

REPORT

OSCE PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY 12TH WINTER MEETING VIENNA, AUSTRIA 21-22 FEBRUARY 2013



Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY

Prepared by the International Secretariat of the OSCE PA

REPORT ON THE 2013 WINTER MEETING OF THE OSCE PARLAMENTARY ASSEMBLY

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Summary



Since February 2002, the OSCE PA has held an annual Winter Meeting at the Hofburg Congress Centre in Vienna. The Winter Meeting provides an opportunity for the three General Committees to hold discussions and be briefed by high-level OSCE officials. The meeting also serves as an opportunity for parliamentarians to hear presentations by the three committee rapporteurs and to discuss their draft reports for the upcoming Annual Session. The Winter Meeting is the second largest event in the OSCE PA calendar.

More than 200 parliamentarians gathered in Vienna on 21-22 February 2013 for the Winter Meeting, which opened with a call by President Riccardo Migliori for remembering the OSCE's roots in tackling challenges of the present and future.

"Whether we are debating changes to our security forces or the new technology affecting media freedom, the plight of refugees or the protection of borders, solutions for the future can be found in the road map signed in our past, the Helsinki Final Act that binds us all together here," said President Migliori.

The meeting included addresses by the President of the Austrian Parliament, Barbara Prammer; OSCE Secretary General Lamberto Zannier; the Special Envoy of the Ukrainian Chair-in-Office of the OSCE, Viacheslav Yatsiuk; OSCE PA Special Representative on Mediterranean Affairs Alcee Hastings and OSCE PA Special Representative on Gender Issues Hedy Fry. Opening the special debate on the situation in Syria, the Sahel, and North Africa, Hastings appealed to the parliamentarians to examine their consciences when dealing with the crisis in Syria.

Following Hastings' address, Marcela Villarreal, from the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization, presented the work of her organization in relation to the Syrian humanitarian crisis. She called on the parliamentarians to show more political will in responding to the situation.

"In Syria, the situation is nothing less than dramatic and very quickly deteriorating," she said, noting that one in seven Syrians is not receiving the proper amount of food. She

explained the impact of conflict situations with long-lasting effects and the trends with people migrating from rural areas, noting that the repercussions for children could last several generations. She urged members of parliament to ensure that the issue of hunger and food security remains high on the agenda.

During the debate, more than 20 parliamentarians took the floor. The efforts of Turkey, Jordan and Lebanon to tackle the Syrian refugee crisis were particularly praised. The crises in the Sahel and in North Africa were also touched on by several delegations, focusing in particular on issues of humanitarian aid, terrorism, migration policies, military intervention, protecting women and children, economic co-operation and trafficking in arms, drugs and human beings.

A meeting of the Standing Committee on 22 February focused primarily on OSCE election observation activities. Following a lively debate, the meeting closed with President Migliori announcing a committee of parliamentarians headed by Francois-Xavier de Donnea (MP, Belgium) that will have a mandate to negotiate on behalf of the Assembly with the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights regarding improved co-operation in election observation.

The meeting also included sessions of the PA's three general committees, which heard reports from the committee rapporteurs and vice-chairs, as well as presentations by a range of experts. The First Committee included a discussion on the security community, the Second Committee debated border co-operation and the Third Committee discussed press freedom.

First Joint Session of the General Committees



OSCE Parliamentary Assembly President Riccardo Migliori officially opened the joint session of the three committees and introduced the Special Envoy of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office Viacheslav Yatsiuk. He then gave the floor to the President of the Austrian Parliament Barbara Prammer.

Barbara Prammer, President of the Austrian Parliament

Barbara Prammer congratulated Ireland for the successful organization of the Dublin Ministerial Council and for having achieved positive results during its Chairmanship. She stressed the significant role of civil society in the Helsinki +40 process, but regretted that decisions had not been reached in the human dimension. She further expressed hope for the Ukrainian Chairmanship and stated that Austria endorses its priorities of resolving protracted conflicts, promoting conventional arms control, and fighting trafficking and terrorism. She highlighted the importance of participating States compromising to achieve tangible outcomes.

Prammer indicated that mutual transparency is particularly important in the context of politico-military co-operation and expressed hope that progress will be made on confidence-building measures. She pointed out that the nuclear test by the North Korea on 12 February underlined the importance of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, and reiterated Austria's call for all countries to sign the international ban.

