

**Press Release**

**Soares Appointed to South Caucasus Post**

BELGRADE, 10 July 2011 – Joao Soares (MP, Portugal) today was named Special Representative for the South Caucasus, including for the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

OSCE Parliamentary Assembly President Petros Efthymiou announced the appointment today in the plenary of the 20th Annual Session after consulting with delegations from Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia.

“Joao Soares has extensive knowledge and personal relationships with important interlocutors in the region. In addition, he has the necessary diplomatic skills to help bring people of all backgrounds together and focus the needed political attention on the continuing conflicts in the Caucasus. I look forward to his work adding a parliamentary component to ongoing discussions,” President Efthymiou said.

“I am honored to fill this role to help build stronger bridges between parliamentarians in the area, reinforce ongoing talks throughout the Caucasus, and do what we can to support the OSCE Minsk Group process to bring about lasting peace in the region,” Soares said.

Soares, a former two-term president of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, has traveled extensively in the region, with trips to Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia in the last eight years.

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