

250 Parliamentarians to Attend Winter Meeting

From 19-20 February 2004, more than 250 parliamentarians from 46 OSCE participating States will meet in the OSCE premises in Vienna for the third OSCE Parliamentary Assembly Winter Meeting.

The President of the Austrian Nationalrat, Dr. Andreas Khol, will address the parliamentarians at the opening session on 19 February.

The delegates will be briefed on current OSCE developments by senior OSCE representatives, followed by question/answer sessions.

During the Winter Meeting, the three General Committees of the Assembly will also deal with preparations for the next Annual Session of the Assembly to be held

in Edinburgh from 5-9 July 2004. The main theme of the Edinburgh Session will be "Co-operation and Partnership: Coping with New Security Threats".

The OSCE PA Winter Meeting is the second largest event in the OSCE PA calendar, topped only by the Annual Session held each year in July.

The Winter Meeting will be preceded by a Meeting of the Standing Committee, which will hear welcoming remarks by OSCE PA President Bruce George, followed by reports on the various current and upcoming activities of the Assembly. The Standing Committee will also review the results of the December 2003 OSCE Ministerial Council in Maastricht.

Bruce George to Present Journalism Prize

During the Opening Session of the Winter Meeting in Vienna, Bruce George, President of the Assembly, will present the 9th OSCE Prize for Journalism and Democracy to the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ).

The USD 20,000 award is given annually by the OSCE PA to journalists or groups of journalists who have, through their work, promoted the principles of free journalism as laid down in the OSCE Budapest Declaration of 1994.

The CPJ is a non-profit, non-partisan organization founded in 1981 and dedicated to the global defence of press freedom.

OSCE PA President Visits Malta

OSCE PA President Bruce George, invited by the Speaker of the Maltese House of Representatives Anton Tabone, paid an official visit to Malta from 29 January to 1 February.

During his visit, President George held meetings at the highest level, including meetings with the President of the Republic, Prof. Guido de Marco, Prime Minister Eddie Fenech Adami, and with Foreign Minister Joe Borg.

President George also held meetings with the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the Maltese Delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly, led by Jason Azzopardi. Mr. George also met the leader of the opposition and visited the Mediterranean Academy of Diplomatic Studies at the University of Malta.

President George discussed with the Maltese authorities a variety of issues relating to the OSCE, with special focus on security in

the Mediterranean. Bruce George expressed support for Malta's efforts in developing the Mediterranean dimension of the OSCE, including assisting in the enhancement of relations with Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation. He was also informed about the country's prospects regarding its integration in the EU next May.

President George discussed the different initiatives taken by the PA regarding the Mediterranean including the Parliamentary Forum held in Rome last Fall and the next Forum to be held in Rhodes in October. The Maltese Parliament conveyed an invitation to President George to host the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly's 2006 Autumn Conference and Mediterranean Forum.

During his visit, President George was accompanied by Gustavo Pallarés, Adviser to the President in the Assembly's International Secretariat, and by Rose Burley, President George's Constituency Assistant.



President Bruce George meets with the Maltese Delegation to the OSCE PA.