

REPORT

OSCE PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY'S 20TH ANNUAL SESSION BELGRADE



*Strengthening the OSCE's
Effectiveness and Efficiency – A New
Start After the Astana Summit*

REPORT ON THE 20TH ANNUAL SESSION OF THE OSCE PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY



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Summary

Hosted by the Serbian Parliament, the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly's 20th Annual Session took place at the historic Sava Centre in Belgrade from 6 to 10 July 2011.



The 20th Annual Session of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly was held from 6 to 10 July 2011 in Belgrade, Serbia, under the theme of “Strengthening the OSCE’s Effectiveness and Efficiency – A New Start After the Astana Summit.” It concluded with the elections of Assembly Officers and the adoption of the Belgrade Declaration.

Parliamentarians from across the OSCE region voted on 10 July to pass the Belgrade Declaration, a political document filled with recommendations for national parliaments and the Organization for Security and Co-operation Europe on economic, security and human rights issues.

“This Belgrade Declaration should remind us all that the best days of the OSCE are ahead of us,” said President Petros Efthymiou (Greece). “Since the beginning our region has constantly changed, and now it is imperative for the OSCE to change as well. We look forward to governments, parliaments and the OSCE implementing these recommendations.”

Parliamentarians re-elected President Efthymiou to a second one-year term on the final day of the Session. Treasurer Roberto Battelli (Slovenia) was re-elected to a two-year term.

The three General Committees elected new

Officers to one-year terms on 9 July. In the General Committee on Political Affairs and Security, Karl-Georg Wellmann (Germany) was re-elected Chair; Susanne Bratli (Norway), Vice-Chair and Vilija Aleknaite Abramikiene (Lithuania), Rapporteur.

The General Committee on Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and Environment elected Serhiy Shevchuk (Ukraine) as Chair; Bruce Hyer (Canada), Vice-Chair; and Tony Lloyd (United Kingdom), Rapporteur.

In the General Committee on Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions, Matteo Mecacci (Italy) was elected Chair; Alain Neri (France), Vice-Chair; and Coskun Coruz (Netherlands), Rapporteur.

Vice-Presidents were elected to three-year terms on the final day. Wolfgang Grossruck (Austria) was re-elected, while Walburga Habsburg Douglas (Sweden) and Tonino Picula (Croatia) were elected after having served as Chair of the Third Committee and Rapporteur of the First Committee, respectively.

Several meetings were held on the margins of the Annual Session, including a side meeting on Belarus, a bilateral Armenian-Azerbaijani meeting, a working lunch on gender issues and an event on organ trafficking.

Belgrade Declaration



OSCE PA President
Petros Efthymiou

At the close of each Annual Session, the Assembly adopts a Declaration with recommendations in the fields of political affairs, security, and economic, environmental and human rights issues, represents the collective voice of the OSCE parliamentarians and helps shape OSCE and national policy.

OSCE parliamentarians voted on 10 July to pass the Belgrade Declaration with recommendations for national parliaments and the OSCE on economic, security and human rights issues.

To strengthen the effectiveness and efficiency of the OSCE, the Belgrade Declaration recommends, *inter alia*, that the OSCE change the consensus rule for OSCE decision-making, at least on personnel, budget and administration matters. Further, the OSCE Permanent Council should allow the public and the press to attend its meetings. The OSCE should also provide assistance in North Africa, if asked, in the fields of democracy and human rights.

In the field of economic and environmental affairs, the Belgrade Declaration recommends that energy infrastructure be developed mindful of “environmental threats and nuclear safety.”

Further, the international community should create a global system to notify governments of natural disasters, co-ordinate international assistance to affected areas, and promote international investment to help redevelop hard-hit communities. The document also recommends countries invest in environmentally safe industries and energy-saving technologies.

In the human dimension, the Belgrade Declaration calls on participating States to implement in full the commitments they have assumed in the fields of human rights, fundamental freedoms, democracy and the rule of law. To this end, the Assembly recommends utilizing the “consensus minus one” procedure in cases of “clear, gross and uncorrected violations of OSCE commitments.” The Declaration It is also recommended that the Permanent Council hold bi-weekly meetings to consider human rights issues.

Members also approved 23 resolutions on a host of issues, including human rights in Belarus, cyber security, human trafficking, internet freedom, nuclear safety and organ trafficking.





Inaugural Plenary Session



Speaking at the Opening of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly's 20th Annual Session, President Petros Efthymiou (Greece) called for significant changes to the operations of the OSCE to make it

more effective in addressing modern political and security crises.

Noting the historic importance of the Sava Centre, built in 1977 to host the first working meetings of the Conference for Security and Co-operation in Europe, Mr. Efthymiou recalled the OSCE's success in South-East Europe as a model for its role in other parts of the OSCE region. Reforms, however, are needed in the Vienna-based operations, said Mr. Efthymiou.

"For the OSCE to be as effective as it has been in the past in regions like this one, I recommend the Ministerial Council meet twice a year to create more opportunities for high-level political consultations," Mr. Efthymiou said. "It is also high time that the OSCE change its consensus-based decision-making process in times of crisis so no one country can alone hold up needed progress on human security issues."

Mr. Efthymiou stated that the OSCE, despite having helped to change the course of history in Europe, is now in a state of crisis. He regretted the fact that at the Astana Summit in December only past commitments were reaffirmed while the Organization failed to define its plans for the future.

