

BACKGROUND REPORT

Nineteenth Annual Session

Oslo, Norway



*Rule of Law: Combating Transnational
Crime and Corruption*



BACKGROUND REPORT FOR THE NINETEENTH ANNUAL SESSION

CONTENTS

DRAFT PROGRAMME	1
WELCOME MESSAGES	2
ASSEMBLY MEETINGS	6
PRESIDENTIAL ACTIVITIES	8
ELECTION OBSERVATION	10
PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY OVERVIEW	14
ASSEMBLY OFFICERS	19
AD HOC COMMITTEES	22
SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVES	23
ANNUAL SESSIONS AND DECLARATIONS	26
THE INTERNATIONAL SECRETARIAT	28

NINETEENTH ANNUAL SESSION OF THE OSCE PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY
Oslo, 6-10 July 2010

DRAFT PROGRAMME

The Inaugural Plenary Session and all other official meetings of the Assembly's bodies will take place on the premises of the Oslo Congress Centre.
Please check latest version of the programme for possible changes.

Monday, 5 July

12.00 – 20.00	Registration on the premises of the Oslo Congress Centre	09.30 – 11.00	General Committee on Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and Environment
18.00 – 19.00	Briefing for Secretaries of Delegation	11.30 – 13.00	Special Plenary: Address by OSCE Chairperson-in-Office, Kazakhstan's Foreign Minister Kanat Saudabayev
19.00 – 19.30	Reception for the Secretaries of Delegation hosted by the Storting	13.00 – 14.30	Working Lunch on Gender Issues

Tuesday, 6 July

07.00 – 9.00	Time reserved for meetings of various groups	14.30 – 16.00	General Committee on Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and Environment
09.00 – 12.00	Meeting of the Standing Committee	14.30 – 16.00	General Committee on Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions
14.30 – 16.00	Inaugural Plenary Session	16.30 – 18.00	General Committee on Political Affairs and Security
16.30 – 18.00	General Committee on Political Affairs and Security	19.00 – 22.30	Cultural evening at the Bygdøyenes museums hosted by the Norwegian Delegation to the OSCE PA
Evening	Reception in the National Opera hosted by the President of the Storting (HM the Queen of Norway will be present)		

Wednesday, 7 July

07.00 – 09.00	Time reserved for meetings of various groups	07.00 – 09.00	Time reserved for meetings of various groups
09.00 – 11.00	General Committee on Political Affairs and Security	09.00 – 11.00	General Committee on Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and Environment
09.00 – 11.00	General Committee on Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and Environment	09.00 – 11.00	General Committee on Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions
11.30 – 13.30	General Committee on Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions	11.10 – 11.30	Meeting of the Bureau
13.45 – 15:15	Side Event on New Minorities hosted by the Storting and the OSCE HCNM	11.30 – 13.30	General Committee on Political Affairs and Security
16:30 – 20:30	Guided Tour of the Vigeland Park followed by a reception	15.00 – 18.00	Plenary Session General Debate
		Evening	Reserved for Diplomatic missions

Thursday, 8 July

07.00 – 09.00	Time reserved for meetings of various groups
09.30 – 11.00	General Committee on Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions

Saturday, 10 July

07.00 – 09.00	Time reserved for meetings of various groups
09.30 – 12.30	Plenary Session
12.30	Adjournment immediately followed by a reception offered by the President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly

Welcome to Oslo

To the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly
Nineteenth Annual Session Participants
6-10 July 2010



Dear Colleagues,

On behalf of the Norwegian Parliament, the Storting, it gives me great pleasure to welcome you to the 19th Annual Session of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and related events in Oslo from 6th – 10th July 2010.

The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, by means of its comprehensive membership and its focus on dialogue in situations of tension and conflict, continues to play an important role in its area. Its support for the development and reinforcement of democratic institutions, and its efforts in terms of conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict rehabilitation, amongst other areas, cannot be overestimated. The experiences of the last decade clearly indicate that we will also need the OSCE in the years to come.

In light of this, it is important that we, the parliamentarians of the OSCE, meet to discuss the issues on the OSCE agenda and other pressing issues that affect our countries. The general theme of this year's Annual Session, "Rule of Law: Combating Transnational Crime and Corruption," is highly relevant in that regard. I am confident that it will provide the basis for fruitful discussions in Oslo.

May I also invite you to become better acquainted with our capital and our country during your visit. The month of July can be very pleasant at our altitude and the days are long and light.

I wish you a successful Annual Session and I look forward to seeing you in Oslo.

Yours sincerely,

Dag Terje Andersen

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Dag Andersen", with a stylized flourish at the end.

President of the Storting

Message from the President

To the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly,
Nineteenth Annual Session in Oslo,
6-10 July 2010

It is a great pleasure to again welcome you to our Annual Session, the most important event in the OSCE PA calendar. As we gather in Oslo for our deliberations, I hope we will all take advantage of this opportunity to again consider how we can contribute to the OSCE process. Norway has long played an important role in the OSCE, and I am very pleased that the country is now taking on the responsibility of hosting this parliamentary meeting.



The theme for discussions in Oslo, 'Rule of Law: Combating Transnational Crime and Corruption,' raises issues that we must all address. Maintaining the rule of law is a constant challenge in all of our countries, and we cannot allow complacency to take effect. In particular, transnational crime effects us all, undermining our basic security in numerous ways, and requires co-ordinated work if we are to overcome its effects. I am confident that our discussions and recommendations will provide a strong contribution to international work in this regard.

We convene at a critical time for the Organization. Just two years after major hostilities between two of our participating States, the governmental side of the OSCE has begun deliberations through the 'Corfu Process' on how to again strengthen security in the region. We must welcome these discussions and contribute to them. As the only body in the OSCE with a truly democratic basis, the Parliamentary Assembly can and must play a role.

I am also pleased to express my appreciation and respect for the work being conducted by Kazakhstan's Chairmanship of the OSCE. During these difficult times, steady leadership has proven vital, and the ability of Kazakhstan to bring delegations of differing views together for discussion has been essential to the Organization's work. In advocating an OSCE summit, Kazakhstan has also been working to once again place the Organization high on the world agenda. The OSCE is in need of revival; our Assembly has regularly encouraged an increase in high-level political dialogue, and I believe that 2010 – on the 35th anniversary of the Helsinki Final Act and the 20th anniversary of the Charter of Paris – is the appropriate moment to reinvigorate the Organization through the convening of an OSCE summit.

On behalf of the Assembly, I am pleased to extend our collective thanks to the Norwegian Parliament for their generous assistance and warm hospitality. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Members of the Assembly for entrusting me with the important task of leading the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, and to the National Parliaments for their support during this past year. I hope we can continue to work together for a strong OSCE and a strong and vibrant Parliamentary Assembly.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized 'J' followed by a series of loops and a long horizontal stroke.

Joao Soares
President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly

Report of the Secretary General



Welcome to Oslo! We are delighted to be here in the Norwegian capital for the 19th Annual Session of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly.

The last time we met in Norway was in May 2005, when over 80 OSCE parliamentarians gathered in Tromsø, in the far north of the country, for the Assembly's first-ever conference focusing specifically on Northern issues under the theme "The High North – Environment, Security and Co-operation." Now, once again, Norway's delegation to the OSCE PA and the Norwegian Storting are hosting the Assembly and we are very grateful for their constructive participation in our Assembly and for their hospitality.

