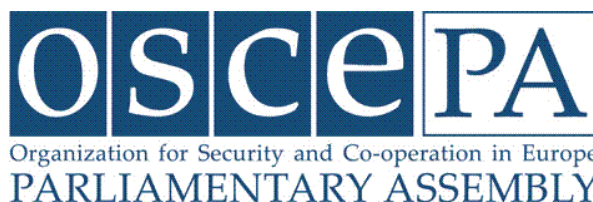


REPORT

OSCE PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY 13TH WINTER MEETING VIENNA, AUSTRIA 13-14 FEBRUARY 2014



Prepared by the International Secretariat of the OSCE PA

REPORT ON THE 2014 WINTER MEETING OF THE OSCE PARLIAMENTARY 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 ideas for the upcoming Annual Session. The Winter Meeting is the second largest event in the OSCE PA calendar.

Some 250 parliamentarians from 55 OSCE participating States and four Partners for Co-operation participated in the 13th OSCE PA Winter Meeting, held at the Hofburg Congress Centre in Vienna on 13-14 February 2014.

The first joint session of the general committees was addressed by President Krivokapic and Barbara Prammer, President of the National Council of Austria. The opening session also featured a special address by Abdul Raouf Ibrahim, Speaker of the Lower House of the Parliament of Afghanistan, and OSCE PA Secretary General Spencer Oliver.

In the First Committee, PA Members heard from Ambassador Dominic Schroeder, Chair of the OSCE Security Committee; Ambassador Adam Kobieracki, Director of the OSCE CPC; Lt. Col. Detlef Hempel, FSC Co-ordinator for the Code of Conduct; and Col. Presenjit Chaudhuri from the Swiss Armed Forces.

The Second Committee was addressed by Ambassador Olga Algayerova, Chair of the OSCE Economic and Environmental Committee, and Dr. Halil Yurdukul Yigitguden, Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities.

Speakers for the Third Committee included the OSCE Permanent Council's Human Dimension Committee Chair Robert Kvile, ODIHR Director Janez Lenarcic and the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media Dunja Mijatovic. Speakers from several OSCE countries also addressed the committee on the rule of law and political prisoners, including: Andrei Sannikov, Civil Campaign for European Belarus; Yevgeniy Zhovtis, International

Bureau for Human Rights and Rule of Law, Kazakhstan; Rashid Hajili, Media Rights Institute, Legal counsel for Anar Mammadli, Azerbaijan; Nurettin Demir, Member of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey.

The Standing Committee met on 14 February, hearing reports about OSCE PA finances and ongoing activities, as well as confirming a new OSCE PA Deputy Secretary General, former Senior Counsellor Semyon Dzakhayev.

The closing joint session of the Winter Meeting featured addresses by OSCE Secretary General Ambassador Lamberto Zannier, followed by a question and answer session, and by OSCE PA Special Representative on Gender Issues Hedy Fry, followed by a debate.

The meeting concluded with a special debate on "The Current Situation in Ukraine," which featured the participation of nearly 30 parliamentarians, including several Ukrainian Members of Parliament from the Communist Party, Batkivshchyna, Party of Regions and UDAR.

On the margins of the Winter Meeting, OSCE PA President Ranko Krivokapic met on 13 February with members of Ukraine's Delegation to the PA, including lawmakers from the government and the opposition. The President and the Ukrainian delegates shared views on the crisis in the country and discussed ways forward. OSCE PA Secretary General Spencer Oliver also participated in the meeting.

In another side meeting, the President met with chairs of the PA's general committees and representatives of their counterpart committees from the OSCE's governmental side, seeking to promote further co-ordination in all three dimensions of security.

First Joint Session of the General Committees



The opening panel just prior to the first joint session

Parliamentary Assembly President Ranko Krivokapic (Montenegro) opened the joint session of the three committees with remarks about the historical significance of holding the Winter Meeting every year in Vienna, the former capital of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. He introduced the keynote speakers for the opening session, President of the National Council of Austria Barbara Prammer, Speaker of the Lower House of the Parliament of Afghanistan Abdul Raouf Ibrahim, and OSCE PA Secretary General Spencer Oliver.

Barbara Prammer, President of the National Council of Austria



Barbara Prammer

President Prammer expressed concern about the situation in Ukraine and welcomed the recent repeal of draconian laws by the Ukrainian government, noting that the country's compliance with its international com-

mitments is a test for the OSCE.