Prammer also highlighted the importance of election observation and restated the Austrian



Parliament's commitment to take part actively in this activity.

Riccardo Migliori, President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly

Thanking the Austrian Parliament for its active participation in the Assembly, President Migliori reminded the participants of the overall role and mission of the Organization and called upon States to continue working toward the Annual Session in Istanbul. He pointed out that the Organization was forged at a time when the world was divided by the Cold War, but noted that unfortunately, it is still divided by frozen conflicts, inequality, and different approaches to issues such as migration. The president said that it is therefore more important than ever to promote bilateral and multilateral comprehensive agreement and stressed that the OSCE's full potential is still unrealized.

Migliori discussed emerging threats related to new technologies, noting in particular the challenges of cyber-crime, hatred, intolerance, racism, violence, trafficking, and exploitation of children. He commended the Irish Chairmanship for working diligently on these issues in 2012 and expressed hope that the Ukrainian Chairmanship continues on this path.

Viacheslav Yatsiuk, Special Envoy of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office

Viacheslav Yatsiuk emphasized the significant role of the OSCE in addressing the challenges of the 21st century. He mentioned that the

First Joint Session of the General Committees



Viacheslav Yatsiuk

Organization provides a unique platform to discuss security issues in a transparent manner and that Ukraine will strive to be a bridge-builder during its Chairmanship. Noting that the Ministerial Council will be held on 5-6 December 2013 in Kyiv, Yatsiuk solicited the PA's support, and provided a short overview of the priorities of the Ukrainian Chairmanship.

Yatsiuk mentioned several priorities including the implementation of OSCE politico-military commitments, the Transnistrian settlement process, tackling social and economic problems, a possible update of the 2003 Maastricht strategy, as well as environmental challenges and energy-related issues. He also stated that Ukraine will strongly support youth and civil society engagement in these processes and expressed hope that the anniversary of the Helsinki Final Act will be celebrated not only by commemoration but also by realizing concrete steps forward. In conclusion, Yatsiuk stated the Chairmanship's readiness to work with the PA.



Debate

The special envoy was reminded of a provision in the OSCE PA Monaco Declaration requesting that at the end of each Chairmanship there be a specific report to the national parliaments and national OSCE PA delegations on the preceding year's work. A Georgian delegate asked about the issue of conflict prevention within the framework of the Helsinki +40 process, and how the format can be used to resolve protracted conflicts including in Georgia.

Yatsiuk pointed out that the Chairmanship's activities are reported on in the OSCE Annual Report. The special envoy stated that conflict settlement is at the core of the Organization's work, emphasizing that the Chairmanship does not differentiate between the various protracted conflicts and will do everything possible to facilitate the process of conflict resolution.

Other issues touched on included election observation, energy security and human rights.







General Committee on Political Affairs and Security



**Asa Lindestam,
Chair of the First Committee**

First Committee Chair Asa Lindestam (Sweden) introduced the agenda, which included presentations by the rapporteur, the vice-chair, and the OSCE High Commissioner for National Minorities. In addition, the Committee heard a panel discussion with the former Chair of the EU Military Committee, General Hakan Syren, OSCE Security Committee Chair Ambassador Ildem of Turkey, Ambassador Ian Kelly of the United States and Ambassador Andrey Kelin of Russia on building a comprehensive OSCE security community.

**Susanne Bratli,
Vice-Chair of the First Committee**

Vice-Chair Susanne Bratli (Norway) presented her interim report on developments related to PA recommendations adopted at the 21st Annual Session in Monaco. The vice-chair noted that conflict resolution is a core competence of the OSCE, with protracted conflicts meriting special attention. Bratli



Susanne Bratli



discussed the 5 February visit of Afghan President Hamid Karzai to Oslo in which a bilateral agreement was reached between Norway and Afghanistan for financial contributions totaling EUR 100 million a year until 2017 to be distributed towards education, good governance and training of police officers.