The Parliamentary Assembly, more engaged than ever, continues to function as an important OSCE Institution, providing critical political input and vital political support to the Organization in the field. As President Joao Soares has stated frequently, it is in the field that the most important work of the OSCE is done, and that is where the resources of the Organization should be concentrated.

Through declarations and recommendations, the Assembly continues to add a democratic dimension to the Organization. In the past year, the Assembly has continued to provide political leadership in six election observation missions. Since our first observation mission to Russia in 1993, more than 3,200 parliamentarians have observed over 100 elections, and I would like to thank all the parliamentarians who have taken the time to participate in this vital endeavor for our Assembly and for the OSCE as a whole.

During his second year as Assembly President, Mr. Soares has continued his active programme on behalf of the Assembly. He has forcefully and effectively advocated the vital work of the OSCE and its Parliamentary Assembly at every opportunity, including the Ministerial Meetings in Madrid, Corfu and Athens. I would like to thank him personally, as well as on behalf of the staff of the International Secretariat, for his hard work and dedicated leadership as head of our Assembly. It's been a real pleasure and privilege to work with him.

I am also happy to report that once again the Assembly continues to be in excellent financial condition through the diligence of the Secretariat staff and effective oversight by Treasurer Roberto Battelli.

Since our creation by the Charter of Paris in 1990, well over 16,000 Members of Parliaments have participated in our activities throughout the OSCE area. Almost 40 participating States have hosted our many conferences and events. On behalf of the International Secretariat, I would like to express my gratitude to the Members of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly for their active involvement and for the generous contribution of support for our Assembly meetings.

This year is the 17th year since the International Secretariat set up the office in Copenhagen, and I would like to thank the Parliament of Denmark – Folketinget – for its continued support and hospitality, as well as to the Austrian Parliament for its support of the Liaison Office in Vienna.

As we carry out our important work in Oslo, we dedicate ourselves in the coming year to continued excellent service to all members of the Assembly. It will certainly be another busy and challenging year, with the Fall Meetings in Palermo, Italy, several election observation missions, our regular Winter Meeting in Vienna, and the Assembly's 20th Annual Session in Belgrade, Serbia.

It is an exciting challenge as well as a great opportunity to serve as Secretary General of this important parliamentary institution. I hope to have the opportunity to continue to serve, along with our outstanding team in Copenhagen and Vienna, in the years ahead.

R. Spencer Oliver

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Spencer Oliver".

Secretary General



President Joao Soares, Chairperson-in-Office Kanat Saudabayev and Secretary General Spencer Oliver



The recent Trans-Asian Parliamentary Forum in Almaty



Last year's Annual Session in Vilnius

Assembly Meetings



Trans-Asian Parliamentary Forum in Almaty

Since the 2009 Annual Session, the Assembly has met three times, most recently in Almaty from 14 to 15 May.

Trans-Asian Parliamentary Forum

The Second Trans-Asian Parliamentary Forum, organized by OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and the Parliament of the Republic of Kazakhstan, took place in Almaty on 14 and 15 May. Nearly 90 parliamentarians attended the conference from 35 OSCE participating States and Mediterranean partner countries, as well as from Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Qatar.

Under the theme, “The OSCE Eurasian Dimension,” the Forum’s high points were two special sessions with lively discussions on Afghanistan and Kyrgyzstan.

The special session on regional security, Afghanistan and combating terrorism and drug trafficking, involved as key speakers former Afghan Foreign Minister Abdullah Abdullah, the First Deputy President of the Afghan National Assembly’s House of Representatives, Mirwais Yasini, and OSCE PA Special Representative on Afghanistan, Michel Voisin.

In the special session on Kyrgyzstan, “The Crisis in Kyrgyzstan and Its Implications for Parliamentary Democracy,” the panelists were Zhanibek Karibzhanov, Special Envoy of the Kazakh OSCE Chairmanship on Kyrgyzstan, Adil Akhmetov, OSCE PA Special Envoy on Kyrgyzstan, and the Kyrgyz Ambassador to Kazakhstan, Zhanys Rustenbekov.

The Forum’s other sessions discussed



2010 Winter Meeting in Vienna

emerging markets and growing challenges in Eurasia and religious tolerance, political development, human trafficking, labour migration and gender equality. The OSCE Chairperson-in-Office, Kanat Saudabayev and Secretary General Marc Perrin de Brichambaut addressed the Forum.

Winter Meeting

A highlight of the ninth Winter Meeting, held 18-19 February in Vienna, was a special debate on the situation in Afghanistan. Introducing the debate were OSCE PA Vice-President and Head of the Kazakh Delegation Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, and Michel Voisin, the PA’s Special Representative on Afghanistan and Head of France’s Delegation to the OSCE PA.

The Winter Meeting included meetings of the three General Committees and a meeting of the Standing Committee, which was addressed by President Joao Soares who reported on the recent election observation mission to



2010 Winter Meeting in Vienna

Assembly Meetings



Trans-Asian Parliamentary Forum in Almaty

Ukraine. Treasurer Roberto Battelli reported to the Standing Committee on the financial health of the Assembly and Secretary General Spencer Oliver reported on the PA's election observation activities.

President Soares addressed the opening session of the Winter Meeting with other opening day speakers including the President of the Austrian Nationalrat, Barbara Prammer, and the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office, Kazakhstan's Foreign Minister Kanat Saudabayev. OSCE Secretary General Marc Perrin de Brichambaut spoke during the closing session.

Also addressing the Winter Meeting were



2010 Winter Meeting in Vienna

the OSCE's High Commissioner on National Minorities, Knut Vollebaek; ODIHR Director, Janez Lenarcic; CPC Director, Herbert Salber; Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities, Goran Svilanovic; and the OSCE's new Special Representative for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings, Maria Grazia Giammarinaro.

Fall Meetings

Under the theme of "Energy Security and Environment," almost 200 members from 50 participating States met in Athens for the Fall Meetings 9 to 12 October.

In three focused sessions, the parliamentarians addressed Regional Co-operation in Energy Security, Climate and Environmental Policy, and Optimal Utilization of Natural Resources for Human Security.

The Meetings included a Mediterranean Forum, chaired by OSCE PA Vice-President Jerry Grafstein. The Assembly's Special Representative on Mediterranean Affairs, Alcee Hastings, reported to the Forum on his activities.

"Long-term sustainability, energy security, and environmental solutions must be viewed hand-in-hand," said President Soares in his conclusion of the Meetings. "Our responses cannot be successful if only enacted on a national level; they must be broad in their scope and approach."

Speakers at the Fall Meetings included the President of the Hellenic Parliament, Dimitrios Sioufas; Deputy Foreign Minister, Spyros Kouvelis; Head of the Greek Delegation to the OSCE PA, Panayotis Skandalakis; OSCE PA Vice-Presidents Petros Efthymiou and Kassym-Jomart Tokayev; and OSCE Secretary General Marc Perrin de Brichambaut.

Mediterranean Partner countries Algeria, Jordan, Egypt and Israel participated in the Athens conference.

Presidential Activities



President Soares opening the OSCE PA's Standing Committee meeting in Vienna, February 2010

After serving for one year, Joao Soares, from Portugal, was unanimously re-elected by the Assembly as President at the Annual Session in Vilnius in July 2009.