She reported on a symposium being organized by the Austrian Parliament in commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the First World War, examining in particular the premise that "democracies do not wage war against each other." Austria supports the OSCE's engagement in the Western Balkans, Southern Serbia,

Kosovo, and South Caucasus, she said, but believes efforts to resolve these conflicts must be strengthened.

She further noted that Austria prioritizes conventional arms control in Europe, as well as the emphasis on gender mainstreaming within the OSCE, further implementation of the Roma and Sinti Action Plan, and work on the prevention of trafficking in human beings.

As current chair of the Council of Europe, Austria looks forward to promoting further co-ordination and co-operation between the parliamentary assemblies of the CoE and OSCE, President Prammer said.

Ranko Krivokapic, President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly

Noting that the 323 members of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly represent the collective voice of more than a billion individuals across the OSCE area, President Krivokapic said that with their knowledge

of local realities and their extensive governmental experience, OSCE parliamentarians are uniquely qualified to adopt and implement the commitments of the Organization as a whole.

People across the OSCE area continue to find their individual security, rights, and livelihoods undermined and threatened, Krivokapic said, and thus it is important for parliamentarians to redouble their efforts in implementing OSCE commitments. Parliamentarians act as "missionaries of values," he said, and the strength of the Parliamentary Assembly is not only in the diversity of its composition, but its steadfast commitment to promoting mutual understanding. Increased co-operation between parliamentarians and the OSCE governmental side is vital to overcoming the challenges that lay ahead, the President said.



Ranko Krivokapic

First Joint Session of the General Committees



**Abdul Raouf Ibrahimi,
Speaker of the Lower House of the
Parliament of Afghanistan**



Abdul Raouf Ibrahimi

Speaker Abdul Raouf Ibrahimi focused on Afghanistan's achievements since 2001, as well as the current situation in the country and its prospects for "sustainable stability."

Prior to 2001, Afghanistan's administrative and education systems "were completely destroyed; freedom of speech was brutally repressed and there was no room for media activities," said Ibrahimi. Women, despite comprising half the population, were deprived of basic rights and were "prisoners within their own homes," he said.

After 12 years of sacrifices by the people of Afghanistan and its international partners, Afghanistan is today an active and dignified member of the international community, he said. "We currently have a modern constitution, an elected president and an elected parliament as well as elected provincial councils," Ibrahimi pointed out.

"Despite the challenges, our people have successfully participated in two presidential and provincial council elections and two parliamentary elections, and are on the threshold of the third presidential and provincial council elections," he said. "They are preparing with better experience and greater excitement. Women's role and engagement in various areas including

in the parliament and the government institutions has been significantly strengthened."

Going forward, the international community can continue to play a vital role in the peace process in Afghanistan, contributing to the economic and social development of Afghanistan, the Speaker said.

**Spencer Oliver, Secretary General of the
OSCE Parliamentary Assembly**



Spencer Oliver

In his remarks, Secretary General Spencer Oliver noted that the Parliamentary Assembly should be proud of the role that it plays within the Organization, pointing out that in "this room today is the largest gathering you will find within

the OSCE."

"It is a nostalgic room for me," Oliver said. "We negotiated here the Paris Charter. It was in this building that the PA was created in the draft proposal." Nevertheless, despite the fact that the Parliamentary Assembly is the only OSCE Institution that continues to exist in its original form, "some people question whether we are or are not an OSCE Institution, saying that our mandate is only for inter-parliamentary dialogue," the Secretary General said.

"I think it is important to stress that we are not a liability, we are not the barbarians at the gates," he said. "We provide the direct connection between the people and their governments."





General Committee on Political Affairs and Security

First Committee Chair Makis Voridis (Greece) opened the session noting that the upcoming 2015 anniversary of the Helsinki Final Act presents an ideal opportunity to reflect on the future of the OSCE. He introduced the first speaker, Pia Kauma.

Pia Kauma, Rapporteur of the First Committee

Committee Rapporteur Pia Kauma (Finland) discussed democratic oversight of the military and referred to the 2013 Istanbul OSCE PA Declaration which reiterated the need for further updating the Vienna Document in order to increase transparency and predictability in the politico-military dimension. Kauma pointed out that democratic control of the armed forces is possible only when the rest of society enjoys the rule of law, arguing that military spending should be decided solely by democratically elected national parliaments.