**Vilija Aleknaite Abramikiene,
Rapporteur of the First Committee**

Rapporteur Vilija Aleknaite Abramikiene outlined what she hopes will be the basis for a renewal of commitments made in 1999 at the Istanbul Summit. Arms control, protracted conflicts, border security and the 2014 withdrawal of international troops from Afghanistan are key political and security issues facing the OSCE region. She welcomed the progress made in Transdniestria and the open dialogue between representatives of Russia and Georgia both within the framework of the Geneva Discussions and those taken on their own initiatives.

Aleknaite Abramikiene noted that the priorities highlighted by the Ukrainian Chairmanship were key areas of concern to the Parliamentary Assembly and welcomed future co-operation on these issues.

**Ambassador Knut Vollebaek,
OSCE High Commissioner on National
Minorities**

Knut Vollebaek noted the successes of the Helsinki Final Act's provisions on minority issues, including the agreement of norms and practices, and the codification of rights and duties within a legal framework, all of which have added to the efforts of identifying and

General Committee on Political Affairs and Security

resolving past discrimination.

“The fact that we still face complex minority-related issues does not mean we have failed,” said Vollebaek. “It just means we have more to do.” He encouraged reinvigorating the spirit of Helsinki to counter a polarized political discourse and noted a recent trend in societies being less respectful towards diversity.

**Hakan Syren,
Former Chairman of the
EU Military Committee**

Former Chair of the EU Military Committee General Hakan Syren noted that in the wake of the economic crisis while some countries have cut their defence budgets they have failed to curb inefficient spending. Broadening co-operation and co-ordination could answer many of the defence questions raised through budget cuts, he said. “Europe has to be able to bear a greater part of the burden in its immediate neighbourhood,” said Syren. The initiative by the Ministers of Defence in 2010 has set the stage for new ways to enhance efficiency through better co-operation between armed forces, while “pooling and sharing” has become the preferred approach of the European Defence Agency.

**Tacan Ildem,
Chair of the OSCE Security Committee
and Permanent Representative of
Turkey to the OSCE**

Ambassador Ildem, the Chair of the OSCE Security Committee and Permanent Representative of Turkey to the OSCE, stressed the importance of the OSCE and its unique forum for dialogue, but said there is a need to develop a new culture of commitment in the Organization. Although the Permanent Council meets every Thursday, he said, its current level of engagement is insufficient, with a need to bring about solid principles, common values and commitments. “It is unfortunate that after so long we have not achieved a solution to the protracted conflicts,” said Ildem. “We need to reinvigorate the process and take all necessary measures to prevent conflicts in the future.”

There needs to be mobilization and co-operation on every possible level in order to achieve the best possible results, he said.

**Ian Kelly,
Permanent Representative of the United
States to the OSCE**

Ambassador Kelly reiterated that the OSCE is continuing to build a security community which is necessary for the future of the OSCE region. However, he said, the Organization as a whole generally lacks guidance. Kelly acknowledged that the Organization’s dependence on consensus is both its strength and weakness. This does not mean that the OSCE does not have a purpose, he said, it just needs to be modernized.

Kelly spoke of the need for the OSCE to co-operate with States bordering Afghanistan, develop confidence-building measures and promote transparency to help combat threats along with the use of non-military resources to strengthen regional security.

**Andrey Kelin,
Permanent Representative of the
Russian Federation to the OSCE**

Ambassador Kelin argued that the security community is sometimes undermined by exaggerations and hyperbole. In principle, the OSCE could carry out a cohesive security community, but there are additional steps that need to be taken, said Kelin.

There needs to be a resolution on the international legal personality of the Organization in order to further legitimize its work, he stressed. In addition, developing standards for election observation is essential to the OSCE’s success, he said.

Debate

The parliamentarians discussed various aspects of a security community, focusing on protracted conflicts, transnational threats, and how to update OSCE commitments approaching the 40th anniversary of Helsinki. Members also debated how to enhance trust among States in the OSCE.

International co-operation between the OSCE and other organizations was stressed as a means of facilitating further support and stability during the withdrawal of ISAF forces and the transition of Afghanistan through the Kabul Process.

General Committee on Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and the Environment



Roza Aknazarova

Roza Aknazarova, Vice-Chair of the Second Committee

Presenting the follow-up report on the 2012 Monaco Declaration, Roza Aknazarova (Kyrgyzstan) noted that the international community has increasingly come to view excessive austerity measures as counter-productive. Participating States should seek alternative solutions to tackle the economic crisis, she said, urging policymakers to promote environmentally friendly economies through green growth strategies.

