

**REPORT OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL
OF THE OSCE PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY
TO THE STANDING COMMITTEE**

Mr. Roberto Montella

VIENNA, 22 FEBRUARY 2018

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Report to the Standing Committee
22 February 2018

OSCE PA Secretary General, Roberto Montella

Since I last reported to the Standing Committee in Andorra, OSCE PA members and staff have continued to be exceptionally busy participating in activities in four continents. We once again express our **gratitude to the Andorran parliament** for hosting the Autumn Meeting.

Following the October 15 elections in Austria, and former **President Christine Muttonen's** departure from parliament, we appreciate President George Tsereteli's willingness to take on the duties as President. His commitment to the OSCE and the Assembly have made this a smooth transition and ensured that the OSCE PA continues to be well-represented at the highest political levels. Under **President Tsereteli's leadership**, the Assembly remains actively engaged, and is co-operating very well with the new Italian Chairmanship of the OSCE.

I take this opportunity to **thank the Danish parliament** for generously hosting our headquarters at no cost to the Assembly, as well as **the Austrian and Italian governments** for their support to the OSCE PA through premises for our Vienna Liaison Office and secondments of staff. Their continued support is a strong contribution to the entire Assembly and the OSCE and deserves our gratitude.

Activities of the International Secretariat in support of Members

In October our election team supported a group of more than 25 parliamentarians deployed to observe the **presidential election in Kyrgyzstan**. Under the leadership of **Azay Guliyev**, who served as Special Co-ordinator of the short-term OSCE observer mission and **Artur Gerasymov**, Head of the OSCE PA delegation, the observers worked very effectively with teams from the OSCE/ODIHR, the Council of Europe PA, and the European Parliament. Together, the observers delivered a clear and effective message.

The International Secretariat was also pleased to support several activities of our **ad hoc committees on migration and on countering terrorism**. Eight parliamentarians, under the leadership of counter-terrorism committee Chair **Makis Voridis**, held several days of meetings in **Vienna in November to meet with OSCE and UNODC** officials and to develop effective co-operation to address the threat of terrorism. The work of the committee was continued in early February with a very successful and a very high level **visit to Brussels** organized by Vice-Chair **Stephane Crusniere**. **Ana Birchall** also shared highlights of the committee's work with partners in the field by participating in a major parliamentary forum on preventing violent extremism in **Milan** last year.

In the field of **migration**, Assembly work continues at a high pace, with the ad hoc committee led by **Filippo Lombardi** conducting **visits to Rome, Bolzano and Brussels** in recent months in fact-finding and policy-focused visits. Ad Hoc Committee Vice-Chair **Pascal Allizard** and member **Alf Dubs** also travelled to **Malta** to participate in a conference organized by the Inter-Parliamentary Union, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean and the Parliament of Malta, which served as parliamentary input to United Nations discussions on the global compact on safe, orderly and regular migration. Filippo Lombardi also briefed the OSCE Permanent Council (PC) on Assembly work, providing PA input to the OSCE governmental side's consultations on the topic.

Former President Muttonen remained active until the end of her term in office, including conducting **visits to the United States and Canada**, and addressing the OSCE's Permanent Council (PC). In her final address to the PC, Muttonen stressed the importance of strengthening dialogue and co-operation between OSCE parliamentarians and the OSCE's governmental representatives, urging all OSCE institutions to work closely together and share their strengths in order to meet current challenges.

President George Tsereteli has been extremely active since he assumed the Presidency on 9 November 2017. He visited the OSCE PA International Secretariat in **Copenhagen** on his first day in office and met with the **Speaker of the Danish Parliament** to reiterate the Assembly's appreciation for Denmark's support to the Assembly. In November the President addressed the Standing Committee of the Parliamentary Assembly of the **Council of Europe**. In December Tsereteli addressed the **OSCE Ministerial Council** meeting delivering an important message to the Ministers of the 57 OSCE participating States, requesting them to strengthen the OSCE and to cherish the great work that the Organization does for the end users – the citizens, the people – of the OSCE products. The Secretariat also supported the President's very successful trips to **Ukraine (including meetings with high-level officials and the OSCE SMM)** and the **United States** (with meetings in **Congress, State Department, National Security Council amongst others**) and dialogue with high-level officials at the **United Nations in New York**.

Our newly appointed **Special Representative for Eastern Europe, Kent Harstedt**, has also continued his efforts at open dialogue in the region with a high-level visit to Belarus last month. His meetings also served as an opportunity to encourage action on reforms recommended by the OSCE/ODIHR and to support their work in the country.