The Rapporteur went on to discuss the future of the OSCE and underlined four points of development. First, there is an overwhelming need to strengthen the common political will of all 57 participating States, despite their differences. Second, she stressed the importance of further work and finding new substance for the Vienna Document. The discussion should also include the CFE and Open Skies Treaty.

Third, she stressed that the geopolitical situation has changed and that there are new threats that are relevant to modern security policy, and which demand new responses (e.g., terrorism, cyber warfare, and unmanned aerial vehicles).

Finally, Kauma discussed the role of the OSCE in countries' internal crises. She stressed that the threat of internal conflicts is real, citing the examples of Syria and Ukraine. Kauma urged participants to do everything possible to de-escalate the crises and urged the OSCE to take an active role in the process.

Dominic Schroeder, Chair of the Security Committee of the OSCE Permanent Council, Head of the United Kingdom's Delegation to the OSCE

Amb. Schroeder stated that the OSCE Security Committee's priorities for 2014



take into account the various, and sometimes conflicting, priorities of participating States.

The topics to be discussed by the Security Committee include terrorist financing (including kidnapping for ransom), and secondly on countering radicalisation leading to terrorism, including the return of foreign fighters from conflicts such as the civil war in Syria. The Ambassador expressed hope for fruitful discussions in order to advance common objectives with OSCE PA Special Representative on Anti-Terrorism Nikolay Kovalev (Russian Federation).

Second, Schroeder pointed out that at least one session of the Security Committee will be dedicated to policing issues, with a likely focus on community policing and gender-related issues such as preventing sexual violence against women. Another issue is border security and management as an area in which the OSCE has developed a specialized expertise. Discussions on this topic will be focused on Central Asia given the importance of that region in view of the 2014 transition in Afghanistan. He looked forward to working with the PA's Special Representative on Border Co-operation, Jose Ignacio Sanchez Amor (Spain), on this topic, he said.

Finally, the Ambassador noted the importance of the results of the December 2013 Ministerial Council in Kyiv, particularly the endorsement of the first-ever set of regional confidence-building measures in the area of cyber/ICT security. These initial CBMs are voluntary and are designed to start the process of building contacts, trust and mutual understanding between national experts.

The Ambassador's presentation was followed by a special debate on parliamentary control of the armed forces.

General Committee on Political Affairs and Security

Special Debate - Parliamentary Control of Armed and Security Forces: Ensuring Transparency at the National and International Levels

**Col. Prasenjit Chaudhuri,
Swiss Armed Forces**

Col. Chaudhuri offered a detailed presentation on the substance of the Code of Conduct (CoC), addressing its structure and offering examples of how its provisions have influenced the Swiss Armed Forces, including the national implementation in terms of the legal instruments. He also cited the structure of parliamentary control to which the armed forces are subjected.

He stressed the very detailed nature of provisions in the CoC which, if applied correctly, can help prevent various problematic issues related to rights and duties of the military personnel. Col. Chaudhuri discussed further the CoC's general applications and provisions, focusing primarily on rights and duties, internal security and human rights, as well as international missions and human rights. He concluded his presentation with the CoC objectives and activities of the Swiss Chairmanship for 2014. Finally, he listed possible activities of the OSCE PA to support the development of the CoC.

**Lt. Col. Detlef Hempel,
Forum for Security Co-operation
Co-ordinator for the Code of Conduct**

Lt. Col. Detlef Hempel described the general status of the CoC's implementation. He stated that the information exchanged under the Code doesn't become 'OSCE information' but remains part of a fluid exchange between, and for the benefit of, OSCE participating States. The information addresses domestic elements; intra-state elements; as well as the organization of armed forces and their capabilities. Supplementary information covers areas such as prospects for women and force protection for both genders. Overall there are 420 questions, he said.

The Code offers the German parliament the chance to exercise the fundamental responsibility of democratic control over the armed forces, as well as possibilities in the

form of future seminars and exchanges of best practices, and Col. Hempel encouraged further involvement in these processes by all participating States. The volume of information exchange has steadily increased since the first instance in 1989, with all participating States taking part in 2013.

**Adam Kobieracki
Director of the OSCE Conflict
Prevention Centre**

Amb. Adam Kobieracki stressed the importance of the parliamentary observation of the armed forces as well as the importance of the CoC document itself, mentioning in particular the support of the OSCE Secretariat in promoting the Code.