In view of the Ukrainian Chairmanship's declaration that the energy issue will be one of its priorities for 2013, the Parliamentary Assembly should offer itself as a partner to further develop the energy dialogue, Aknazarova said. She welcomed the decision to institutionalize the Economic and Environmental Dimension Implementation Meeting as an annual OSCE meeting.

Michael C. Camuñez, U.S. Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Market Access and Compliance

Michael Camuñez, who serves as one of President Barack Obama's representatives to the United States Helsinki Commission, said that the work of the OSCE's Second Dimension has never been more important than it is today. The rise of global markets has profoundly changed our economies, he said, and with the distributed, internationalized approach to research and development, the global sourcing of supply chains and manufacturing, the cross-border flows of data, capital and intellectual property, there is a growing need for

greater economic integration on issues such as standards, regulations, trade facilitation and investment policy. He commended the Ukrainian Chairmanship for having selected energy security and sustainability as a central focus this year. Solidarity between OSCE participating States should be improved to move from mere dialogue to informed action, he said.

Christos Stylianides, Rapporteur of the Second Committee

Christos Stylianides (Cyprus) said that the most notable problems in the Second Dimension are unemployment and the lack of social cohesion, with austerity measures generally proving counter-productive in addressing the economic crisis. Rather than pursuing austerity, he urged structural reform of social and economic policies to stimulate growth potential and open markets, especially in the countries most affected by the crisis. He emphasized green growth as a potential solution to many of these issues. Regarding migration, he said, there is a need for control, improved rights protection and effective systems to help migrants adapt in their new countries.

Olga Algayerova, Chair of the OSCE Economic and Environmental Committee and Permanent Representative of Slovakia to the OSCE

Olga Algayerova presented the main issues being worked on by the OSCE Economic and Environmental Committee this year, including transport and trade corridors, good governance and fighting corruption, public awareness and participation in decision-making, and protection of energy infrastructure. She welcomed the resolution the Assembly adopted in Monaco on renewable energy and discussed the important work of the OSCE field presences, which she called "a visible comparative advantage of our organization."

Halil Yurdakul Yigitgüden, Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities

Halil Yurdakul Yigitgüden, in his first address to the Assembly as Co-ordinator of

General Committee on Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and the Environment

OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities, previewed the agenda of the 21st OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum, to be held in April. He described the office's priorities for 2013, which include anti-corruption, capacity-building and exchanges of good practices, migration, transport systems, environmental security, confidence-building, good governance, training, and action-oriented policies. He reminded the parliamentarians that 2013 is the United Nations-designated international year of water co-operation, which is also supported by the OSCE.

Before joining the OSCE, Yigitgüden served in the Turkish Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources and worked in the private sector as a consultant on energy economics.

José Ignacio Sánchez Amor, OSCE PA Special Representative on Border Co-operation

José Ignacio Sánchez Amor (Spain), the PA's new Special Representative on Border Co-operation, discussed the various facets of border co-operation and explained the need to include border co-operation as an instrument in conflict prevention and resolution. He encouraged colleagues to view border conflict zones as areas for reconciliation.

Sánchez Amor identified the training of police and customs officers as important in addition to arms control, stressing the need for constant co-operation on these matters. He pointed to the European Union as an example of best practices on the international level but stressed the need to respect local governments' actions based on subsidiarity principles. Policies should be developed in mutual co-opera-

tion, especially regarding trafficking, he said. He concluded by saying that the OSCE should implement horizontal trans-border policies to prevent new conflicts and to create cultural, social, and economic links.

Penny Staches Brohs, OSCE Border Unit

Welcoming the appointment of Sánchez Amor as Special Representative on Border Co-operation, Penny Staches Brohs pointed out that this issue is one that truly crosses the three dimensions of the OSCE's comprehensive view of security. She detailed the activities of the OSCE Border Unit, emphasizing the OSCE's priority of securing borders, co-operation with other entities, border security management and capacity-building. As they provide expertise, some issues are especially sensitive, she said, such as border delimitation and demarcation. Brohs mentioned the example of their efforts regarding the Caspian Sea and presented the activities of the OSCE Border Management Staff College.