The President said the real strength of the OSCE lies in its comprehensive conception of security and called for more co-operative work between the various structures of the Organization.

"The Parliamentary Assembly is fully part of this Organization and has real legitimacy as it represents the people in the OSCE area," he said. He called for a closer working relationship between the Assembly and the OSCE's governmental side.

Speaker of Parliament Slavica Dukic-Dejanovic

Speaker of the Serbian Parliament Slavica Dukic-Dejanovic noted the significance for Serbia of hosting the Assembly's 20th Annual Session.



The fact that the gathering was being held in Belgrade, she said, "is a singular recognition for Serbia, as a founder of the OSCE and a State which consistently implements the basic postulates of the OSCE in the spheres of political-security, economy and human rights in practice."

Ms. Dukic-Dejanovic said, "It is my message and hope that the session in Belgrade will mark a truly new beginning for the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly so that it might take a central position in the OSCE family in the upcoming period and continue to be a strong and integrating factor in the development of co-operation."

Prime Minister Mirko Cvetkovic

Serbia's Prime Minister Mirko Cvetkovic emphasized the importance of the OSCE as a strategic partner for his country and praised the work of the local OSCE Mission in promoting the rule of law and reconciliation in Serbia, describing the Mission as "creating a better future, co-operation, and a common European perspective."

He stressed Serbia's devotion to the OSCE principles and considers the Organization as a strategic partner in dealing with new challenges such as terrorism, organized crime, human trafficking, energy security and climate change.

The Prime Minister said that this Annual Session will contribute in reaching the common goal of greater security in the region.

Inaugural Plenary Session

Speaking about European integration, the Prime Minister also emphasized the importance of the EU for Serbia not only in economic terms, but also in terms of common European values.

He stated that gaining the status of a candidate state in the EU is currently the biggest priority for the country.

OSCE Chairman-in-Office Audronius Azubalis



In his second address to the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, Lithuanian Foreign Minister and OSCE Chairman-in-Office Audronius Azubalis discussed the work of the Chairmanship broadly

halfway through his term.

He stressed the resolution of protracted conflicts as a priority for the Chairmanship and expressed regret that the recent Kazan summit on the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict failed to produce a breakthrough. Minister Azubalis also mentioned his work on Moldova, Georgia, Belarus and Afghanistan.

Speaking about the importance of recent events in North Africa, he said, "The OSCE should stand ready to support these partners. There lies a great promise here for the role of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly."

OSCE Secretary General Lamberto Zannier

In one of his first official addresses as Secretary General of the OSCE, Ambassador Lamberto Zannier spoke about political leadership within the Organization.

He said that he looked forward to regular discussions with parliamentarians and mentioned that he has already initiated a fruitful dialogue with President Efthymiou and OSCE PA Secretary General Spencer Oliver.

"Promoting effectiveness of the OSCE has been put on the top of my agenda," Amb. Zannier said.

He called for a pragmatic relationship between the OSCE and the OSCE PA

and mentioned the possibility of appointing a Deputy Secretary General in Vienna.

Amb. Zannier presented some of the issues that still need to be confronted at the OSCE, including multi-year planning in the context of frozen budgets, the system of limited term mandates, and the establishment and recognition of a legal personality for the Organization.

Furthermore, he stated that political transition in the Mediterranean should be a priority for the OSCE and stressed the need for a conference on security and co-operation in the Mediterranean.



OSCE PA Special Representative on Gender Issues Hedy Fry

In her second address to the Assembly as Special Representative on Gender Issues, Hedy Fry (Canada) called for passage of legislation to promote gender equality, mainstreaming of gender in all aspects of policy, active promotion of female candidates in elections, and sharing of best practices.

Focusing her report on the theme of economic independence, she reminded the parliamentarians that poor women are especially vulnerable in times of economic uncertainty. Citing reports from the European Union, World Bank, and United Nations, she said that when women are given economic independence, GDP and productivity increase significantly.

"Gender equality is not only a human rights issue, it also one of economic efficiency," Dr. Fry said. She also called for greater representation of women in the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, including its leadership.





Standing Committee



The Standing Committee consists of the 55 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.

In his report to the Standing Committee on 16 July, President Efthymiou expressed confidence that future co-operation with the new OSCE Secretary General, Lamberto Zannier, would be fruitful. Nevertheless, he said he regretted the lack of transparency in the Secretary General's recruitment.

Mr. Efthymiou also expressed concern over the outsourcing of OSCE functions to the International Peace Institute and called for improved dialogue with the Chairmanship on this issue.

Mr. Efthymiou provided the Standing Committee with a brief description of his recent activities including visits to Moldova, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, meetings with the European Parliament and the Interparliamentary Assembly of the CIS, as well as speeches he has made at universities in the United States and the United Kingdom.

Treasurer Roberto Battelli (Slovenia) reported on the good financial health of the Parliamentary Assembly and answered related questions.

He proposed that the budget for 2011-12 remain frozen, which was approved unanimously by the Heads of Delegations.

OSCE PA Secretary General Spencer Oliver informed the Standing Committee about the activities of the International Secretariat during the past year, including a move to new premises provided by the Danish Parliament. He emphasized the increasingly active role played by OSCE parliamentarians in the work of the Assembly and in support of the multi-faceted activities of the OSCE.