According to the Forum for Security Co-operation decision of 2008, he said, the OSCE Secretariat is responsible for the organization of at least one conference or workshop a year to help raise awareness and to support the implementation of the Code. Since this decision was taken, the Conflict Prevention Centre has organized several targeted regional seminars around the OSCE region.

For 2014, together with the upcoming OSCE Chairmanship of Serbia, the first OSCE-wide training workshop was planned for OSCE staff members in Belgrade. This first-of-its-kind workshop was intended to help enhance coherence and co-ordination among the OSCE executive structures, he said.

Debate

The presentations of the keynote speakers were followed by a lively debate.

The OSCE parliamentarians who took part generally agreed that parliaments are essential for maintaining democratic control of the armed forces and in ensuring that armed forces comply with international law. They further pointed out the importance of open dialogue on these matters and transparency in the security sector and throughout the politico-military dimension.

OSCE PA Special Representative on Gender Issues Hedy Fry (Canada) emphasized the importance of UN Resolution 1325 and argued for gender-sensitive training being included in military procedures.

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



Second Committee Chair Roza Aknazarova (Kyrgyzstan) introduced the agenda, which included presentations by Committee Rapporteur Roger Williams, the Chair of the OSCE Economic and Environmental Committee and Permanent Representative of Slovakia to the OSCE, Olga Algayerova, and the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities, Halil Yurdakul Yigitguden. These were followed by a special debate on Co-operation in Water Management in the OSCE Area.

Roger Williams, Rapporteur of the Second Committee

Roger Williams (United Kingdom) highlighted a number of matters where he believes the OSCE can better realize the sentiments expressed in the 1975 Helsinki Final Act that “efforts to develop co-operation in the fields of trade, industry, science and technology, the environment and other areas of economic activity contribute to the reinforcement of peace and security in Europe and in the world as a whole.”

Three main developments he pointed out over the years have advanced this vision: the establishment in 1992 of the Economic Forum (renamed Economic and Environmental Forum in 2006); the creation in 1997 of the post of Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities; and the establishment in 2001 of the Economic and Environment Committee of the Permanent Council.

In offering his general ideas for the report and draft resolution to be presented at the Annual Session in Baku, Williams argued that these structures can be used to bring real

improvements in water and food security for the benefit of citizens.

The Rapporteur also reminded participants that OSCE countries should encourage young people to study agricultural science through facilitating transnational courses, and pointed out that the second dimension is comprehensive enough to include every citizen. Everyone must contribute to find concrete actions that will enable the OSCE to achieve shared objectives, he said.

Olga Algayerova, Chair of the OSCE Economic and Environmental Committee

Amb. Algayerova noted that in the past year the OSCE has devoted much of its work to issues such as energy security, energy efficiency, the fight against corruption, and sustainable development. She said that despite significant progress, further dialogue is needed in order to pursue common goals.

The Ambassador highlighted two Ministerial Council Decisions adopted in Kyiv that gave the OSCE a mandate to be more involved in issues such as the environment, energy efficiency, and natural disasters.

She also noted that environmental challenges are among the priorities of the 2014 Swiss OSCE Chairmanship.

Algayerova outlined the main topics of the OSCE Economic and Environmental Committee as follows: mechanisms to assess money laundering risks, gender and the environment, public-private partnerships to address challenges, sharing best practices on sustainable water management, implementation of Ministerial Decision No. 5/13 on Improving the

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

Environmental Footprint on Energy-Related Activities and Ministerial Decision No. 6/13 on Protection of Energy Networks from Natural and Man-Made Disasters.

She noted that there is a lack of consensus for speaking about energy and security in the OSCE. This is a sensitive topic, with unsuccessful attempts having been made in the past to introduce the topic of energy security. As such, the Ambassador expressed satisfaction that two Ministerial Council Decisions on energy security had been adopted.

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

Halil Yurdakul Yigitguden highlighted activities planned by his office for 2014, including the publication of a revised edition of the OSCE Best Practices in Combating Corruption. The office also provides support to field presences' in empowering civil society to participate more actively in decision-making processes, particularly related to preventing corruption, in particular through the OSCE Handbook on Data Collection in support of Money Laundering and Terrorism Financing National Risk Assessments.

In the field of transport, trade and customs, the office intends to build on the main findings and recommendations of the OSCE-UNECE Handbook of Best Practices at Border Crossings. In the field of labour migration management it will release a Spanish translation of the OSCE Gender-Sensitive Labour Migration Policy Guide and a Russian version of the OSCE Handbook on Harmonization and Sharing of Migration Data. Several other priority areas for the office are the issues of water (including water scarcity); climate change, disaster risk reduction, hazardous waste, and environmental good governance.