In his two years as President, Mr. Soares has worked to strengthen the role of the Parliamentary Assembly as a major forum for open debate on the most important issues facing the OSCE area. Under his presidency, the Assembly has held special debates on the Crisis in Georgia (September 2008), European Security Architecture proposals (February 2009), the World Financial Crisis (May 2009), Afghanistan (February 2010) and Kyrgyzstan (May 2010), among others.

As the highest representative of the Assembly, Mr. Soares has maintained close contact with the governmental side of the OSCE, including with the Finnish, Greek and Kazakh Chairpersons-in-Office.

Addressing the OSCE Ministerial Council in Athens in December 2009, President Soares called for reforms to overcome inefficiency and cumbersome decision-making processes in Vienna. These reforms, he said, would lead to a revival of the OSCE.

"The decision-making structures in Vienna are virtually unable to reach agreement, particularly on key political issues," Mr. Soares said. He also strongly encouraged the convening of an OSCE summit meeting in 2010.

Joao Soares, the author of a book on the work of the Organization, has remained a vocal advocate of the work of the OSCE. However, the OSCE must maintain its origi-

nal flexibility and be willing and able to openly address the most pressing issues facing security in the OSCE, he has said. Mr. Soares has also expressed his concern that more and more resources are being devoted to diplomats in Vienna, rather than to the important work in the field.

"It is my hope that the OSCE can be reinvigorated through a genuine review process at the highest political level."

Joao Soares,
Ministerial Council, December 2009

Underscoring the importance of the role that parliamentarians play in democratic processes, President Soares personally led the OSCE PA's observation missions to Ukraine in January and February 2010. Leading

the several month-long observation mission, Mr. Soares announced that the elections were "an impressive display" and urged "the country's political leaders to listen to the people's verdict and make sure that the transition of power is peaceful and constructive."

President Soares also personally led the OSCE PA's delegation to the general elections in the United Kingdom in May 2010. Reflecting his dedication to ensuring appropriate balance in the work of the Assembly, this was the first observation mission deployed by the OSCE PA in which a majority of parliamentarians came from the Commonwealth of Independent States.

The President has traveled extensively throughout the OSCE area to maintain contacts with parliamentary and governmental leaders. He has consistently offered his strong support for the work of OSCE field missions as the most important work of the Organization, and has personally visited almost all of its missions.

Presidential Activities



President Soares addresses the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly's Standing Committee



President Soares speaking with Viktor Yanukovich during a pre-election visit to Ukraine



Chairperson-in-Office Kanat Saudabayev and President Soares at the Ministerial Council in Athens



President Soares opens the Fall Meetings in Athens

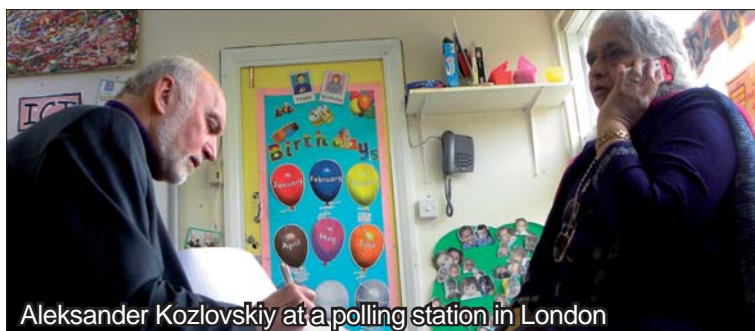


President Soares with Yulia Tymoshenko, during the second round of Ukraine's presidential election



President Soares on a Presidential Visit to the Caucasus

Election Observation



Aleksander Kozlovskiy at a polling station in London

Since the Vilnius Annual Session in July 2009, the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly has deployed six election observation missions, most recently to the parliamentary elections in the United Kingdom.

United Kingdom

The 6 May general elections in the United Kingdom demonstrated that democracy is a vibrant force in the world's oldest parliamentary system, concluded the OSCE PA's observer delegation in a statement issued on 7 May.

Legislation governing elections is clearly understood by practitioners and stakeholders, the observers noted, and is underpinned by widespread trust in the electoral system. The delegation, however, expressed concern about reports that voters who were lining up to vote at the time of closing were not allowed to vote.

Some interlocutors expressed concern about the possible vulnerability to fraud of postal voting, despite safeguards introduced in 2006. Unlike most other electoral systems in the OSCE, the pure first-past-the-post system in the United Kingdom allows for a distribution of seats in parliament which does not reflect the preference of the general electorate in the UK.

The OSCE PA delegation included Members of Parliament from Azerbaijan, Georgia, Italy, Kazakhstan, Portugal, Russia and Tajikistan. In

addition to leading the Assembly's delegation, President Soares was also appointed to lead the OSCE observation mission by the Chairman-in-Office of the OSCE, Kazakhstan's Foreign Minister Kanat Saudabayev.

Tajikistan

The parliamentary elections in Tajikistan on 28 February took place peacefully, but despite certain small positive steps the elections failed to meet many key OSCE commitments. Serious irregularities took place on election day, including high incidence of observed proxy and family voting, despite the stated aim of the authorities of Tajikistan to hold more democratic and transparent elections.

"I'm happy that election day took place in a generally good atmosphere, but I'm even more disappointed that these elections failed on many basic democratic standards. Such serious irregularities weaken genuine democratic progress. There is still a long way to go, and hopefully

the new parliament will take up this challenge," said Pia Christmas-Moeller, OSCE PA Vice-President and Special Co-ordinator for OSCE short-term observers, at a press conference in Dushanbe on 1 March.

Over 250 short-term observers from 41 OSCE participating States were deployed, with 39 MPs from the OSCE PA and 12 from

the European Parliament, in addition to ODIHR's long-term mission.

Ukraine

The first round of Ukraine's presidential election, held on 17 January, was of high quality, showing significant progress over previous elections and meeting most OSCE commit-



Pia Christmas-Moeller in Tajikistan

Election Observation

ments, the Special Co-ordinator of the OSCE short-term observers, Joao Soares, announced on 18 January.

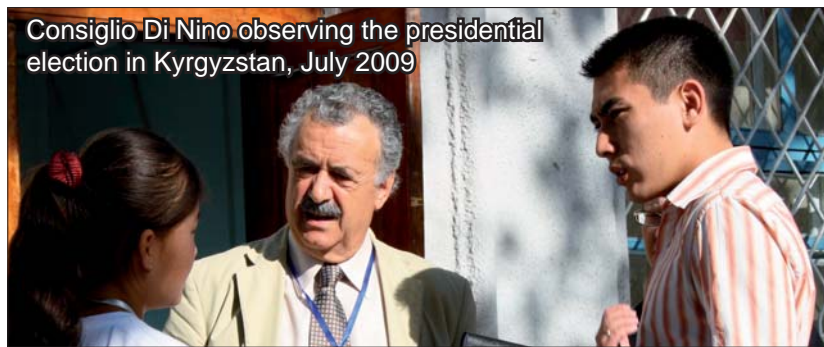
The observers noted that the election demonstrated respect for civil and political rights and that candidates were able to campaign freely. A pluralistic media offered voters a variety of information about candidates. Voting and counting on election day was assessed overwhelmingly positively.

The Assembly's delegation totaled 117 observers from 31 countries, including 90 Members of Parliament.