The Standing Committee approved 25 supplementary items for general debate. Four supplementary items, dealing with human rights in Belarus, women's representation at the Parliamentary Assembly, combating transnational organized crime, and implementing

the UN action plan on combating trafficking in persons, were assigned to be debated in Plenary Session.

The Standing Committee delegates heard reports from the leaders of recent election observation missions to Kazakhstan, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey. Francois-Xavier De Donnea (Belgium), head of the informal group on election observation, presented the group's work and expressed his concerns over different institutions issuing separate contradictory statements which undermine the credibility and efficiency of the OSCE as a whole. The Ad Hoc Committees on Belarus, Moldova, and Transparency and Accountability in the OSCE also reported on the progress made in their respective fields.

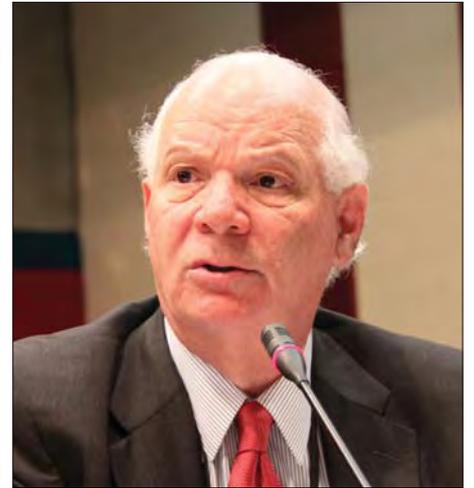
OSCE PA Special Representative on Migration Kathleen Ferrier (Netherlands) informed the Standing Committee of her activities, including visits to Armenia and Kazakhstan. She also stated that the OSCE would benefit from a network of migration policy focal points on the ground in participating States.

The Special Representative for Afghanistan, Michel Voisin (France), reported on his visit to the country. He emphasized the lack of security in Afghanistan and reminded delegates that the withdrawal of troops would not be conducive to ensuring a peaceful transition.

Petur H. Blondal (Iceland), Special Representative on the OSCE Budget, advocated for the Organization to allocate more resources to field operations and called for updating and improving the current OSCE financial guidelines to include independent auditing.

Roberto Battelli (Slovenia), Special Representative on South East Europe, reported on his activities over the past year, including two election observation missions to Bosnia and Herzegovina and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.







First General Committee on Political Affairs and Security



Under the Chairmanship of Karl-Georg Wellmann (Germany), the First General Committee on Political Affairs and Security debated a wide range of issues included in the report and resolution of Rapporteur Tonino Picula (Croatia) on strengthening the OSCE's effectiveness and efficiency. The report of the Kyrgyzstan Inquiry Commission (KIC) was presented by former Special Representative for Central Asia Kimmo Kiljunen (Finland), and provided for a lively debate

In his report, Mr. Picula reiterated President Efthymiou's calls for OSCE reform, stressing that while globalization continues to accelerate, multilateral organizations are lagging behind. His resolution is intended to provide a programme for meeting these challenges, he said. "This resolution will help the OSCE function more efficiently to be able to help strengthen new government and non-government institutions when asked," he said.

To ensure greater transparency and accountability, the OSCE Permanent Council should allow public and the press to attend its meetings, his resolution states.

The resolution also recommends modifying the consensus rule for OSCE decision-making,

at least for decisions related to personnel, budget and administration. It encourages the OSCE to employ outside, independent auditors and make those audits available to the Parliamentary Assembly. The resolution was passed after debate on 43 proposed amendments, of which 18 were approved.

Dr. Kiljunen presented to the Committee the KIC report on the June 2010 violence in southern Kyrgyzstan, noting that one of the triggers for the violence was the political vacuum created by the 7 April 2010 overthrow of the Kurmanbek Bakiyev government. Citing the KIC report, Dr. Kiljunen noted that some of the acts committed during the events amounted to crimes against humanity.

Dr. Kiljunen pointed to the willingness of Kyrgyzstan's President Roza Otunbayeva to reform the judicial system and said that although the government had been critical about the report's findings, it has planned to establish a commission to monitor and implement the report's recommendations. The Delegation from the Kyrgyz Republic highlighted that no single ethnic group was at fault for the tragic events in June 2010. While critical of some elements of the KIC report, the Delegation noted the need for reconciliation.

Election of Officers

Chair: Karl-Georg Wellmann (Germany)

Vice-Chair: Susanne Bratli (Norway)

Rapporteur: Vilija Aleknaite Abramikiene (Lithuania)

Supplementary Items

The Committee debated and passed four supplementary items related to violent extremism, national minorities, Mediterranean political transition, and the situation in Moldova.

After a spirited debate and a close vote, the

First General Committee on Political Affairs and Security



Committee voted down an item that would have proposed enlarging the OSCE partnership to include the Palestinian National Authority and Lebanon.

The Committee passed an amended version of the supplementary item on countering violent extremism and radicalization that leads to terrorism, sponsored by Mr. Coskun Coruz (Netherlands). The resolution encouraged OSCE participating States to share best practices and to engage with OSCE executive structures and fund roundtables and trainings on approaches to counter radicalization and violent extremism that lead to terrorism.

The supplementary item on Moldova, sponsored by Walburga Habsburg Douglas (Sweden) and presented by Francois-Xavier De Donnea (Belgium), reaffirmed support for the 5+2 negotiating format to resolve the Transnistrian conflict and appealed to the Russian Federation to finalize withdrawal of its troops from Moldova.