Martín Guillermo Ramírez, Secretary General of Association of European Border Regions

Martín Guillermo Ramírez presented the work of the Association of European Border Regions, emphasizing that with its bottom-up process, the association adds value to the top-down development that often guides border co-operation. He detailed the EU's success on this topic and explained the current expansion of their work, with local governments and in other regions of the world.

Debate

In the debate, parliamentarians raised various issues related to border co-operation, including water management and environmental concerns, challenges in Central Asia, and the funding of the OSCE Border Management Staff College. Tax evasion and fair tax policies were also discussed, as were green growth, job creation and boosting trade. Delegates also touched on energy security, youth unemployment and renewable energy.



Martín Guillermo Ramírez and José Ignacio Sánchez Amor





General Committee on Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions



**Matteo Mecacci,
Chair of the Third Committee**

Chairing the meeting, Matteo Mecacci informed the Assembly that it would be his last as a Member of the OSCE PA, following the results of recent elections in Italy. Highlighting the vital work the committee is doing for all OSCE countries east and west of Vienna, he encouraged Members to listen closely to those who have a direct stake in humanitarian issues.

He regretted that in Dublin, the Ministerial Council failed to adopt a decision on fundamental freedoms in the digital age and stressed that it is the Parliamentary Assembly's duty to continue this debate.

Dunja Mijatovic, OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media

Dunja Mijatovic said that in fulfilling her mandate, she regularly works closely with parliamentarians and other stakeholders in addressing issues of concern. She regretted that laws are not always adopted in a transparent and democratic manner by parliaments, often lacking consultation with civil society. She thanked those lawmakers, however, who have worked to promote important reforms.

Discussing new technologies, she mentioned the success of the OSCE's recent Internet Freedom Conference held in Vienna and emphasized the complementary relationship between freedom and security.

Mijatovic called for equal attention to be paid to all participating States in the field of media freedom, stressing that there are almost weekly incidents of threats against journalists.

Karin Deutsch Karlekar, Project Director at Freedom House

Karin Deutsch Karlekar presented Freedom House's latest global survey on press freedom, highlighting the broad range of press freedom within the OSCE area. She explained that respect for freedom of the press is deteriorating in several countries, detailing several case studies of curtailed media freedom both east and west of Vienna. Karlekar called for reforming restrictive laws and increasing pressure on governments that limit media freedom.

Tamara Kaleyeva, President of the Adil Soz International Foundation for Protec- tion of Freedom of Speech (Kazakhstan)

Tamara Kaleyeva focused on the situation of media freedom in Kazakhstan. She described cases in which journalists' rights have been violated, independent newspapers and websites shut down and TV channels blocked. Moreover, she explained that the new criminal code and the new law on terrorism will not improve the situation. Kaleyeva encouraged the authorities in Kazakhstan to promote dialogue with civil society, and called on the OSCE to further focus on media freedom.

Zhanna Litvina, Chairperson of the Belarusian Association of Journalists

Facing ongoing legal challenges and other obstacles, the media in Belarus is unable to fulfill its functions, said Zhanna Litvina. She highlighted three cases that contrast the conditions under which state and non-state actors work. Speaking about prosecution, access to information, and financial inequalities, Litvina called for legislative reform and for an end to state harassment of independent journalists.

Andrei Kolesnikov, Deputy Editor, Columnist for *Novaya Gazeta* (Russian Federation)

Andrei Kolesnikov stressed that freedom of speech in Russia is at a tipping point. He said that although freedom of expression is in short supply, it is still possible to freely access

General Committee on Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions



Ann Phelan

information. He identified several ongoing problems, including state control of media, the decline of independent media, and the limited reach of independent media. Kolesnikov welcomed, however, the rise of new media for enabling the rapid spread of information.

Christian Mihr, Executive Director of Reporters without Borders (Germany)

Christian Mihr pointed to examples in the German press of potentially offensive, but nevertheless protected, free speech, citing in particular a recent case of a magazine satirizing Pope Benedict XVI. The main pillars of media freedom, he said, include a robust rule of law and independent court decisions that are fairly implemented.

Vuk Žugić, Chair of the OSCE Human Dimension Committee and Permanent Representative of Serbia to the OSCE

Ambassador Žugić called for best practices to be discussed and to review human dimension reform. He invited the Chairman of the Third Committee of the OSCE PA to address the OSCE Human Dimension Committee.