Special Debate – Co-operation in Water Management in the OSCE Area

Roza Aknazarova, Chair of the Second Committee

Introducing the special debate, Second Committee Chair Aknazarova pointed out that

“there are few issues more fundamental to human security than the issues of energy, food security and water management. The availability and management of water for people across the OSCE area is a topic which transcends the affairs of the individual, the state and the international system like no other.”

“It is becoming increasingly clear how vital water management is, with new forms of energy extraction affecting the water supply, which in turn affects everything, including agriculture and food production,” Aknazarova said.

Debate

Debating the topic, parliamentarians raised various issues related to water management and co-operation, particularly as a security concern. Water was cited as a priority issue for the OSCE, with transboundary water resources highlighted as a particular concern. Water scarcity is an economic, social and human dimension problem with political implications, parliamentarians argued. The role of the OSCE in fostering co-operation on water management was also discussed.

In his intervention, OSCE Co-ordinator of Economic and Environmental Activities Halil Yurdakul Yigitguden discussed water as a strategic resource and an essential element of national and regional security – especially within the context of food or energy security and economic stability. Pointing out that there are more than 150 shared river and lake basins in the OSCE area, Yigitguden noted that there are still several transboundary water basins that lack an agreement, have an insufficient agreement or have no effective implementation mechanisms.

“This is of particular risk in those places that lack good neighbourly relations that could channel potential disputes,” he said.

He underlined that the OSCE as a regional security organization is well placed and has an important role to play in strengthening water co-operation throughout the OSCE area – both through its political processes as well as through the concrete projects by the Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities and the OSCE field operations.





General Committee on Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions



Opening the meeting of the General Committee on Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions on 13 February, Chair Isabel Santos (MP, Portugal), presented the agenda and introduced the first speaker, Committee Rapporteur Gordana Comic (MP, Serbia).

Gordana Comic, Rapporteur of the Third Committee

The Rapporteur said that she would focus her report and resolution on the issue of migration, while also covering issues such as OSCE reform, civil society, and the rule of law.

Comic called for a frank discussion on the attitudes towards migration in the OSCE area, both East and West of Vienna. She particularly emphasized the troubling situation in Western countries where recent legislation and regulations in many countries have restricted or denied access for labour migrants as well as undermined the situation of asylum seekers. She argued that properly addressing these issues requires financial resources, but more importantly transforming social perspectives that are defined by prejudice and stereotypes.

Ambassador Robert Kvile, Chairman of the OSCE Human Dimension Committee

Amb. Kvile provided an outline of the OSCE Permanent Council's Human Dimension Committee's priorities for 2014, which include media freedom and fundamental rights of expression, religion or belief, peaceful assembly and association. Also on the agenda are issues such as non-discrimination, national minorities, protecting human rights in counter-

ing terrorism, gender equality, death penalty and trafficking, he said.

Amb. Kvile stressed that not all OSCE delegations were happy with these priorities, with some arguing that issues lacking consensus should be avoided. But he argued that there is great value in discussing these issues and continuing to work towards consensus, which could hopefully be reached before the 2014 Ministerial Council in Basel.

Dunja Mijatovic, OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media

Mijatovic opened her remarks by stating that the fundamental freedoms of information and of expression are intrinsically linked to the rule of law. Laws on free expression and media freedom must be adopted by legitimate legislative bodies elected through fair and open processes and legislative deliberations must take place in open and pluralistic venues, she said. Such laws must respect international norms, be precisely worded and not open to arbitrary application. Finally, she said that challenges to these laws must be allowed for those affected by them and that the legality of the laws must be decided by independent courts of competent jurisdiction, which enjoy the public's trust and operate in the public's interest independently of partisan political interest.

Janez Lenarcic, Director of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR)

Amb. Lenarcic highlighted several areas of ODIHR's activities in which there is potential for closer co-operation with the PA. Concerning the mandate of human rights monitoring, which is sometimes challenged by OSCE participating States, Lenarcic called for the support of the PA in stressing the importance not only of ensuring the exercise of fundamental rights but also independent monitoring. Lenarcic emphasized that due to the economic crisis, the OSCE region faces increasing instances of intolerance, hate speech and crimes against vulnerable groups. He called on parliamentarians to raise their voices against this trend.