Sponsored by Riccardo Migliori (Italy), the amended resolution on national minorities expressed hope that parliaments will study the compatibility of their legislation with the principles of the 2008 Bolzano Declaration, noting that the question of protecting national minorities is a crucial issue for human rights and conflict prevention.

The resolution on Mediterranean political transition sponsored by Benjamin L. Cardin (United States) condemned government-sponsored violence against the people of Libya and Syria, called for an immediate halt to the violence exercised by the Syrian authorities, and

encouraged Mediterranean Partners to solicit OSCE and OSCE PA expertise in governmental reform, elections, press freedom and civil society development. Sen. Cardin reminded his fellow parliamentarians that “the basic principles of our Organization apply to the Mediterranean region.”

The resolution also called on the United Nations, the OSCE, the European Union and other organizations to assist countries who are helping people displaced by the instability in Libya and Syria.

Armenia, Azerbaijan agree to Special Representative for the South Caucasus

On Friday 8 July, President Petros Efthymiou hosted a meeting with the Delegations of Armenia and Azerbaijan to discuss the appointment of President Emeritus Joao Soares (Portugal) as Special Representative for the South Caucasus with a mandate to also work towards a solution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

Both Delegations welcomed this appointment and expressed their willingness to work with Mr. Soares.

President Efthymiou also informed the delegations that following his visit to the region and other areas with protracted conflicts, he had been working on putting the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict on the agenda of the OSCE PA. He said having a meaningful discussion on this topic would help foster better understanding of the conflict. The Delegations of Armenia and Azerbaijan welcomed this idea.

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



Second Committee Chair Roland Blum (France) opened the first session of the Second Committee on 7 July by outlining the agenda for the coming days and reflecting on the importance of building on the Astana Summit.

In addition to the main resolution, seven supplementary items were debated and adopted by the Committee, dealing with topics including labour trafficking, migration, gender and economic independence, free movement of information, cyber security, agricultural land use, and nuclear safety.

Report and Resolution

Mr. Blum raised the issue of Greece and the Eurozone and called for more solidarity within the OSCE community. He also expressed his regret over the catastrophe at the Fukushima nuclear plant in Japan. With nuclear power likely continuing to be used in Europe, where it accounts for 35 per cent of the energy supply, he called for greater safeguards on the industry. Finally, he called for better control of migration flows from the Mediterranean area.

Committee Rapporteur Serhiy Shevchuk (Ukraine), presenting his report for the Committee, said, “We must all learn new lessons from this year’s catastrophe in Japan. To save more lives and speed up international assistance, we

need to develop a global disaster planning and preparedness system.”

Mr. Shevchuk’s speech was followed by a lively discussion, with participation from more than a dozen different delegations. In response to the issues raised by the parliamentarians, Mr. Shevchuk warned Members against making rapid decisions to abandon nuclear energy despite the high costs of maintaining nuclear plants – even after they have been closed down as in the case of Chernobyl.

The adopted resolution calls for an increase in nuclear energy safety and for the creation of a global disaster response system, which would rapidly notify governments of natural disasters, co-ordinate international assistance to affected areas, and attract foreign investment to spur redevelopment in hard-hit communities. The resolution was agreed to with 13 amendments debated, out of which seven were approved.

Supplementary Items

Kathleen Ferrier (Netherlands) introduced a supplementary item concerning migration policy in the OSCE area, which called on States to “better co-ordinate migration policies and monitor their implementation.” The item also encouraged the OSCE States to promote information exchange on the issue and proposed establishing a network of “national focal points for migration.” The resolution was adopted.

The Committee also adopted a supplementary item on better utilization of agricultural land to prevent malnutrition and uncontrolled migration. Introduced by Khachik Harutyunyan (Armenia), the measure calls for greater invest-

Election of Officers

Chair: Serhiy Shevchuk (Ukraine)

Vice-Chair: Bruce Hyer (Canada)

Rapporteur: Tony Lloyd (United Kingdom)

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



ment in agriculture in developing countries and better use of land by both developed and developing countries.

A resolution promoting cyber security, sponsored by Francois-Xavier de Donnea (Belgium), urged closer international co-operation on information and communication technologies as well as an increase in confidence-building measures. The resolution was agreed to overwhelmingly.

The supplementary item on nuclear safety and environmental protection, introduced by Vilija Aleknaite Abramikiene (Lithuania), was followed by a long and heated debate on the prospects of the use of nuclear energy in the OSCE area and the possibility of opting out of nuclear power. Out of the 35 amendments proposed, 18 were withdrawn and 17 rejected.

The Committee unanimously adopted the resolution “Free Movement of Information and Knowledge,” presented by Luka Juri (Slovenia). The item encourages affordable Internet access for all population groups and seeks more open government practices to ensure citizens are able to freely access state documents and information. The resolution also welcomes a common strategy to lower telecom prices.

Hedy Fry (Canada) introduced the supplementary item on “Gender, Migration and Economic Independence” stressing that by doing so she was putting some “teeth” in the gender report she presented in Plenary. The resolution, which seeks national policies that facilitate economic opportunities and independence for women, was adopted unanimously.

Lastly, the Committee passed a resolution on combating labour trafficking in supply chains introduced by Christopher Smith (United States).

The measure urges participating States to ensure all goods they purchase are not produced by labor trafficking victims. It also urges governments to insist corporations use independent verification that their supply chains are free from human trafficking.