Janez Lenarčič, Director of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institu- tions and Human Rights

Ambassador Lenarčič highlighted the main activities of the ODIHR and the field operations regarding the human dimension, discussing, in particular, the Human Dimension Implementation Meeting held in Warsaw.



Isabel Santos

Isabel Santos, Vice-Chair of the Third Committee

Isabel Santos (Portugal) presented the follow-up report on the Monaco Declaration with a focus on OSCE reform and the proposals of the Civic Solidarity Platform, a transatlantic network of non-governmental organizations. She underlined that media professionals need support to fight against threats.

She mentioned the political prisoner issue and applauded the work of the OSCE field operations. Santos concluded that the OSCE PA must continue to play a leading role in election observation.

Ann Phelan, Rapporteur of the Third Committee

Ann Phelan (Ireland) presented her ideas for the Third Committee report and draft resolution to be debated at the Annual Session in Istanbul. She will focus on the role of education in the area of human trafficking, with a special emphasis on national and ethnic minorities. Her report will explore how education and awareness can benefit these individuals to make them less vulnerable to trafficking.

Debate

Issues raised by parliamentarians included the impact of social media on young people, freedom of speech, reasonable right to privacy, the future of newspapers and media pluralism, freedom of expression, the OSCE Internet Freedom Conference, criminal codes and journalists in prison.





Standing Committee Meeting



The Standing Committee consists of the OSCE PA's 57 Heads of National Delegations and Members of the Bureau. Meeting three times a year – at the Winter Meeting, the Fall Meetings and the Annual Session – the Standing Committee guides the work of the Assembly, approves its budget, and appoints the Secretary General. The 2013 Winter Meeting's Standing Committee met on 22 February and was addressed by the PA's President, Treasurer, and Secretary General as well as by Special Representatives and leaders of election observation missions.

PA President Riccardo Migliori presented a report on his activities since being elected at the Monaco Annual Session with special emphasis on election observation missions, his visit to Turkey and the Syrian border, his intervention at the Dublin Ministerial Council, and a meeting with the UNODC's Executive Director Fedotov.

Roberto Battelli, Assembly Treasurer, reminded Members of the Standing Committee that the budget has been frozen for four consecutive years in absolute terms, putting great pressure on the PA's professional staff. Battelli also reported that the

Assembly's external auditor issued a positive audit report with no qualifications. Thanking Denmark, Austria and the countries that have hosted meetings, Battelli affirmed the need for continued support and called on those countries that have not hosted a meeting yet to do so in the future.

Secretary General Spencer Oliver stressed the importance of financial transparency and explained that the PA is the only OSCE Institution which has its financial records assessed by outside auditors. He thanked his staff in Copenhagen and in Vienna for their work.

Oliver then explained the background for the President's decision taken at the Dublin Ministerial Council regarding election observation missions. Since the ODIHR had failed to implement the 1997 Co-operation Agree-

ment, the President – after consultations with the Bureau – deemed the agreement no longer valid or operative. The Secretary General also explained how the PA had successfully observed election observation missions in Romania and Armenia without assistance from the ODIHR.

As heads of recent election observation missions, Battelli reported on Montenegro, Matteo Mecacci (representing Walburga Habsburg Douglas) on Ukraine, Joao Soares on the United States, Wolfgang Grossruck on Romania, and Tonino Picula on Armenia. They

"We have ensured that our budget complies with and reflects the efforts of all of our national legislatures to minimize expenses."

Treasurer Roberto Battelli

presented the main conclusions from each of these observation missions and also included descriptions of their collaboration, or lack thereof, with the ODIHR.

Members discussed the decision taken by the President at the Ministerial Council on the 1997 Co-operation Agreement with ODIHR. The President mandated the Ad Hoc Committee on Transparency and Reform of the OSCE under the leadership of Francois-Xavier de Donnea to work on this issue.

President Migliori said that de Donnea and his committee should have the mandate to verify respect for the co-operation agreement and to try to resolve conflicts between the two OSCE election-observing institutions. The Ad Hoc Committee will report on progress made during the Bureau Meeting in April.



