

Alcee L. Hastings is elected President of OSCE Parliamentary Assembly

U.S. Congressman Alcee L. Hastings was elected **President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly** (OSCE PA) at its Thirteenth Annual Session, which took place in Edinburgh, Scotland, from 5 to 9 July. He succeeds British parliamentarian Bruce George, who served as President for two terms, from July 2002 to July 2004.

Alcee L. Hastings has been a Member of the U.S. House of Representatives since 1992, representing his native state of Florida. His last re-election was in 2002.

He has served as OSCE PA Vice-President, Chair and Vice-Chair of the First General Committee, as well as Committee Rapporteur for two terms.

"I am overwhelmed by the support and confidence entrusted to me by parliamentarians from 55 European and North American countries," said Congressman Hastings. "There is no doubt that the trans-Atlantic relationship will improve during my tenure."

He is a member of the House Rules Committee, and a senior member of the Select Committee on Intelligence. He also serves as one of four House Democrats on the U.S. Helsinki Commission. He is Vice-Chairman of the Democratic Select Committee on Election Reform and is

Vice-Chairman of the Florida Delegation.

As an attorney, judge and civil rights activist, he has championed the rights of minorities, women, the elderly, children and immigrants.

A graduate of Fisk University, Congressman Hastings earned his law degree at Florida A&M University in Tallahassee.

Appointed by President Jimmy Carter in 1979, he became the first African-American



Federal Judge in Florida, serving in that position for ten years.

"When the OSCE PA meets next year in Washington, D.C., I hope my European colleagues will look back to an exceptionally productive year under my presidency," he said. "I look forward to tackling the many challenges ahead."



The Congressional office of PA President Alcee L. Hastings in Washington, D.C., was the setting for discussions between the U.S. Representative and the OSCE Chairman-in-Office, Bulgarian Foreign Minister Solomon Passy, on 21 July.

The two leaders reviewed co-operation between the governmental and parliamentary branches of the OSCE and pledged their full support to ongoing efforts to reform the Organization. They also discussed the decisions taken at the Parliamentary Assembly's Annual Session, which focused on the theme, "Co-operation and Partnership: Coping with New Security Threats".

Minister Passy had called on some 300 parliamentarians at the annual gathering to help bring the Organization closer to their constituencies. "You play a vital role in generating fresh initiatives and influencing decision-makers to use the OSCE in tackling contemporary challenges," he said.



OSCE OFFICE IN BAKU

Maurizio Pavesi, a career diplomat from Italy, took up his post as **Head of the OSCE Office in Baku** on 12 July, succeeding Peter Burkhard from Switzerland.

"I am firmly committed to assisting the Republic of Azerbaijan in any way I can to advance its economic and democratic reforms," Ambassador Pavesi said. "I believe that a more dynamic economic climate, increased respect for

human rights and the rule of law, and greater religious and media freedom will help bring about long-term political stability in the country."

Prior to his OSCE appointment, Ambassador Pavesi handled Stability Pact matters in the Italian Foreign Ministry, working closely with the Director General for European Affairs. From 1999 to 2002, he served as First Counsellor at the Permanent Mission of Italy to the United Nations in New York.

After starting his diplomatic career in 1978, he held postings in Moscow, Warsaw, Aden and Riyadh.

Born in Arezzo, Ambassador Pavesi is a Political Science graduate of the University of Florence.

Pavel Vaček, a Czech diplomat, has succeeded Osmo Lipponen of Finland as **Head of the OSCE Presence in Albania**, starting 1 October.

Ambassador Vaček has spent a great part of his career working on multilateral affairs. His most recent post, which he held until July 2004, was Head of the Czech Republic's Permanent Mission to the United Nations and to the OSCE in Vienna. During this period, he chaired several U.N. and OSCE bodies, including the OSCE's Forum for Security Co-operation.

He has served as Director-General for Multilateral Affairs and Director for Security Policy in the Czech Foreign Ministry. In the 1990s, he was assigned in Brussels as Deputy Head of the Czech Mission to NATO and the Western European



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Union (WEU) and Deputy Head of his country's delegation to the talks on the Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE) Treaty.

"I would like to put my diplomatic experience at the service of Albania," Ambassador Vaček said. "I strongly believe that to succeed, an OSCE mission's work must be driven by the shared commitments and collective political will of our participating States as well as by the needs and interests of the host country."



OSCE/NERMIN PODZIC

Douglas Davidson was appointed **Head of the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina** in June 2004, succeeding Robert M. Beecroft of the United States.

A career diplomat, Ambassador Davidson has had extensive experience in the Balkans as well as in the OSCE. Most recently, he was the United States' Deputy Representative to the OSCE in Vienna, a post he assumed in 2001.

In 1998, he served at the U.S. Embassy in Belgrade, where he also supervised the only diplomatic presence in Kosovo at that time. The following year, he was appointed the first Director of the Department of Media Affairs in the newly established OSCE Mission in Kosovo.

From 1995 to 1998, he was assigned to the U.S. Embassy in Zagreb, with a brief stint in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1996 as Spokesperson for the U.S. Presidential Observer Mission to the country's first elections, which were run by the OSCE.

"I have always looked forward to working in Bosnia and Herzegovina, where the Mission enjoys a good reputation among the citizenry," Ambassador Davidson said. "Having begun my assignment by travelling to our field offices, I can concur with the High Representative's opinion that the OSCE's effectiveness and added value lie in its strong field presence and in its high-calibre staff, most of whom are citizens of this country."