Gender Lunch focuses on economic independence

Special Representative on Gender Issues Hedy Fry (Canada) opened the Gender Lunch on 7 July by emphasizing the importance of women’s economic independence. She mentioned the plight of female migrants as a population particularly vulnerable to trafficking, prostitution, and poverty.

Gordana Comic, Deputy Speaker of the Serbian National Assembly, spoke of the daily housework many women do for their own families and how this is not considered in a country’s GDP.

Special Representative for Migration Kathleen Ferrier (Netherlands) stressed that for migrants to be able to integrate, the host country needs to give them the opportunities to fully participate in society.

In the debate, Members discussed various gender related issues such as UN Resolution 1325, women’s access to the labour market, and gender aspects of public health and social systems. Several Members shared best practices from their home countries.

Dr. Fry closed the debate stressing that gender equality concerns women and men and that parliamentarians should emphasize the value of educating their public on the issue.

Third General Committee on Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions



With Chair Walburga Habsburg Douglas (Sweden) and Vice-Chair Robert Aderholt (United States) unable to attend the Annual Session, Rapporteur Matteo Mecacci (Italy) took on added responsibilities in the Third General Committee on Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions.

The Third Committee meetings took place from Thursday 7 July through Saturday 9 July. During the meetings the parliamentarians discussed Mr. Mecacci's report and resolution as well as nine supplementary items.

Report and Resolution

In light of recent changes in North Africa and the Middle East, Mr. Mecacci stressed the important role of the OSCE in promoting democracy and human rights. "In a world with many different international organizations active in the fields of promotion of human rights and democratization, such as the Human Rights Council of the UN, the European Union and also NATO, the OSCE must find answers to these challenges in order not to fall into oblivion," he said.

Mr. Mecacci said that the OSCE, in collaboration with other regional organizations, has the responsibility to perform a role in the pro-

cess of transition towards democracy, which is also of political and strategic importance to the Organization.

Regarding the decision-making process within the OSCE, Mr. Mecacci noted that there are still several unresolved conflicts between participating States that need to be addressed. To effectively deal with these crises, he said the Organization needs to use the existing 'consensus minus one' procedure.

Mr. Mecacci's speech was followed by a lively discussion with many parliamentarians welcoming the rapporteur's work. Some Members said they wanted to include more concrete examples of attempts to settle disputes in the OSCE region, and there was considerable discussion about the Organization's use of the 'consensus minus one' procedure.

Out of 25 amendments submitted to the draft resolution, 16 were defeated, seven were adopted and two were withdrawn. The draft resolution was then adopted in its amended form with only three members voting against it. The final result was a set of recommendations on how to improve the functioning of key OSCE human rights instruments including through increased monitoring, and greater support for field operations.

Supplementary Items

The Third Committee discussed and voted on nine supplementary items, of which one was defeated. The supplementary item on 'combat against illicit trade in human organs,' sponsored by Ms. Suzana Grubjesic (Serbia) passed with two amendments.

The item on 'strengthening efforts to combat

Election of Officers

Chair: Matteo Mecacci (Italy)

Vice-Chair: Alain Neri (France)

Rapporteur: Coskun Coruz (Netherlands)

Third General Committee on Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions



racism, xenophobia and foster inclusion,’ sponsored by Special Representative on Migration Kathleen Ferrier (Netherlands) passed with one amendment.

The supplementary item on ‘promoting policies in favour of the Roma population,’ sponsored by Ms. Pilar Lopez (Spain) passed un-amended. The measure emphasizes the need to make access to European Union Structural Funds conditional on desegregating policies. The resolution on promoting policies on equality between women and men of the Roma population, also carried by Ms. Lopez, passed without amendments.

The supplementary item on ‘combatting intolerance and discrimination against Christians in the OSCE area,’ sponsored by Ms. Habsburg Douglas, passed with one amendment.

The measure on ‘the work of the committee on the human dimension of the permanent council of the OSCE,’ sponsored by Ms. Hildegard Faessler-Osterwalder (Switzerland) was also amended once and adopted.

The item on ‘international parental child abductions,’ sponsored by Special Representative on Human Trafficking Christopher H. Smith (United States) was adopted unanimously. This item calls on participating States to ratify or accede to the 1980 Hague Convention on Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction and seek to resolve cases where children are wrongfully separated from their parents.

The supplementary item on ‘witness protection programmes - a challenge to justice and reconciliation,’ sponsored by Mr. Jean-Charles Gardetto (Monaco) was adopted without objec-

tion. The measure calls on States to upgrade their witness protection programs and employ new technologies to help protect the identity of a witness testifying in court.

The committee voted down the proposed resolution on “crimes that cause serious social alarm,” a measure aimed at promoting the use of preventive detention in cases of sex crimes against children and murder.

Working Group holds meeting regarding human rights in Belarus

The Ad Hoc Working Group on Belarus, chaired by Uta Zapf (Germany) held an open meeting on the margins of the Annual Session with representatives of the opposition and human rights groups.

Participants briefed parliamentarians on the grave human rights situation in Belarus, and provided suggestions on ways to move forward in co-operating with Minsk.

Irina Bogdanova, sister of presidential candidate and political prisoner Andrei Sannikov, addressed the meeting on behalf of the families of other candidates, youth activists and journalists currently imprisoned in the country or in exile.