The run-off presidential election on 7 February confirmed the international election observation mission's earlier assessment that the electoral process met most international commitments. The election "consolidated progress achieved since 2004," the observers said in the joint statement by the PA, the OSCE ODIHR, the European Parliament and the parliamentary assemblies of NATO and the Council of Europe. The PA's delegation consisted of 69 observers in the second round, including 51 Members of Parliament.

Moldova

The 29 July 2009 parliamentary elections in Moldova met many international standards, but the process underscored the need for continued democratic reforms to restore public trust, the



Consiglio Di Nino observing the presidential election in Kyrgyzstan, July 2009

international election observation mission concluded. The election was overall well-administered, allowing for competition of political parties representing a plurality of views. But the observers stressed that the campaign was negatively affected by subtle intimidation and media bias.

"I am encouraged by the conduct of these elections. Many OSCE commitments were met, but important challenges remain if the lack of trust among the country's political parties and voters is to be overcome so that Moldova's democracy can continue to improve," said Petros Efthymiou, head of the PA's delegation and Special Co-ordinator of the OSCE short-term observers. A total of 38 MPs participated.

Kyrgyzstan

Kyrgyzstan's presidential election on 23 July failed to meet key OSCE commitments, despite some positive elements, the OSCE election observation mission concluded. "We are pleased to see some political pluralism and an active civil society, but this was undermined by an overall uneven playing field in which the distinction between the ruling party and the State was blurred," said Consiglio Di Nino, head of the OSCE PA delegation and Special Co-ordinator of the OSCE short-term observers.

Voters could choose from a number of presidential candidates and civil society played an important role in the election process. But the incumbent gained an unfair advantage over his opponents through the misuse of administrative resources and bias in the media coverage of the campaign, which did not allow voters to make an informed choice. The observers noted that the shortcomings contributed to an atmosphere of distrust and undermined public confidence.

Twenty-two parliamentarians participated.



Petros Efthymiou delivering the Moldova post-election statement in Chisinau





Parliamentary Assembly Overview



Parliaments of all OSCE States are entitled to be represented in the Parliamentary Assembly, the aim of which is to promote parliamentary involvement in the activities of the OSCE and to facilitate inter-parliamentary dialogue and co-operation. The Assembly occupies a unique place in the structure of the OSCE by providing a vital link between the governmental side of the OSCE and parliamentarians from the OSCE countries.

A Short History

The OSCE Parliamentary Assembly was established by the leaders of the Parliaments of all States signatory to the 1975 Helsinki Final Act and the 1990 Charter of Paris for a New Europe. At the invitation of the Spanish Cortes, leading parliamentarians from all CSCE signatory countries gathered in Madrid in early April 1991 to establish the modalities of a CSCE Parliamentary Assembly as requested by their respective Heads of State or Government.

The Madrid Declaration, adopted by consensus, set forth the mandate, basic rules of procedure, working methods, size, and distribution of votes for the first official meeting of the CSCE Assembly, scheduled for Budapest in July 1992. The Declaration also called for the Assembly to meet once a year, at a time when most parliaments would be out of session, enabling leaders and key members of the various parliaments to attend.

At the Budapest Session, the Assembly decided to establish a small permanent secretariat and to appoint a Director, now Secretary General, with two Deputies. The International Secretariat provides administrative support for the Assembly in its various activities.

Objectives

The Assembly's primary task is to facilitate inter-parliamentary dialogue and to address the challenges of democracy throughout the OSCE area. The Assembly may also pursue other important objectives that are stated in its Rules of Procedure:

- To assess the implementation of OSCE objectives by participating States;
- To discuss subjects addressed during meetings of the Ministerial Council and the summits of Heads of State or Government;
- To develop and promote mechanisms for the prevention and resolution of conflicts;
- To support the strengthening and consolidation of democratic institutions in OSCE participating States;
- To contribute to the development of OSCE institutional structures and of relations and co-operation between existing OSCE Institutions.

To pursue these objectives, the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly employs a variety of means:

- A Final Declaration and a number of resolutions and recommendations are adopted each year at the Annual Session;
- Committee and Plenary work addresses important contemporary international issues;
- Programmes and Seminars designed to develop and strengthen democracy, including an extensive election observation programme;
- Special parliamentary missions to areas of latent or active crisis.

Parliamentary Assembly Overview

Annual Meeting Calendar

Jan	Feb	Mar	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Winter Meeting Standing Committee			Bureau		Annual Session Standing Committee Bureau		Fall Meetings Standing Committee Mediterranean Forum			Bureau	

The Plenary

At the Annual Session, the Assembly meets in Plenary to adopt a Final Declaration and Resolutions and elect Assembly Officers. Decisions at the Annual Session are taken by majority vote.

General Committees

The work of the Parliamentary Assembly is divided into three General Committees, which correspond to the three main sections of the Helsinki Final Act:

- The First General Committee on Political Affairs and Security;
- The Second General Committee on Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and Environment;
- The Third General Committee on Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions.

The General Committees meet during the Annual Session and the Winter Meeting. At meetings during the Annual Session, decisions are taken by majority vote. A Chair, Vice-Chair and Rapporteur are elected at the Annual Session for a one-year term by the members of each Committee.

Standing Committee

The Standing Committee, which meets three times a year, consists of the 56 Heads of National Delegations and Members of the Bureau. The Standing Committee guides the work of the Assembly, approves its budget, and appoints the Secretary General to a five-year term.

Bureau

The Assembly's Bureau consists of the President, the nine Vice-Presidents, the Treasurer, and the Officers of the three General Committees. The President Emeritus (immediately preceding former President) is also an ex officio non-voting Member. The Bureau is responsible for ensuring that the decisions of the Standing Committee are carried out. Decisions are taken by majority vote.

Budget

The Assembly's budget covers most of the organizational expenses related to the Annual Session, Winter Meeting, Fall Meetings, Standing Committee and Bureau Meetings, official visits, the election observation programme, as well as the costs of the International Secretariat. Host Parliaments of the Annual Sessions have all contributed significantly by providing considerable support to these regular events, ensuring their success and contributing substantive cost savings. The Danish Folketing has generously provided office facilities free of charge for the Assembly's International Secretariat.

Annual Sessions

The Annual Session, held in early July every year, is the most important event in the Assembly calendar. At the end of each Annual Session, the Plenary adopts a Final Declaration addressing contemporary issues within the fields of political affairs, economic affairs and human rights. The Final Declarations contain specific calls on participating States to adhere to their OSCE commitments as well as recommendations on strengthening OSCE institutional structures.

Parliamentary Assembly Overview



Winter Meetings

In February 2001, the Standing Committee approved the holding of an annual OSCE PA Winter Meeting in Vienna. The Winter Meeting, which has been held each February since 2002, provides an opportunity for the three General Committees to have debates as well as to be briefed by senior OSCE officials who have responsibilities related to the work of each of the Committees. The Winter Meeting also allows parliamentarians to hear presentations by the three General Committee Rapporteurs and to discuss their ideas on their draft resolutions for the Annual Session.

Fall Meetings

Each year the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly organizes a set of Fall Meetings to enhance inter-parliamentary dialogue on important topics related to OSCE commitments and values. The Meetings include a Conference on a topical issue, a session of the Assembly's Standing Committee of Heads of Delegations and typically also a meeting of the Mediterranean Forum. The first set of Fall Meetings took place in 2002 in Madrid, followed each year by meetings in Rome, Rhodes, Sveti-Stefan, Malta, and Portoroz.