General Committee on Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions

Special Debate – Rule of Law in the OSCE Region

Introducing the special debate, Third Committee Chair Santos stated that the rule of law is a “cornerstone of democracy” and that it should be a major priority for the OSCE. She said that she hoped the debate would focus specifically on the rule of law especially because of her deep concern for the situation of political prisoners in many OSCE countries. Aware of the heated international discussion on the definition of “political prisoner”, she expressed her desire to see the OSCE PA continue to debate this topic in upcoming meetings.

Andrei Sannikov, Civil Campaign for European Belarus

Andrei Sannikov described the human rights situation in Belarus, stressing the OSCE’s role in promoting democracy in Eastern Europe. He expressed gratitude in particular to the Parliamentary Assembly and thanked Christian Holm, Chair of the PA’s Working Group on Belarus, for the attention paid to the situation in his country. Sannikov emphasized that in Belarus many are behind bars simply for standing up for their rights, and he urged PA delegates to do everything possible for their release. He argued that the list of political prisoners is only the tip of the iceberg, since in prison he had met hundreds of people who had also been arrested for political reasons.

Yevgeniy Zhovtis, International Bureau for Human Rights and Rule of Law, Kazakhstan

Yevgeniy Zhovtis brought to the parliamentarians’ attention the controversial issue of definitions of “political prisoners”. In 2012, he pointed out, an expert group of human rights organizations developed criteria for political prisoners in Kazakhstan. For these purposes “political prisoners” are regarded as individuals who are in prison as a result of 1) charges that can be attributed to so-called “political” articles, or 2) discriminatory application of criminal law for political purposes.

Rashid Hajili, Media Rights Institute, Legal counsel for Anar Mammadli, Azerbaijan

Rashid Hajili stated that there are currently dozens of political prisoners in Azerbaijan. He described what he called the arbitrary use of criminal laws by the government against its opponents who are convicted on dubious charges, and further, stated that political prisoners in Azerbaijan are denied release on bail during the investigation and trial. He also described incidents of torture and limitations on legal assistance.

Nurettin Demir, Member of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey

Demir claimed that there is a lack of judicial independence in Turkey, highlighting cases of imprisoned parliamentarians, which he said demonstrates the distortion of the separation of powers to the point where the very functioning of parliamentary democracy is impeded. Recently, several deputies had been released from detention, but he pointed out that MP Engin Alan is still imprisoned, and the Turkish Supreme Election Council stripped Hatip Dicle of his parliamentary mandate. Demir called upon the international community to condemn all acts against the rule of law in Turkey.

Debate

Debating the topics raised by the panelists, parliamentarians raised issues such as how best to understand the rule of law as a normative concept. It was suggested that ideally the rule of law should be understood as a model that conforms with international democratic principles, including an independent judiciary, free media, strong civil society and access to justice in the courts. Ukraine was also mentioned as a particular case in which the OSCE can play a very important role in promoting the rule of law. Another member pointed out that while it is important to examine current violations of the rule of law, it is equally important to address historic violations that continue to undermine relations in Europe.





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 Autumn Meeting and the Annual Session – the Standing Committee guides the work of the Assembly, approves its budget, and appoints the Secretary General. The 2014 Winter Meeting's Standing Committee met on 14 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.

President Krivokapic opened the Standing Committee meeting on 14 February with a report on his activities since being elected at the 2013 Annual Session in Istanbul. Highlighting his involvement in the Kyiv Ministerial Council, Krivokapic spoke of a “renewed spirit of co-operation and co-ordination” between the PA, ODIHR and other OSCE Institutions, and stated his belief that the Organization was ready to continue addressing issues of concern to people across the region.

Treasurer Roberto Battelli (Slovenia) announced that although the PA slightly exceeded its budget for the first time ever during the previous financial year, its finances remained in good shape. Battelli also indicated that he would meet with the PA's auditor in conjunction with the April Bureau Meeting in Copenhagen. He expressed gratitude to members for the increase in the PA's budget agreed at the Istanbul Annual Session, as well as to the Danish and Austrian governments for their continued support in hosting Assembly offices in Copenhagen and Vienna.

Noting ongoing discussions regarding the financial obligations of participating States, Secretary General Spencer Oliver echoed President Krivokapic's previous calls for voluntary contributions to sustain the work of the Parliamentary Assembly, particularly in the field of election observation.