Stanislau Shushkevich, the first head of the Belarusian state, and now leader of the Social Democrats in Belarus, called for Minsk to respect its international commitments on human rights, rule of law and democracy.

Viasna and the Committee on International Control – human rights organizations – urged parliamentarians to maintain pressure on the authorities in Minsk.

Closing Plenary Sessions



Foreign Minister Vuk Jeremic

Addressing the Plenary Session on 9 July, Serbian Foreign Minister Vuk Jeremic announced that Serbia would seek the Chairmanship of the OSCE in 2014.

Noting Serbia's political and geographic significance, Minister Jeremic said that his country is working hard to make up for missed time, noting in particular the co-operation with the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia.

"We would like to make the OSCE something more than just a sum of 56 countries by creating a dynamic area of convergence," he said. He stated that the Organization should streamline its capacities and sharpen its identity, including its legal status. "We should avoid zero-sum agendas. Mistrust and divergences on political concepts of security have to be overcome," he added.

After the Minister's address, Members debated and adopted four supplementary items.

Debate on Resolutions

Chair of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Belarus, Uta Zapf (Germany), presented the resolution on Belarus, stating that the December 2010 elections could not be considered free or fair. Seven of nine opposition presidential candidates have been imprisoned amid widespread political repression in Minsk. The resolution calls for political prisoners in Belarus to be released and calls on Minsk to allow independent human rights experts into the country under the Moscow Mechanism.

Parliamentarians opposing the resolution

said the document was prejudiced against the Belarusian authorities, while those supporting the item expressed concerns about serious human rights violations in the country.

In addition, Ms. Zapf noted that the reopening of the OSCE Office in Minsk would enhance the relationship between Belarus and the international community and benefit Belarusian society at large. The resolution passed with six out of seven proposed amendments adopted.

The Assembly also adopted three supplementary items without amendments: "Women's Representation at the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly," "Implementation of the United Nations Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons," and "Combating Transnational Organized Crime."

Presenting his resolution on women's participation in the PA, Jordi Guillot (Spain) reminded parliamentarians that nearly a third of all delegations are exclusively male.

The human trafficking item, sponsored by Viktor Guminsky (Belarus), urges States to strengthen co-operation on the United Nations action plan, address demand for all forms of exploitation, and hold exploiters accountable with enhanced punitive measures to deter their actions.

The crime-fighting measure, sponsored by Vice-President Riccardo Migliori (Italy), specifically calls for parliaments to strengthen legislation combating organized crime, calls for harmonizing local laws, and mentions the need for co-operation between the OSCE and United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.

During the discussion, Members mentioned the importance of exchanging information and harmonizing structures of state institutions, including judicial bodies, who handle similar criminal cases to more effectively combat transnational crime.

Finally, the Question of Urgency on "The Selection Process for the Appointment of the OSCE Secretary General" was presented by Vice-President Isabel Pozuelo (Spain) and adopted by the Plenary. The item expresses concern over the lack of transparency in the process and calls on the OSCE Permanent Council to review its procedures for selecting the Organization's highest level appointment.

Closing Plenary Sessions



Treasurer's Report

Roberto Battelli (Slovenia) informed the Assembly on 10 July that the Standing Committee unanimously approved the Assembly's annual budget for the next financial year. He noted that the budget for 2011-2012 reflects the efforts of national parliaments to reduce expenses in these times of economic restraint. The budget, he said, has therefore been frozen for a fourth straight year, and national contributions to the Assembly will remain the same.

The Treasurer also said that the Assembly's finances have consistently received a positive assessment from external auditors.

Mr. Battelli said he found it remarkable that, despite the fact that the OSCE PA has by far the smallest staff and budget of all similar parliamentary organizations in Europe, it continues to maintain and increase its level of activities. The Treasurer thanked the delegations that had made their financial contribution for the fiscal year 2010-2011, as well as the Danish Parliament and Austrian Government for providing the International Secretariat with offices.

Secretary General's Report

OSCE PA Secretary General R. Spencer Oliver reported on the activities of the Assembly since the Oslo Annual Session, highlighting election observation missions in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kyrgyzstan, the United States, Azerbaijan, Moldova, Belarus, Kazakhstan, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and Turkey.

Mr. Oliver expressed his satisfaction over the Winter Meeting's increased participation and emphasized the importance of parliamentarians meeting with OSCE officials and diplomats. He went on to thank President Petros Efthymiou for his dedicated leadership.

Mr. Oliver also thanked Treasurer Roberto Battelli and Deputy Secretary General Gustavo Pallares for good management of the budget. He also thanked his staff for their hard work, and ended by thanking the Parliament of Serbia for hosting the Annual Session.

Adoption of the Declaration and Election Results

On 10 July, Members adopted the Belgrade Declaration, consisting of the three resolutions of the General Committees, as well as 23 supplementary items that had been debated over the previous three days.

At the end of the Plenary, election results were announced. President Efthymiou was re-elected by acclamation for a second one-year term. Closing the meeting, the President said that the OSCE should be a political organization, rather than an administrative one, in order to be more efficient and effective. He reiterated the call for the OSCE to review its procedures for choosing a Secretary General.

The Assembly also elected Vice-Presidents to three-year terms: Walburga Habsburg Douglas (Sweden), Tonino Picula (Croatia), and Wolfgang Grossruck (Austria). Treasurer Roberto Battelli (Slovenia) was re-elected to a two-year term.