Conferences

Parliamentarians also review OSCE commitments by participating in topical Seminars and Conferences, organized on a regular basis by the

Assembly. These inter-parliamentary fora focus on specific OSCE themes, such as minorities and freedom of religion, as well as on regional issues, such as the Trans-Asian dimension, the Mediterranean, and the Arctic. The OSCE PA also organizes an Economic Conference every two years. All these fora provide parliamentarians with occasions to exchange views with colleagues and international experts and to deepen their understanding of OSCE issues within the wider context of OSCE principles and the OSCE's comprehensive concept of security.

Interaction with other OSCE Institutions

Although the Parliamentary Assembly has its own independent budget and may take unilateral, independent initiatives, it has developed formalized interaction with other OSCE Institutions. The Assembly is represented at every level of official OSCE meetings and maintains a close working relationship with the OSCE Chair-in-Office, the Troika, the OSCE Secretary General, as well as the other OSCE Institutions in Vienna, Prague, Warsaw and the Hague.

A senior representative of the Assembly presents the annual OSCE PA Declarations to the Permanent Council and receives comments from national OSCE Delegations. The Assembly participates in the OSCE's Permanent Council meetings, OSCE Ministerial Council meetings, as well as OSCE Summits. Heads of other OSCE Institutions also address Assembly meetings. It has become standard practice since 2002 that the OSCE Secretary General briefs the Standing Committee on the proposed OSCE budget

Parliamentary Assembly Overview



at the Assembly's Fall Meetings. This provides the Assembly with an opportunity to give comments on the draft budget to the OSCE.

In order to further strengthen co-operation and co-ordination between the OSCE and the OSCE PA, the OSCE PA Secretary General opened a Liaison Office in Vienna in February 2003. Heading this Office, the Special Representative of the OSCE PA to the OSCE, participates in Permanent Council meetings and other formal as well as informal OSCE meetings of interest to the Assembly.

Interparliamentary co-operation

Since the 1991 Madrid Conference, the CSCE/OSCE Parliamentary Assembly has developed extensive co-operation with the Parliamentary Assemblies of the Council of Europe, the Western European Union, NATO, the Interparliamentary Union, the European Parliament, and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). These parliamentary institutions have official observer status at the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, and OSCE PA representatives also attend their main meetings.

In addition, the OSCE PA co-operates with the Nordic Council and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Co-operation.

At the Secretariat level, there is regular contact between the Secretaries General as well as the staff of the international parliamentary institutions in order to strengthen co-ordination and coherence.

During election observation missions, the OSCE PA co-operates closely with other

international parliamentary institutions, particularly the Council of Europe, the European Parliament, and NATO.

On several projects, the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly has joined "Parliamentary Troikas" consisting of the European Parliament, the Council of Europe and the OSCE PA, in order to increase co-ordination and strengthen international parliamentary projects. The Chairmanship of the Troikas rotates between the three institutions on an annual basis.

Membership	Seats per Country	Total
United States of America	17	17
Russian Federation	15	15
France, Germany, Italy, and United Kingdom	13	52
Canada and Spain	10	20
Belgium, Netherlands, Poland, Sweden, Turkey, and Ukraine	8	48
Romania	7	7
Austria, Belarus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Kazakhstan, Norway, Portugal, Switzerland, and Uzbekistan	6	78
Bulgaria and Luxembourg	5	10
Serbia and Slovak Republic	4	8
Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Cyprus, Estonia, Georgia, Iceland, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Malta, Moldova, Montenegro, Slovenia, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan	3	57
Andorra, Liechtenstein, Monaco, and San Marino	2	8
Total seats		320

*The Holy See may send two representatives to the Assembly's meetings as guests of honour.



Officers of the Assembly



The Officers of the Assembly, also known as the Bureau, include the President, Vice-Presidents, the Treasurer, General Committee Officers and the President Emeritus. The Bureau is responsible for ensuring that the decisions of the Standing Committee are carried out, as well as ensuring the efficient operation of the Assembly between meetings of the Standing Committee. The Bureau takes decisions by majority vote.

Following the 1991 Madrid Declaration, three committees were established along the lines of the three main “baskets” of the Helsinki Final Act: The First General Committee on Political Affairs and Security; the Second General Committee on Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and Environment; and the Third General Committee on Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions. The Bureau of each General Committee is composed of a Chair, Vice-Chair, and General Rapporteur.

The Rapporteur is responsible for preparing a report and a draft resolution to be presented to the Committee. After debate and discussion, the draft resolution is adopted by each Committee for presentation to the Annual Plenary Session of the Assembly, which is then included in the Final Declaration.

The Vice-Chair of each General Committee is responsible for preparing a report on the follow-up of the resolutions adopted by the General Committee and the Parliamentary Assembly. These reports are presented by the Vice-Chairs at the following Annual Session.

Joao Soares (Portugal)

was elected President of the Assembly at the Annual Session in Astana and re-elected at the Annual Session in Vilnius. His term as President ends at the 2010 Session. He has been a Vice-President of the PA and member of the Bureau since July 2006.



Goran Lennmarker (Sweden)

currently serves as President Emeritus, after having served two terms as Assembly President and three terms as Chair of the First General Committee. Mr. Lennmarker is also the Assembly's Special Representative on the Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict and Special Envoy to Georgia.

Roberto Battelli (Slovenia)

was elected Treasurer of the Parliamentary Assembly in Vilnius in 2009. Since 2006, he has also served as the OSCE PA's Special Representative on South East Europe.



Benjamin Cardin (United States)



was elected Vice-President of the Assembly at the Annual Session in Brussels in July 2006, and re-elected in Vilnius in 2009. He previously served as Chair of the Second Committee and is Chairman of the U.S. Helsinki Commission.

Officers of the Assembly

Pia Christmas-Moeller (Denmark)

was elected Vice-President during the Annual Session in Washington in July 2005 and re-elected during the 2008 Annual Session. Her term is set to end at the 2011 Session.

**Petros Efthymiou (Greece)**

was elected Vice-President of the Assembly at the Annual Session in Vilnius in 2009. Previously, he had served as Chair of the Second General Committee, a position he held for one year, following a term as Vice-Chair of the Committee.

**Jean-Charles Gardetto (Monaco)**

was elected Vice-President of the Assembly in Vilnius, after having served as Chair of the First Committee since 2006 and as Vice-Chair prior to that. Mr. Gardetto is also Head of Monaco's

Delegation to the OSCE PA. His term as Vice-President ends at the 2012 Session.

Wolfgang Grossruck (Austria)

was re-elected Vice-President of the Assembly at the 2008 Annual Session in Astana. It is a post he has held since July 2006. He has also served as Rapporteur of the First General Committee. Mr. Grossruck has been a Member of the Austrian Delegation to the OSCE PA since 1996.

**Kimmo Kiljunen (Finland)**

was elected Vice-President at the 2001 Annual Session in Paris and re-elected in 2007. Mr. Kiljunen, who serves as Special Representative for Central Asia and previously as Vice-Chair and Chair of the First General Committee, is not eligible for re-election this year.

**Isabel Pozuelo (Spain)**

was elected Vice-President at the 2009 Annual Session in Vilnius for a one-year mandate. She is presently Head of the Spanish Delegation to the OSCE PA and is eligible for re-election as Vice-President this year.