Strengthening the OSCE PA's functioning

With an ever increasing number of activities undertaken by the Assembly, the President has asked several senior Members of the PA to discuss ideas and suggestions on how **to improve and develop our work**. A detailed paper providing much food for thought prepared by **Vice-President Bowness** serves as a very strong contribution to this process. The International Secretariat, with strong institutional memory on Assembly activities and procedures, is pleased to provide support and advice to the Assembly's leadership on this matter.

At the Secretariat level as well, we continue to pursue ways to improve our operations in order to best serve OSCE parliamentarians. Since 1st October the **new Financial Rules** adopted by the Standing Committee in Minsk are in place and our **new Chief of Administration and Finance, Marieta Samac** is also providing the necessary expertise and internal control to fully implement those rules. We are now working together with **Treasurer Barnett** on a new budget which will try to respond to the needs deriving from increased activities in the areas of migration and countering terrorism as well as the need to review and strengthen our historically very successful Research Fellowship programme.

Our offices in Copenhagen and Vienna are always pleased to receive OSCE and Assembly visitors. Such visits, particularly by parliamentary delegations, provide important opportunities for International Secretariat staff to brief parliamentarians on activities and opportunities in the Assembly while, at the same time, offering our visitors a unique opportunity to get acquainted with the work of the Secretariat. Since Andorra, we've been fortunate to host **visits by parliamentarians from Georgia, Norway, the Netherlands and Morocco**, the **Director of the OSCE/ODIHR**, as well as **experts from the foreign ministries of Nordic-Baltic countries, and groups of students from Azerbaijan and Denmark**.

The International Secretariat has continued to work as actively as possible, within our limited resources, in support of all of the many activities described within this report. We continue to operate in a very frugal manner, and with careful planning and use of finances, we have been able to provide the necessary support within existing resources. I'm pleased that once again, our **external auditor** has endorsed and **positively assessed our financial management**, and we will continue to take diligent care of the Assembly's financial resources.

Co-operation within the OSCE and with partners

OSCE PA Members, and the International Secretariat, have continued our outreach activities to ensure that Assembly efforts in all of our areas of work are well co-ordinated with other bodies. In this regard, I want to **warmly welcome the unprecedented initiative of Ambassador Alessandro Azzoni and the 2018 Italian Chairmanship of the OSCE to invite our President to address the Permanent Council at the beginning of the year**, in addition to the traditional address that follows our Annual Session. President Tsereteli's address to the PC this past January, when he outlined our primary activities in the coming year, will help to ensure not only strong co-operation, but improved co-ordination in the OSCE's work. President Tsereteli, and before him President Muttonen, also paid working visits and met with the **OSCE's Representative on Freedom of the Media and the High Commissioner on National Minorities**, respectively. Such high-level co-operation benefits the OSCE overall. **Deputy Secretary General Gustavo Pallares** also shared his expertise, chairing a panel at an OSCE conference focused on the OSCE Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security, which included several high-level participants.

Assembly participation in the **OSCE's 2017 Mediterranean Conference, held in Palermo**, was particularly strong, with OSCE PA Vice-President **Marietta Tidei**, OSCE PA Special Representative on Mediterranean Affairs **Pascal Allizard**, and Chair of the OSCE PA's Ad Hoc Committee on Migration **Filippo Lombardi** all addressing the high-level conference, which was opened with a speech by **Italian Foreign Minister Angelino Alfano**. Many other OSCE PA Members have also taken time out of their busy schedules to work on behalf of the OSCE, including human rights Chair **Ignacio Sanchez Amor**, who addressed the **OSCE's Human Dimension Committee**, and our economic and environmental committee Chair **Nilza Sena**, who travelled to Vienna last month to contribute to the **OSCE's Economic and Environmental Forum**. Such contributions of time and effort, from parliamentarians whose primary duty of course remains in their home parliaments, is a clear demonstration of the commitment that OSCE PA members feel to the Organization.

A large **team of senior Assembly Members** also travelled to **Morocco** for several days of discussion focused on issues related to **promoting religious tolerance and dialogue, human rights, and the issue of foreign terrorist fighters**. The meetings served as an opportunity to solidify relations with our partners in the Moroccan parliament, and the PA delegation welcomed the active engagement of Morocco in meetings of the Parliamentary Assembly.

At the Secretariat level, we have continued to promote close co-operation with counterparts both within the OSCE, and in other organizations. Several members of the Secretariat participated in the annual OSCE meeting of Heads of Missions and Institutions with the OSCE Chairmanship last month, providing a useful opportunity to reinforce our daily co-operation efforts. As Secretary General, I have also maintained **close contact** with **OSCE Secretary General Thomas Greminger**, as well as **ODIHR Director Ingibjorg Gisladottir**, **High Commissioner on National Minorities Lamberto Zannier**, and **Representative on Freedom of the Media Harlem Desir**, all with the intention to **solidify co-operation** and explore further opportunities for common efforts.