Officers of the Assembly

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



President Efthymiou chairing the OSCE PA's Bureau Meeting in April 2011

Petros Efthymiou (Greece)

was elected President of the Assembly at the 2010 Annual Session in Oslo and re-elected in Belgrade. He had previously served as Assembly Vice-President, and as Chair and Vice-Chair of the Second General Committee. A former Minister of Education and Religious Affairs, Mr. Efthymiou has also had a long and distinguished career in both print and broadcast journalism. He is a founding member of the Greek Socialist Party (PASOK), and has been a member of the Greek Parliament since 2004. Mr. Efthymiou has also served as a Member of the European Parliament.



and has also served as a Member of the European Parliament, including as a Member of the EP Bureau. From 1995 to 2002, Mr. Soares was Mayor of Lisbon, during which time he also served as a Member of the State Council.

Roberto Battelli (Slovenia)

was elected Treasurer of the Parliamentary Assembly in Vilnius in 2009 and was re-elected for a second two-year term in Belgrade. A member of the Assembly since 1992, he has been particularly active in election observation, observing more than 20 elections across the OSCE area. He has served as head of the OSCE PA delegation and as Special Co-ordinator of the OSCE short-term observers four times. Mr. Battelli has been active in the Democracy Team for Moldova, the Sub-committee on Rules of Procedure, and the Sub-committee on Transparency and Accountability. Since 2006, he has also served as the OSCE PA's Special Representative on South East Europe. He has been a member of the Parliament of Slovenia since 1990.



Joao Soares (Portugal)



serves as President Emeritus, after two terms as President from 2008-2010. He had previously served for two years as Vice-President. Mr. Soares also currently serves as Special Representative for the South Caucasus. He was first elected to the Portuguese Parliament in 1987

Benjamin L. Cardin (United States)

was elected Vice-President of the Assembly at the Annual Session in Brussels in July 2006, and re-elected in Vilnius in 2009. Prior to that,

Officers of the Assembly



he had served as Chair of the Second Committee. Mr. Cardin was elected to the U.S. Senate in 2006, and currently co-chairs the U.S. (Helsinki) Commission on Security and Co-operation in Europe. In the U.S. Senate, he serves on

the Foreign Relations Committee, Judiciary Committee, Environment and Public Works Committee, Budget Committee and Small Business Committee. Before his election to the Senate, Mr. Cardin served for 20 years in the U.S. House of Representatives.

Oleh Bilorus (Ukraine)

was elected Vice-President during the 2008 Annual Session in Astana, and was elected again in 2010. Mr. Bilorus is Chairman of the Permanent Delegation of Ukraine to the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and Chairman of the



Foreign Affairs Committee of the Verkhovna Rada (Parliament) of Ukraine. An economist, manager, and diplomat, Mr. Bilorus has a PhD in Economics and is a Full Professor and member of the Ukrainian National Academy of Sciences. He is also the Vice-Chairman of the Yulia Tymoshenko Bloc, Motherland Party.

Wolfgang Grossruck (Austria)

was elected Vice-President of the Assembly at the 2008 Annual Session in Astana and re-elected in 2011. He has also served as Rapporteur of the First General Committee. Mr. Grossruck was first elected to the



Austrian Parliament in 1995 and has been a Member of the Austrian Delegation to the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly since 1996. He is a frequent participant in election observation, and has headed several missions, most recently in Azerbaijan. With a background in insurance, Mr. Grossruck is also active in municipal politics and is the Mayor of Grieskirchen.

Riccardo Migliori (Italy)



was elected Vice-President at the 2010 Annual Session in Oslo. Mr. Migliori previously served as Rapporteur of the First Committee and has been Head of Italy's Delegation since June 2008. A member of the Chamber of Deputies, he

has served on the Constitutional Affairs Committee and as Deputy Chair of the Bicameral Regional Affairs Committee. A member of the PDL (Popolo della Liberta) Parliamentary Group, he is also a member of the Committee on Foreign Affairs. With a degree in law from Florence University, Mr. Migliori has served on the Florence City Council as well as on the Tuscany Regional Council.

Jean-Charles Gardetto (Monaco)

was elected Vice-President of the Assembly in Vilnius in 2009, after having served as Chair of the First Committee since 2006 and as Vice-Chair before that. Mr. Gardetto has been a Member of the National Council of Monaco



since 2003, and is Head of Monaco's Delegation to the OSCE PA. Mr. Gardetto has served as Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee and a Member of the Legislative, Finance, Education & Youth and Women's Rights Committees. He is also active in the Parliamentary

Officers of the Assembly

Assembly of the Council of Europe, where he serves as Chair of the Sub-Committee on Human Rights. As an attorney he is active in international legal organizations.

Alexander Kozlovskiy (Russia)

was elected Vice-President of the Parliamentary Assembly at the Oslo Annual Session in 2010. Since 2008 he has served as Head of the Russian Delegation to the OSCE PA. From 2004-2007, he served as Deputy Head of the Delegation. Mr. Kozlovskiy currently serves as Deputy Chairman of the Committee for International Relations and Chairman of the Sub-Committee for Relations with the USA in the Russian State Duma. Mr. Kozlovskiy also holds the post of Deputy Co-Chairman of the Inter-Parliamentary Co-operation Committee between the Federal Assembly and Milli Mijlis of Azerbaijan.