**Kassym-Jomart Tokayev****(Kazakhstan)**

was elected Vice-President in July 2008, at the Annual Session in Astana. Head of the Kazakhs Delegation to the OSCE PA, Mr. Tokayev has served as Chairman of the Senate of Kazakhstan since



January 2007.

Consiglio Di Nino (Canada)

was elected Chair of the First General Committee during the Annual Session in Vilnius in 2009. He was elected Vice-Chair in 2007 and re-elected in 2008. He is also the Head of the Canadian Delegation to the OSCE PA.



Officers of the Assembly

Canan Kalsin (Turkey)

was elected Vice-Chair of the First General Committee at the 2009 Annual Session in Vilnius. She has served as a member of the Turkish delegation to the OSCE PA since 2007.



Serhiy Shevchuk (Ukraine)

was elected Rapporteur of the Second General Committee at the 2009 Annual Session in Vilnius. A member of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, Mr. Shevchuk has been a delegate to the OSCE PA since 1998.



Riccardo Migliori (Italy)

was re-elected Rapporteur of the First General Committee during the Annual Session in Vilnius. Mr. Migliori has been a member of the Italian delegation to the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly since July 2006 and was elected Head of the Delegation in June 2008.



Walburga Habsburg Douglas (Sweden)

was elected Chair of the Third Committee during the Annual Session in Vilnius, after having served as its Rapporteur and then as Vice-Chair. Ms. Habsburg Douglas is also the Head of the Swedish Delegation to the OSCE PA.



Roland Blum (France)

was elected Chair of the Second General Committee in Vilnius, after having served as Vice-Chair and as Rapporteur of the Committee. He is Vice-President of the Foreign Affairs Committee in the French National Assembly.



Robert Aderholt (United States)

was elected Vice-Chair of the Third Committee at the Annual Session in Vilnius. Since 2001, Mr. Aderholt has also served on the U.S. Commission on Security and Co-operation in Europe.



Ivor Callely (Ireland)

was elected Vice-Chair of the Second General Committee in Vilnius, after having served as Rapporteur of the Committee since 2008. Mr. Callely is a member of the 23rd Seanad of Ireland and serves as Head of the Irish Delegation to the OSCE PA.



Matteo Mecacci (Italy)

was elected Rapporteur of the Third Committee at the Annual Session in Vilnius. Mr. Mecacci has been member of the Italian Parliament since 2008, where he serves on the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Chamber of the Deputies.



Ad Hoc Committees



Ad Hoc Working Group on Belarus

The Ad Hoc Working Group on Belarus is tasked with facilitating dialogue between the Government and opposition of Belarus, and works to promote fair election processes and aid in the development of democracy in Belarus. The Working Group, chaired by Uta Zapf (Germany) has been visiting Belarus on a regular basis since its establishment in 1998. During the regular visits, the parliamentarians meet with their counterparts in Minsk, as well as representatives of political parties, civil society and the media. The Working Group works closely with the OSCE Office in Minsk.

The Members of the Working Group also meet with the Belarusian Delegation to the OSCE PA on the margins of the regular OSCE meetings, most recently in Vilnius and Vienna.

Parliamentary Team on Moldova

The Parliamentary Team on Moldova, Walburga Habsburg Douglas (Sweden) was established in early 2000. The Team's mandate is to promote peace, stability and rule of law in Moldova, while affirming the unity of the State, by engaging in and promoting dialogue between parties and organizations representing different sections of Moldova's population. Resolving the status of Transnistria is a particular priority of the Parliamentary Team, which works closely with the OSCE Mission to Moldova. The Team visited both Chisinau and Tiraspol in January 2010, meeting with parliamentarians, political party and civil

society representatives, and chief negotiators of the conflict settlement process.

Ad Hoc Committee on Transparency and Accountability in the OSCE

President Soares expanded and renewed the mandate of the Ad Hoc Committee on Transparency and Accountability in spring 2010. Originally set up in 2001 in order to institutionalize the OSCE PA's efforts to enhance transparency and parliamentary involvement within the Governmental structures of the OSCE, the Committee is now also tasked with providing parliamentary input into the OSCE Corfu process. The Deputy Speaker of the Finnish Parliament, Johannes Koskinen, was appointed to lead the Committee which includes several members of the Bureau and Heads of OSCE PA Delegations.

From the outset in 2001, key priorities of the Committee were to change the use of the secret single country veto in the decision-making procedure of the OSCE, to improve the level of feedback from the Governmental side on the Assembly's recommendations and Declarations, to establish regular contacts between the leaderships of the OSCE and its Parliamentary Assembly and to open a liaison office in Vienna.

Although progress has been achieved on some of these points, the Committee has had to continue to push for increased interaction and feedback, and it has continuously criticized the strict use of consensus in the OSCE decision-making process and the lack of transparency.

"There must be better oversight of the expenditure of taxpayers' money within this Organization, to ensure that it remains as effective as possible."

OSCE PA President Joao Soares

Special Representatives

The President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly may appoint Special Representatives on areas of particular interest or concern to assist or act on his or her behalf. At present, there are Special Representatives working on issues such as Mediterranean affairs, the OSCE budget and transnational organized crime.



President Emeritus Goran Lennmarker speaks to reporters during a March 2010 visit to Georgia

Gender Issues

The Special Representative on Gender Issues, Vice-President Tone Tingsgaard (Sweden), was appointed in 2003 by the PA President to strengthen the Assembly's efforts to promote gender equality within the OSCE and the Parliamentary Assembly. Throughout her mandate, Ms. Tingsgaard has called upon participating States to second and nominate more women to high level positions within the OSCE. With regard to the PA, last year Ms. Tingsgaard initiated a change to the Assembly's Rules of Procedure stressing that each national delegation should have both genders represented. Ms. Tingsgaard has participated actively in a number of OSCE conferences and seminars on gender and has sponsored several resolutions on the issue in the OSCE PA.



Tone Tingsgaard observing Ukrainian election in Donetsk Oblast

confidence-building measures could be introduced in order to create a more favourable environment, based on principles of international law and OSCE commitments. Mr. Lennmarker works closely with the OSCE Minsk Group.

Georgia

Since the August 2008 war, the situation in Georgia has been high on the agenda of the Assembly. After the tragic events, President Soares promptly issued a statement calling for restraint, and appointed President Emeritus Lennmarker as Special Envoy for the conflict. Mr. Lennmarker has travelled to Georgia several times, visiting Tbilisi, Gori and the observers deployed along the administrative border. Mr. Lennmarker

has delivered several reports to the Standing Committee calling for the deployment of a substantial number of observers as well as the establishment of an independent 'catastrophe commission' to investigate what happened on the ground. He has also stressed the right of refugees and internally displaced persons to return to their homes in a safe and dignified manner.