Oliver noted his participation in President Krivokapic's meeting with United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon and expressed hope that future and substantive OSCE-UN co-

operation would follow. He also referenced the PA's efforts to further the Helsinki +40 process through a series of seminars seeking to bring together civil society and academia, and previewed the upcoming Baku Annual Session. Looking ahead, Oliver announced the upcoming involvement of PA election observers in parliamentary elections in Serbia and Hungary.

Members then confirmed Oliver's appointment of Semyon Dzakhaev as PA Deputy Secretary General. Dzakhaev had previously served for six years as the OSCE PA's Senior Counsellor, responsible for the organization of Assembly meetings, liaising with the Russian Delegation and the parliaments of other CIS countries, and assisting the Secretary General in his functions. Dzakhaev has also co-ordinated the work of the General Committee on Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and the Environment and the Sub-Committee on the Rules of Procedure.

Special Co-ordinator Gordana Comic (Serbia) and Adao Silva (Portugal) presented the findings of the election observation missions to the Tajikistan presidential election of November 2013 and the Turkmenistan parliamentary elections of December 2013, respectively. Silva spoke on behalf of Head of Mission Jim Walsh (Ireland).

Finally, members were updated on the activities of the PA ad hoc working groups, covering Moldova, Belarus and Transparency and Reform of the OSCE, followed by presentations of the Special Representatives on South East Europe and Central Asia.



Closing Joint Session of the General Committees



Hedy Fry and Ranko Krivokapic

Chaired by OSCE PA President Ranko Krivokapic, the closing Joint Session of the three General Committees consisted of reports by OSCE Secretary General Lamberto Zannier and OSCE PA Special Representative on Gender Issues Hedy Fry, and a debate on “The Current Situation in Ukraine”.

Lamberto Zannier, Secretary General of the OSCE



Lamberto Zannier

Amb. Zannier emphasized the key role of the Parliamentary Assembly in promoting OSCE values, principles and commitments. He stated that through its activities, including election observation, the OSCE PA delivers a concrete

contribution to the effectiveness of the OSCE and helps raise the visibility of the Organization. He praised the PA and ODIHR for their renewed co-operation on election observation.

The Secretary General said that during the Winter Meeting he and President Krivokapic agreed to develop further the interaction between the OSCE and its Parliamentary Assembly, including the possibility of joint engagement in certain areas. Amb. Zannier noted that the 20th Ministerial Council in December reached consensus on a solid and balanced package of decisions, providing a sound basis for the work of the Swiss Chairmanship in 2014.

Amb. Zannier emphasized that new security challenges are increasingly elusive, trans-

national and cross-dimensional. He stressed that the globalized nature of these security threats demands an internationally co-ordinated response. In this context, he insisted the Helsinki +40 process is a vehicle to reflect about common security in the OSCE area, the way the Institutions of the OSCE work together and the effectiveness of the Organization. He called for an inclusive debate, with input from parliamentarians, civil society organizations and academic experts. He welcomed the launching by the OSCE PA of its own Helsinki +40 Project.

Following his address, the Secretary General fielded questions from the parliamentarians about the security of the OSCE support team during the election in Afghanistan, the situation in Ukraine and the 2014 budget.

Hedy Fry, OSCE PA Special Representative on Gender Issues

Special Representative Hedy Fry (Canada) recalled that gender equality is best measured by examining how policies affect men and women in the reality of their daily lives. Fry stated that overall, the OSCE region has done well on

gender equality relative to other countries in the world but that the pace of progress has been slow. She regretted that making an assessment was difficult in the absence of measurable goals, evaluative mechanisms, data collection and gender-based analysis.

Fry assessed how the OSCE PA fared in each of the six priority areas of the Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality adopted by the OSCE in 2004. Concerning the first priority of developing a legal framework for gender policies, she encouraged parliamentarians to examine their own countries to see whether gender equality has been inscribed in law. Regarding the second priority of preventing violence



Hedy Fry

Closing Joint Session of the General Committees

against women, she expressed concern about the increasing levels of violence against women. With regard to the third priority of increasing the participation of women in public and political life, she stressed that only 15 OSCE participating States have reached the 30 per cent threshold of women in parliament.

The fourth priority of the Action Plan was about developing women's participation in conflict prevention, crisis management, post-conflict and reconstruction of economic and social lives. Fry emphasized that in 51 countries of the world sexual violence was used in areas of conflict, but that women had to be seen not only as victims but as part of the solution to conflicts.