Closing Joint Session of the General Committees



Lamberto Zannier

Chaired jointly by OSCE PA Vice-President Wolfgang Grossruck (Austria) and Assembly President Riccardo Migliori, the closing joint session of the three committees consisted of reports by OSCE Secretary General Lamberto Zannier and OSCE PA Special Representative on Gender Issues Hedy Fry, and a special debate on “How OSCE countries should respond to crises in Syria, the Sahel and North Africa.”

Lamberto Zannier, Secretary General of the OSCE

Ambassador Zannier praised the added value of the interaction between the OSCE PA and other OSCE Institutions. He noted several positive results of the Ministerial Council in December, including the launch of the Helsinki +40 process, a new participating State (Mongolia) joining the Organization, and a decision on combating transnational threats.

However, he regretted the inability of the participating States to reach consensus on other matters, emphasizing the fact that there are fundamentally different visions of security desired by the participating States.

As possible improvements, Zannier called for more engagement with civil society, new partnerships, and more active engagement on conflict prevention and confidence- and security-building measures. He listed a new set of threats that go beyond terrorism and trafficking, to include new challenges in the Mediterranean region, a lack of resources, good governance and trust.

Following his address, parliamentarians asked questions regarding election observa-



Hedy Fry

tion, the compatibility of OSCE work with partner States, the budget – especially regarding the Border Management Staff College – and exchanges of expertise between local governments and field operations.

Hedy Fry, OSCE PA Special Representative on Gender Issues

OSCE PA Special Representative on Gender Issues Hedy Fry (Canada) addressed the parliamentarians on the issue of gender equality, providing updates on some of the OSCE activities as well as declarations and resolutions that have been discussed this year. Focusing on progress in her own country of Canada, Fry noted that “we have seen remarkable successes by women leaders from across the political spectrum over the last year.”

“In our federation of 13 provinces and territories,” she said, “six provincial or territorial governments are currently led by women, meaning that approximately 87 per cent of Canada’s population now lives in a province run by a woman.” She noted however that Canada still has room for improvement in ensuring greater representation of women in parliament, where only a quarter of the seats are held by women.

Fry called on the Parliamentary Assembly to ensure that the promotion of gender equality and women’s participation in parliamentary decision-making remain a priority.

She also spoke about the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security and its application to the OSCE region, as well as in conflict-affected regions such as Mali, Libya and Syria. She

Closing Joint Session of the General Committees



Alcee Hastings

encouraged sharing best practices and also reflecting on common challenges in the gender dimension.

During the discussion, parliamentarians raised issues such as the impact of economic, political, environmental and food crises on women and children, the need to strengthen efforts on this issue and to debate the value of quotas, as well as to remember that the goal is not for women to assume a position of dominance over men but simply to be equal.

Alcee Hastings, OSCE PA Special Representative on Mediterranean Affairs

Former OSCE PA President and current Special Representative on Mediterranean Affairs Alcee Hastings (United States) opened the special debate with a statement on the situation in Syria. Noting that he had just visited a refugee camp in Turkey, Hastings praised the exemplary work being done by the Turkish Government and called on the parliamentarians to take action.

“Inside this Organization, I have seen confusion among you,” he said. “We should look for that common good.” Recalling a massacre that occurred in one Syrian town last May, Special Representative Hastings asked every father and mother in the room to imagine the horror of their own children being killed before their eyes and asked them how they would feel if the world ignored their plight.

Emphasizing that he was not speaking on behalf of the U.S., he expressed his personal view that Syrian President Bashar al-Assad should be sent to the International Criminal Court and put on trial for war crimes. He further emphasized that sufficient support must be provided to help countries deal with refugees.



Marcela Villarreal

Marcela Villarreal, UN Food and Agriculture Organization

Marcela Villarreal presented the work of her organization, informing the PA that every day 870 million people go to bed hungry around the world. She called on the parliamentarians to show greater political will, especially in regards to addressing the situation in Syria.

“In Syria, the situation is nothing less than dramatic and very quickly deteriorating,” she said. Out of the total population of 22 million, three million are reported as food insecure and most of the infrastructure has been destroyed.

The FAO is currently working very closely with other organizations such as the World Food Programme, she said, which focuses on more immediate needs of providing emergency food to people in need. She concluded by calling on the members of parliament to ensure that the issue of hunger and food security remains high on their agenda.