I was particularly pleased to host a **visit by Director Gisladottir to Copenhagen**, which provided a useful opportunity to discuss co-operation in the field of **human rights work and election observation**. I hope that we can find additional opportunities to facilitate MP-ODIHR interaction, so OSCE PA members can learn more about the tools that ODIHR has available and the support that the Organization can provide to parliaments in all OSCE countries. We also discussed that when appropriate and possible, we would continue the previously agreed practice that the **CiO's Special Co-ordinator** will also participate in the presentation of **ODIHR's Final Report** following an election, encouraging follow-up at the domestic level to recommendations that our observers propose. On a practical level, our co-operation has continued with the participation of OSCE PA staff in **ODIHR Needs Assessment Mission** visits prepared in advance of the elections in Italy and Russia, providing a useful basis for co-operation from the very inception of an election activity. Also in the field of elections, we have continued our Secretariat-level dialogue with our traditional partners in the field of observation, **ODIHR, the Council of Europe PA, European Parliament and NATO PA**, to ensure the best delivery of services that we – communally – can provide.

Upcoming events

In the coming months, International Secretariat efforts will of course be primarily focused on preparations for the upcoming **Annual Session, to be held from 7-11 July in Berlin**. Having conducted a preparatory visit by senior staff in December, we are confident that all preparations are proceeding very well for what we expect to be a very successful Session. In advance of that meeting, we look forward to welcoming **Bureau Members** back to **Copenhagen** for a meeting that will once again be generously hosted by the Danish parliament.

Preparations for the **2018 Autumn Meeting to be held in Bishkek** are also proceeding apace, with Deputy Secretary General Pallares having led another visit just last month to liaise with our hosts in the parliament and foreign ministry of Kyrgyzstan on the programme and plans. I'm sure that we all look forward to a successful meeting, the first official OSCE PA meeting to be held in Kyrgyzstan. Preparations for the 2019 Annual Session are also in place with Gustavo Pallares and Odile Lelarge recently visiting **Luxembourg**. We are pleased that so many participating States and delegations are expressing interest in hosting OSCE PA events and we look forward to further discussing with you the implications and opportunities that derive from taking on such important responsibility.

With missions planned to observe **elections including in Italy and Russia** in the coming month, an active calendar of the President, additional activities by special groups within the Assembly, we anticipate a busy spring within the International Secretariat. We are, as always, pleased to provide support to Assembly Members in their work on behalf of the OSCE.

In conclusion I would like to personally **thank all the members of the Assembly** for their continued support and for the words of encouragement that the OSCE PA International Secretariat team receives. As I have said several times, the personal interaction with members and the friendship that many share with me is what I most cherish while holding this responsibility and for which I am most grateful.

ANNEX I:

**OVERVIEW OF OSCE PA INTERNATIONAL SECRETARIAT –
INTERNAL STRUCTURES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

THE OSCE PA INTERNATIONAL SECRETARIAT:

- Roberto MONTELLA, Secretary General
- Gustavo PALLARES, Deputy Secretary General
- Semyon DZAKHAEV, Deputy Secretary General
- Andreas NOTHELLE, Ambassador, Special Representative (Vienna Liaison Office)
- Marieta SAMAC, Chief, Administration and Finance

- Andreas BAKER, Chief of the Executive Office
- Marco BONABELLO, Liaison Officer and Advisor
- Dana BJERREGAARD, Head of Document Services
- Marc CARILLET, Deputy Director of the Vienna Liaison Office
- Farimah DAFTARY, Programme Officer
- Anna DI DOMENICO, Executive Assistant
- Tim KNOBLAU, Executive Assistant to the Vienna Liaison Office
- Odile LELARGE, Head of Conference Services
- Kurt LERRAS, Senior Advisor (consultant)
- Bo Hjorth NIELSEN, General Services Manager
- Francesco PAGANI, Chief Political Advisor
- Nat PARRY, Head of Communications and Press
- Stephen PAUL, Chief, ICT Service and Support Section
- Loic POULAIN, Presidential Advisor
- Iryna SABASHUK, Head of Administration for Election Observation

MANAGEMENT

- Roberto MONTELLA, Secretary General
- Gustavo PALLARES, Deputy Secretary General
- Semyon DZAKHAEV, Deputy Secretary General
- Andreas NOTHELLE, Ambassador, Special Representative (Vienna Liaison Office)
- Marieta SAMAC, Chief, Administration and Finance