She praised the strong push of the OSCE PA on the fifth priority of providing equal economic opportunities to men and women. She invited parliamentarians to consider the negative impact on women of policies made to deal with the economic downturn. Finally, concerning the sixth priority of establishing national mechanisms for the advancement of women, she underlined that progress was slow and encouraged parliamentarians to move things forward.

Fry concluded her address by saying she hoped to hear about the steps taken by parliamentarians to advance the six priority areas of the Action Plan at the Annual Session in Baku.

During the discussion, several parliamentarians highlighted the progress their countries have made in the area of gender equality and women's rights, on topics such as human trafficking and the participation of women in public and political life.

Special Debate: The Current Situation in Ukraine

In a debate on Ukraine introduced by OSCE PA Vice-President George Tsereteli (Georgia), parliamentarians discussed various aspects of the crisis, urging that steps be taken toward restoring democracy and stability in



George Tsereteli



Olena Bondarenko of the Ukrainian Delegation participates in the Special Debate.

the country, with parliamentarians condemning the acts of violence committed on both sides. MPs stressed the importance of upholding the right to freedom of expression and freedom of assembly while promoting a political solution to the conflict.

Delegates called for a peaceful resolution of the situation through constructive dialogue, with some highlighting the relevance and importance of the OSCE as a platform for such dialogue. Several Members from Canada, Poland, Spain, Italy and Romania, as well as members of the Ukrainian opposition, called for the active engagement of the OSCE and other organizations to increase efforts to facilitate peace and reconciliation.

Some warned of the potential negative consequences of sanctions, emphasizing the importance of non-interference in the internal affairs of a country, while others stressed that sanctions play a vital role in increasing pressure in order to uphold OSCE values, and that the PA should speak out whenever those values are challenged. Several argued, however, that external pressure could threaten to undermine Ukraine's democratic structures and could foment a "new Cold War" in the OSCE area.

In his concluding statement, President Krivokapic expressed his gratitude for the solidarity expressed for Ukraine and the delegates' readiness to help in restoring peace and stability in the country. Stating that "Ukraine is an important part of our family," the President assured the delegations that the OSCE would attempt to help facilitate constructive dialogue, if so wished by Ukraine. In closing, he expressed once more his hope for a peaceful resolution of the conflict, and urged the country's leadership to act responsibly toward that goal.









**DRAFT PROGRAMME OF THE 13th WINTER MEETING
OF THE OSCE PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY**

Vienna, 13-14 February 2014

Thursday, 13 February 2014

- 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)*
Address by the President of the National Council of Austria, Ms. Barbara Prammer

Special Address by the Speaker of the Lower House of the Parliament of Afghanistan, Mr. Abdul Raouf Ibrahim, Guest of Honour

Address by the President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, Mr. Ranko Krivokapic

Report by the Secretary General of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, Mr. Spencer Oliver
- 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 National Council /Nationalrat)*

Friday, 14 February 2014

- 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 Secretary General of the OSCE, Ambassador Lamberto Zannier, followed by a question & answer session

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

Special Debate on: *The Current Situation in Ukraine*

Closure by the President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, Mr. Ranko Krivokapic

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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 four staff members at the Liaison Office in Vienna.



Deputy Secretary
General
Gustavo Pallares



Deputy Secretary
General
Semyon Dzakhiev



Special
Representative
Andreas Nothelle



Director of Elections
Andreas Baker



Assistant to the
Secretary General
Dana Bjerregaard



Deputy Director of
Administration
Marc Carillet



Programme Officer
Maria Chepurina



Office Assistant
Farimah Daftary



Conference
Co-ordinator
Odile LeLarge



Administrative
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Kurt Lerras



Director of Presidential
Administration
Roberto Montella



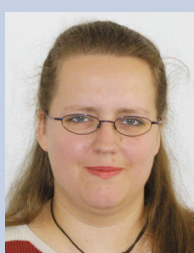
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Francesco Pagani



Editorial Director
Nat Parry



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General Services Officer
Pia Cathrin
Rasmussen



Operations Officer
Iryna Sabashuk



Communications
Director
Richard Solash



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

International Secretariat of the OSCE PA

Tordenskjoldsgade 1

1055 Copenhagen K

Denmark

Tel: +45 33 37 80 40

Fax: +45 33 37 80 30

E-mail: international.secretariat@oscepa.dk

Webpage: www.oscepa.org