Debate

More than 20 parliamentarians took the floor in the debate, with many praising the efforts of Turkey, Jordan and Lebanon to tackle the Syrian refugee crisis. Members also discussed the crises in the Sahel and in North Africa, with general agreement that the situation constitutes a threat for the security of the OSCE area if not the whole world. Delegates raised issues of humanitarian aid, trafficking terrorism, migration policies, military intervention, and economic co-operation.

Some reiterated their support for a peaceful resolution of the Syrian conflict through increased dialogue.









**DRAFT PROGRAMME OF THE 12th WINTER MEETING
OF THE OSCE PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY**

Vienna, 21 – 22 February 2013

Thursday, 21 February 2013

09.00 – 11.45 **General Committee on Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions**
(*Neuer Saal, 2nd floor*)

12.00 – 13.15 **Joint Session of the three General Committees:** (*Neuer Saal, 2nd floor*)

Opening by the President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, Mr. Riccardo Migliori

- Address by the President of the Austrian Parliament, Ms. Barbara Prammer
- Address by the President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, Mr. Riccardo Migliori
- Address by the Special Envoy of the Chairperson-in-Office of the OSCE, Mr. Viacheslav Yatsiuk, followed by a question & answer session
- Address by the Secretary General of the OSCE, Ambassador Lamberto Zannier, followed by a question & answer session

13.15 – 15.15 Lunch Break

15.15 – 18.00 **General Committee on Political Affairs and Security** (*Neuer Saal, 2nd floor*)

15.15 – 18.00 **General Committee on Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and Environment**
(*Ratsaal, 5th floor*)

18.15 *Departure of buses from Hofburg to the Austrian Parliament*

18.30 **Reception offered by the Austrian Parliament** (*Austrian Nationalrat*)

Friday, 22 February 2013

09.00 – 12.00 **Standing Committee Meeting** (*Ratsaal, 5th floor*)

12.00 – 13.30 Lunch break

13.30 – 16.30 **Joint Session of the three General Committees:** (*Neuer Saal, 2nd floor*)

Report by the OSCE PA Special Representative on Gender Issues, Ms. Hedy Fry, followed by a debate

Special Debate: *How OSCE countries should respond to crises in Syria, the Sahel, and North Africa*

Closure by the President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, Mr. Riccardo Migliori

* * *



Philippe Nobile



Secretary General
Spencer Oliver

The OSCE PA International Secretariat provides administrative support for the Assembly in its various activities. The Secretariat organizes the meetings of the Assembly, and provides support for election observation projects, special missions and Presidential activities. Its work is carried out in co-operation with other OSCE Institutions and international parliamentary organizations. The Secretariat, which is hosted by the Danish Parliament, is headed by Secretary General Spencer Oliver, and has a permanent staff of 18, including three staff members at the Liaison Office in Vienna.



Deputy Secretary
General
Tina Schön



Deputy Secretary
General
Gustavo Pallares



Special
Representative
Andreas Nothelle



Assistant to the
Secretary General
Dana Bjerregaard



Deputy Director
of Administration
Marc Carillet



Programme
Officer Maria
Chepurina



Programme Director
Anna Chernova



Senior Counsellor
Semyon Dzakhayev



Conference
Co-ordinator
Odile LeLargé



Administrative
Director
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Administrative
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Director of Presidential
Administration Roberto Montella



Editorial Director
Nat Parry



IT-Supporter
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Staff Assistant
Pia Cathrin
Rasmussen



Operations Officer
Iryna Sabashuk



Director of
Communications
Neil Simon



Bringing together 323 parliamentarians from across the 57-nation OSCE region, including Europe, Asia and North America, the OSCE PA provides a forum for parliamentary dialogue, leads election observation missions, and strengthens international co-operation to uphold commitments on political, security, economic, environmental and human rights issues.

Recognized as a regional arrangement under Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter, the OSCE is a primary instrument for early warning, conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict rehabilitation in its area. The Parliamentary Assembly, originally established by the 1990 Paris Summit to promote greater involvement in the OSCE by national parliaments, is the oldest continuing OSCE Institution.

The basic objectives of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly are:

- 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 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 in July;
- Committee 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.



OSCE Parliamentary Assembly

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