Nagorno Karabakh

Since being appointed Special Representative on Nagorno Karabakh in July 2002, President Emeritus Goran Lennmarker (Sweden), has worked to promote parliamentary dialogue in Armenia and Azerbaijan in order to support the peace process of the OSCE Minsk Group. He visited both countries with President Soares in March 2010, holding discussions regarding resolution of the conflict. His mandate includes promoting dialogue in all segments of society, in particular at the parliamentary level, in order to encourage reconciliation and rehabilitation. The Special Representative considers ways in which

Mediterranean Affairs

Considering the need to develop stronger links between the OSCE PA and the Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation, the OSCE PA President appointed Alcee Hastings as Special Representative on Mediterranean Affairs. Mr. Hastings has continued this past year his active engagement to promote the Mediterranean

Special Representatives



Special Representative on Mediterranean Affairs Alcee Hastings addresses the Fall Meetings on 11 October 2009

dimension in the Assembly. In January Congressman Hastings paid an official visit to the Mediterranean area and was received by government officials as well as NGOs in Turkey, Syria, Lebanon, Egypt, Jordan, and Israel. Among other issues, the Iraqi refugee crisis was high on his agenda, but he also pushed forward various tracks of the Middle East peace process. In addition, Mr. Hastings traveled to Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, sharing with high-ranking officials the importance of the OSCE Mediterranean Dimension with.

OSCE Budget

The Special Representative on the OSCE Budget, Petur H. Blondal (Iceland), was appointed by the President of the PA in September 2006. Reporting to the President and Treasurer, Mr. Blondal's mandate includes following budgetary developments in the OSCE and acting as a focal point for Assembly recommendations. In addition to serving as Special Representative on the OSCE Budget, Mr. Blondal is on the Ad Hoc Committee on Transparency and Accountability.

Central Asia

In keeping with the OSCE PA's priority of encouraging the active participation of parliamentarians from Central Asia in OSCE activities, President Soares re-appointed Mr. Kimmo Kiljunen (Finland) as his Special Representative for Central Asia. Working closely with the OSCE field missions, Mr. Kiljunen has facilitated regional parliamentary seminars in the Nordic States as well as in Central Asia. Mr. Kiljunen also works to facilitate regional con-



Special Representative on Afghanistan Michel Voisin addresses the Winter Meeting on 19 February

tacts through seminars and side events on the margins of regular OSCE PA meetings. Through such regional events, the 2009 resolution on labour migration in Central Asia was elaborated and adopted at the Annual Session in Vilnius. Mr. Kiljunen also spoke at the Trans-Asian Parliamentary Forum, held in Almaty from 14-16 May, which aimed to increase the focus on OSCE issues in the region.

Afghanistan

The Special Representative for Afghanistan, Michel Voisin (France), was appointed by the President in September 2008. Mr. Voisin, who serves as Head of the French Delegation to the OSCE PA, works to focus Assembly activities in regard to OSCE partner State Afghanistan and to increase dialogue with Afghan parliamentarians. The OSCE PA discussed Afghanistan at its Winter Meeting in Vienna and at the Trans-Asian Parliamentary Forum in Almaty, both of which were addressed by Mr. Voisin.

Fight against Transnational Organized Crime

The Special Representative for the Fight against Transnational Organized Crime, Senator Carlo Vizzini (Italy), was appointed by the PA President in September 2007 to focus Assembly activities within this field. Senator Vizzini, who was born in Palermo, represents Sicily in the Italian Senate since 2006. He is a member of the Senate's committee dealing with constitutional issues and of the parliamentary commission investigating organized crime and the mafia.

Special Representatives



Special Representative on South East Europe Roberto Battelli addresses the Standing Committee

South East Europe

Slovenian parliamentarian Roberto Battelli was appointed Special Representative on South East Europe to facilitate parliamentary dialogue in the region and to serve as a focal point for the Assembly's work in the region. Mr. Battelli represented the Assembly at numerous events in the region including a conference on the implementation of the Code of Conduct in November in Sarajevo. His visits have included high-level talks as well as in-depth briefings about the work of the OSCE field operations. He organized a field visit to Bosnia and Herzegovina and accompanied President Soares in his trip to Sarajevo, Banja Luka and Mostar in March 2010. Mr. Battelli also participated in the election observation mission to Albania in June 2009. In addition to serving as Special Representative on South East Europe, Mr. Battelli has served as Assembly Treasurer since July 2009.

Human Trafficking Issues

In order to facilitate the presence and involvement of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly in the international debate on trafficking issues, President Bruce George appointed U.S. Congressman Christopher Smith as Special Representative on Human Trafficking Issues in February 2004. He was reappointed by Presi-



Special Representative on Migration Kathleen Ferrier addresses the Trans-Asian Parliamentary Forum

dent Goran Lennmarker in November 2007 and by President Joao Soares in the summer of 2009.

Mr. Smith's mandate includes closely following the discussions and proposals in the international arena on the issue of trafficking.

Migration

President Joao Soares appointed Kathleen Ferrier, a member of the Dutch delegation to the OSCE PA, as the Assembly's Special Representative on Migration in October 2009. As Special Representative, Ms. Ferrier met with Andreas Halbach, Chief of Mission of the International Organization for Migration, at the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly's Vienna Liaison Office in January 2010. She also addressed the Trans-Asian Parliamentary Forum in Almaty on 15 May, describing her own personal experience as a migrant and the work she has done as a Member of the Dutch Parliament on migration issues. Specifically, she discussed her initiatives regarding circular migration, temporary remi-

"Good migration policies should reflect a fair refugee status determination procedure and respect for relevant conventions, as well as sound migration policy for economic migrants in the region."

Special Representative on Migration
Kathleen Ferrier,
Trans-Asian Parliamentary Forum 2010



Special Representative on Human Trafficking Issues Chris Smith at the 2007 Annual Session in Kyiv

Annual Sessions and Declarations

Since the first Annual Session in Budapest in 1992, the Parliamentary Assembly has debated some of the most pressing issues of the day, with certain themes, such as small arms and light weapons, human trafficking, election observation and reforming the OSCE revisited frequently.



In the 1990s, one of the recurring themes was regarding the crisis in the former Yugoslavia. In the Budapest Declaration of 1992, for example, the Assembly recommended that the CSCE send observers to Kosovo and Vojvodina to monitor the protection of minorities. In 1993, the Helsinki Declaration included a full chapter on the crisis in the former Yugoslavia, illustrating the importance attached to the issue by the PA. Also that year, the Assembly for the first time urged the CSCE to establish a decision-making procedure which would no longer require consensus or “consensus-minus-one.”

Reforming the CSCE/OSCE was revisited the following year, in Vienna, with a resolution adopted calling again for a change in the consensus rule. The Vienna Declaration also called for strengthened co-operation between the CSCE and the Parliamentary Assembly through a formal procedure for considering PA resolutions. The 1995 Ottawa Declaration again called for the OSCE to explore decision-making procedures based on approximate consensus. It also contained a series of resolutions and recommendations relating to OSCE activities regarding the former Yugoslavia, the Baltic region, Nagorno Karabakh, Chechnya and Moldova. The 1996 Stockholm Declaration reiterated the Parliamentary Assembly’s support for the adoption of a broad concept of security, stressing, inter alia, the importance of economic stabilization and environmentally sustainable development in the security dimension.

Meeting in Warsaw in 1997, the PA focused on enhancing the implementation of commitments undertaken in the context of the CSCE and OSCE, including the Helsinki Final Act, the

Charter of Paris and the Budapest and Lisbon Summit documents. The Warsaw Declaration also included recommendations on implementing the principles of territorial integrity and the inviolability of State frontiers.

