Ukraine as a basis for a lasting diplomatic solution.

President Kanerva and Secretary General Spencer Oliver met on 4-5 September with Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov, Federation Council Chairperson Valentina Matvienko, Russian State Duma Chairperson and Head of the Russian Delegation to the OSCE PA Sergey Naryshkin, and Deputy Head of the OSCE PA Delegation and Chair of the Russian State Duma Committee on International Affairs Aleksei Pushkov.

The PA President underscored that Russia's stated commitment to diplomacy in Ukraine requires a full accounting of its impact on the crisis and constructive action on the ground, expressing particular concern about the rapidly deteriorating situation in and around the city of Mariupol.

In their meeting with Foreign Minister Lavrov, President Kanerva and Secretary General Oliver also discussed the importance of Ukraine's parliamentary elections on 26 October and agreed on the need for a large and robust OSCE PA election observation mission that includes Russian MPs.

In the meeting with Chairperson Naryshkin, the sides discussed the PA's continuing work towards convening an Interparliamentary Liaison Group on Ukraine.

The Liaison Group, an initiative first proposed by Chairperson Naryshkin and endorsed by the Parliamentary Assembly in its 2014 Baku Declaration, aims to bring together members of the Russian and Ukrainian Delegations to the OSCE PA, as well as a number of OSCE parliamentarians from other participating States, to promote dialogue and de-escalation of the conflict.

OSCE PA Deputy Secretary General Semyon Dzakhaev and Communications Director Richard Solash participated in the Moscow visit.

PA staff visit Kyiv for regional OSCE meeting and election preparation

On 9-10 September Director of Elections Andreas Baker and Senior Policy Analyst Francesco Pagani were in Kyiv to participate in the OSCE's Eastern Europe Regional Heads of Field Operations meeting. With representatives of the various field operations and OSCE structures working in Ukraine in attendance, the PA staff briefed participants about the

Assembly's work regarding the Ukraine crisis, including the President's recent visit to Moscow and plans for observing the 26 October parliamentary elections. Baker and Pagani also took the opportunity to hold meetings in Kyiv with election experts and civil society representatives, as well as to begin logistical planning for the deployment of observers.

Rabbi Baker visits International Secretariat



Rabbi Andrew Baker, the Personal Representative of the OSCE Chair-in-Office on Combating Anti-Semitism, and OSCE PA Secretary General Spencer Oliver at the Assembly's headquarters in Copenhagen on 9 September.

PA prepares for Helsinki Annual Session

In preparation for the Assembly's 24th Annual Session, to be held 6-10 July 2015 under the theme "Recalling the Spirit of Helsinki," OSCE PA Deputy Secretaries General Gustavo Pallares and Semyon Dzakhaev and Conference Co-ordinator Odile Lelarge conducted a preparatory visit to Helsinki this week. The team positively assessed the meeting venue, historic Finlandia Hall, and met with Director of Administration of the Parliament Pertti Rauho, Head of International Department Katriina Kuusinen, Secretary of the Finnish Delegation Gunilla Carlander, and other senior staff.