EXECUTIVE OFFICE

- Andreas BAKER, Chief of the Executive Office
- Marco BONABELLO, Liaison Officer and Advisor
- Farimah DAFTARY, Programme Officer
- Anna DI DOMENICO, Executive Assistant
- Francesco PAGANI, Chief Political Advisor
- Nat PARRY, Head of Communications and Press
- Loic POULAIN, Presidential Advisor
- Iryna SABASHUK, Head of Administration for Election Observation

Election Observation Department

- Iryna SABASHUK, Head of Administration for Election Observation
- Loic POULAIN, Support
- Anna DI DOMENICO, Support
- On a rotating basis all staff are involved in election observation missions

Presidential Activities

- Loic POULAIN, Presidential Advisor
- Farimah DAFTARY, Support
- Francesco PAGANI, Support

Press and Communications

- Nat PARRY, Head of Communications and Press
- Stephen PAUL, Support
- Loic POULAIN, Support

ADMINISTRATION, FINANCE AND HUMAN RESOURCES

- Marieta SAMAC Chief, Administration and Finance
- Stephen PAUL, Chief, ICT Service and Support Section / Accounting Officer
- Dana BJERREGAARD, Head of Document Services
- Marc CARILLET, Deputy Director of the Vienna Liaison Office
- Tim KNOBLAU, Executive Assistant to the Vienna Liaison Office
- Odile LELARGE, Head of Conference Services
- Kurt LERRAS, Senior Advisor (consultant)
- Bo Hjorth NIELSEN, General Services Manager

Conference Services

- Odile LELARGE, Head of Conference Services
- Kurt LERRAS, support
- Bo Hjorth NIELSEN, support

Document Services

- Dana BJERREGAARD, Head of Document Services
- Farimah DAFTARY, Support
- Tim KNOBLAU, Support
- Iryna SABASHUK, Support

Information Technology

- Stephen PAUL, Chief, ICT Service and Support Section
- Bo Hjorth NIELSEN, support

Research Assistants Programme

- Iryna SABASHUK, Programme Manager
- Marco BONABELLO, Program Manager (Vienna)
- Dana BJERREGAARD, Support
- Marc CARILLET, Support

VIENNA LIAISON OFFICE

- Andreas NOTHELLE, Ambassador, Special Representative
- Marco BONABELLO, Liaison Officer and Advisor
- Marc CARILLET, Deputy Director of the Vienna Liaison Office
- Tim KNOBLAU, Executive Assistant to the Vienna Liaison Office
- Francesco PAGANI, Chief Political Advisor

STATUTORY ACTIVITIES AND OUTREACH PROGRAMMES

General Committee on Political Affairs and Security

- Gustavo PALLARES, Director
- Loic POULAIN, support
- Andreas NOTHELLE, Member of the Vienna PC based FSC and 1st Committee

General Committee on Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and Environment

- Semyon DZAKHAEV, Director
- Nat PARRY, support
- Marco BONABELLO, Member of the Vienna PC based 2nd Committee

General Committee on Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions

- Andreas BAKER, Director
- Farimah DAFTARY, support
- Marc CARILLET, Member of the Vienna PC based 3rd Committee

Sub-Committee on Rules of Procedure and Working Practices

- Semyon DZAKHAEV, Director
- Andreas BAKER, Support
- Iryna SABASHUK, Support

Counter-terrorism

- Marco BONABELLO, Programme Manager
- Farimah DAFTARY, Support
- Loic POULAIN, Support

Migration

- Farimah DAFTARY, Programme Manager
- Loic POULAIN, Support
- Marco BONABELLO, Support

Belarus

- Francesco PAGANI, Programme Manager
- Farimah DAFTARY, Support

Moldova

- Loic POULAIN, Programme Manager
- Farimah DAFTARY, Support

Gender Issues

- Gustavo PALLARES, Programme Manager
- Marc CARILLET, Support

South East Europe

- Andreas NOTHELLE, Programme Manager
- Francesco PAGANI, Support
- Marc CARILLET, Support

Mediterranean

- Gustavo PALLARES, Programme Manager
- Marc CARILLET, Support
- Marco BONABELLO, Support
- Anna DI DOMENICO, Support
- Loic POULAIN, Support

Central Asia

- Farimah DAFTARY, Programme Manager
- Gustavo PALLARES (ad interim), Support
- Andreas BAKER (ad interim), Support

South Caucasus

- Andreas BAKER, Programme Manager
- Iryna SABASHUK, Support

Ukraine

- Andreas NOTHELLE, Programme Manager
- Iryna SABASHUK, Support
- Francesco PAGANI, Support