The Copenhagen Declaration of 1998 stated that in order to meet the challenge of implementing OSCE principles and commitments with greater effectiveness, a refinement of existing OSCE tools and resources should be pursued, calling again for a revision of OSCE decision-making procedures.

The 8th Annual Session, held in St. Petersburg in 1999, dealt with topics such as the situation in Kosovo, the democratic deficit within the OSCE, the role of the OSCE in crisis prevention



and conflict settlement, the problem of human trafficking, and with specific issues in Belarus, Russia and South-Eastern Europe. The St. Petersburg Declaration called for the

Parliamentary Assembly to be consulted more widely on issues of major importance, such as the appointment of the Secretary General and the budgetary activities of the main OSCE Institutions.

In 2000, the Assembly met in Bucharest and discussed, inter alia, issues related to Belarus, calling on all sides to pave the way for free, fair and internationally recognizable parliamentary elections. The Bucharest Declaration also reiterated the importance of reforming the OSCE, calling for reduced reliance on secondment in the long-term field missions to ensure the continuity of the missions’ work.

The Paris Declaration of 2001 included a Resolution on strengthening transparency and accountability in the OSCE and proposed that before making major decisions the Ministerial Council should take into account the opinion of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly.



Annual Sessions and Declarations

In the wake of the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001, the 2002 Berlin Declaration condemned all acts of terrorism, underlining the solidarity of the PA in the struggle against terrorism while reminding all OSCE participating States that any measures taken to address terrorism must fully respect international law and relevant OSCE commitments. The 2003 Rotterdam Declaration emphasized that with Europe's ongoing development in security structures, the OSCE's real strength lies in its capacity to respond to security threats and in its strong field presence. To uphold the credibility of the OSCE, it added, it is imperative to provide the OSCE field activities with adequate funding and high-quality staff.

Meeting in Edinburgh in 2004, the Assembly revisited the issue of terrorism, calling on the international community to target the profound political, social, economic and environmental causes of terrorism and to ensure that the fight against terrorism be carried out in compliance with the principles of international law. The Assembly also adopted a resolution on torture calling upon all participating States to abide by the obligation that no exceptional circumstances may be invoked as a justification of torture.



In the 2005 Washington Declaration, the Assembly addressed a range of political issues, including increasing information exchanges with non-OSCE States on trafficking and upgrading the status of the OSCE's Forum for Security Cooperation. The importance of respecting human rights commitments was also emphasized, including full voting rights for the residents of Washington, D.C.

The Assembly's position on increasing support of OSCE Field Missions was reiterated in the Brussels Declaration of 2006, which

also emphasized the importance of energy security and of the Assembly's leadership in election observation.

Reaffirming the crucial importance of democratic values, the 2007 Kyiv Declaration called on all OSCE participating States to pursue their international commitments in this regard. It also called for greater action on migration and against human trafficking, especially children, and for the dismantling of criminal networks which facilitate illegal migration. In addition, it contained provisions on women, peace and security; cluster bombs; environmental security; human rights and intolerance.

At the 17th Annual Session, held in Astana in 2008, the Assembly focused on the theme of "Transparency in the OSCE" and adopted a Resolution calling on the governments of the 56 participating States to "fully commit themselves, at the highest political levels, to the full implementation of all of their OSCE commitments and to future strengthening of the Organization." To do so, governments should make use of the Assembly as "a key element in the Organization's efforts to be credible in promoting democracy."

Strengthening the OSCE was also a major theme of the 18th Annual Session, held last year in Vilnius. The Vilnius Declaration calls for more transparency in the OSCE in order to enhance its legitimacy and relevance. The importance of the Assembly's leadership in election monitoring was also reiterated in a resolution dealing with OSCE election observation. The issue of human trafficking was also revisited. On food security, the Vilnius Declaration emphasizes that this is a new and major challenge to security in the OSCE area and that it must become a top priority on the OSCE agenda.

The 19th Annual Session is being held in Oslo from 6 to 10 July 2010, under the general theme of "Rule of Law: Combating Transnational Crime and Corruption."



The International Secretariat

A decision was made at the First Annual Session in Budapest to accept the invitation of the Danish Parliament to locate the International Secretariat of the Parliamentary Assembly in Copenhagen. The Standing Committee met in January of 1993 to approve the Bureau's choice of a Secretary General and to adopt formal Rules of Procedure for the Assembly. Secretary General R. Spencer Oliver has been unanimously elected three times by the Standing Committee, and has appointed two deputies to support his work -- Tina Schoen and Gustavo Pallares.

The primary responsibility of the International Secretariat is to organize all activities of the Assembly, including the Annual Session, the Winter Meeting, Fall Meetings and election observation missions. The Secretariat provides support to the President, the Bureau, the Officers of the three General Committees, the ad hoc Committees, and the Special Representatives. It also serves as a central communications link between the PA, parliamentary delegations and other OSCE Institutions. In January 2003, the International Secretariat opened a Liaison Office in Vienna, headed by Ambassador Andreas Nothelle, to facilitate communication with the OSCE structures in Vienna.

The work of the International Secretariat is supported by the invaluable language and research capabilities provided by a Research Fellowship Programme that was established by the Standing Committee in July 1994. Since then, the International Secretariat has benefited from the assistance of 180 young people from 26 participating States. Presently there are five Fellows working in the Copenhagen office and two in the Vienna Liaison Office.

The Secretariat maintains the records of Assembly activities and programmes carried out since it was established, including the minutes of all official meetings. The Secretary General, along with the Administrative Director, is responsible for the financial affairs and administration of the Assembly under the guidance and oversight of the Treasurer, Roberto Battelli (Slovenia). Independent audits by outside auditors are carried out at least once a year. Expenditures have consistently remained within the annual approved budget since the International Secretariat was established in 1993.



Copenhagen Hosts Assembly

The Danish Folketing, as a contribution to the Assembly, provides premises near the Danish Parliament and equipment for the Assembly's use, making Denmark the single largest contributor to the budget of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly.

Each year the Danish Folketing also hosts a meeting of the Bureau in April. The April meeting brings together all of the elected officials of the Assembly to discuss activities, and in particular to prepare for the Annual Session in July.

The meeting serves as an important opportunity for the Rapporteurs of the General Committees to present drafts of their Reports and Resolutions, enabling Members of the Bureau to provide comments and feedback on the drafts.



The 2010 team of Research Fellows: Vera Ragone, Augusta Featherston, Gael Dupont-Ferrier, Alena Blokhina, and Lucas Bauernfeind

The International Secretariat



The Danish Parliament provides premises for the International Secretariat in the centre of Copenhagen



Secretary General
Spencer Oliver

The OSCE PA International Secretariat, which is hosted by the Danish Parliament, is headed by Secretary General Spencer Oliver, and has a permanent staff of 17, including three staff members at the Liaison Office in Vienna.



Deputy Secretary
General
Tina Schøn



Deputy Secretary
General
Gustavo Pallares



Special
Representative
Andreas Nothelle



Presidential
Advisor
Andreas Baker



Director of
Communications
Klas Bergman



Assistant to the
Secretary General
Dana Bjerregaard



Liaison Officer
Marc Carillet



Programme
Officer
Anna Chernova



Senior Counsellor
Semyon Dzakhayev



Logistics Officer
Petra Jezkova



Conference
Co-ordinator
Odile LeLarge



Administrative
Director
Kurt Lerras



Senior Secretary
Connie Mathiesen



Programme
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