Isabel Pozuelo (Spain)



was elected Vice-President at the 2009 Annual Session in Vilnius and re-elected in Oslo. She has been a Member of the Spanish Delegation to the OSCE PA since 2004 and is presently the Head of its Delegation. She has been particularly active in election observation activities, having participated in election observation missions to, inter alia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Serbia, Montenegro, Russia, Georgia, and Armenia.

Ms. Pozuelo has been a member of the Spanish Congress of Deputies since 1996, having served as a member of the Foreign Affairs Committee, as well as the Finance

Committee and the Healthcare and Consumer Affairs Committee.

Walburga Habsburg Douglas (Sweden)

was elected Vice-President of the Assembly at the 2011 Annual Session in Belgrade. She previously served two terms as Chair of the Assembly's Committee on Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions, having previously served as Committee Vice-Chair and Rapporteur. Ms. Habsburg Douglas is also the Head of the Swedish Delegation to the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly. With a background in law and journalism, Ms. Habsburg Douglas served as Secretary General of the International Pan-European movement prior to being elected to parliament in 2006.



Tonino Picula (Croatia)



was elected OSCE PA Vice-President at the 20th Annual Session in Belgrade, after having served as Rapporteur of the First General Committee since the 2010 Annual Session in Oslo. Mr. Picula has been a Member of the Croatian Parliament since 2003, and has served as the Head of Delegation of Croatia to the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly since 2004. From 2000-2003, he served as Croatia's Minister for Foreign Affairs, and from 2004-2008 he was Chairperson of the Social-Democratic Party Croatia Governing Board. He also serves on the Foreign Policy Committee of the Croatian Parliament. He has been particularly active in OSCE election observation activities, leading two election observation missions in 2010.

General Committees



General Committee on Political Affairs and Security

One of the most important aspects of the work of the Annual Session is the deliberation that takes place in the three General Committees.

Following the 1991 Madrid Declaration, three committees were established along the lines of the three main “baskets” or sections of the Helsinki Final Act: The First General Committee on Political Affairs and Security; the Second General Committee on Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and Environment; and the Third General Committee on Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions. Following debate and discussion, a draft resolution is adopted by each Committee for presentation to the Annual Plenary Session of the Assembly, which is then included in the Final Declaration.

First General Committee

Karl-Georg Wellmann (Germany)



was elected Chair of the First Committee at the 2010 Annual Session in Oslo and re-elected in Belgrade. A Member of the German Bundestag since 2005, he has served on the Committee on Foreign Affairs, specifically focusing

on Poland, Central Asia, the Baltic States, Ukraine and Russia. He is a substitute member of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, and since 2005 has been a Member

of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly. He also serves as Deputy Head of the German Delegation to the OSCE PA.

Susanne Bratli (Norway)



was elected Vice-Chair of the Committee on Political Affairs and Security at the 2011 Annual Session in Belgrade. She has served as a member of the Norwegian delegation to the OSCE PA since 2009. In the Storting (Norwegian Parliament) Ms.

Bratli serves on the Committee on Transport and Communications. Since 1993, she has been an active member of the Norwegian Labour Party. She has also served as a member of the Nord-Trøndelag County Council for six years. Ms. Bratli has a business intelligence degree in training in board governance from the Norwegian School of Management.

Vilija Aleknaite Abramikiene (Lithuania)

was elected Rapporteur of the First Committee at the 2011 Annual Session in Belgrade. A Member of the Seimas (Parliament) of the Republic of Lithuania since 1992, she has served as Head of Delegation of Lithuania to the OSCE PA since 2008. She also is a member of the OSCE PA Ad Hoc Committee on Transparency and Accountability and the Work-



General Committees



ing Group on Belarus. Ms. Aleknaite Abramikiene is a Member of the Committees on Foreign Affairs, European Affairs, Legal Affairs, Social Affairs and Labour, Environment Protection and the Commission on Family and Child Affairs of the Lithuanian Seimas.

Second General Committee

Serhiy Shevchuk (Ukraine)



was elected Chair of the Second General Committee in Belgrade, after having served as Rapporteur of the Committee. A member of Ukraine's Verkhovna Rada, Mr. Shevchuk has served as a delegate to the OSCE PA since 1998. Since

2006, he has served as Deputy Chairman of the Committee on European Integration of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine. In 2008, he was elected Chairman of the Committee on Economic Affairs, Science and Environment of the Inter-Parliamentary Assembly of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania and Senate of the Republic of Poland

Bruce Hyer (Canada)

was elected Vice-Chair of the Second Committee at the 2011 Belgrade Annual Session. A scientist, small businessperson, and award-winning conservationist, Mr. Hyer has been a long-time advocate for small business development, economic diversification, and protected areas in Canada. He served as an adjudicator on



the Province of Ontario Environmental Appeal Board from 1988 to 1997 and was first elected as Member of Parliament for the riding of Thunder Bay-Superior North in 2008, and was re-elected in 2011.

Tony Lloyd (United Kingdom)



was elected Rapporteur at the 2011 Annual Session in Belgrade. Mr. Lloyd has been a Member of Parliament since 1983 representing Manchester Central. From 1997 to 1999 he served as Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office

and was his party's spokesperson on foreign affairs, environment, education, employment and transport. Mr. Lloyd has served as Head of the United Kingdom delegations to both the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, where he has also served as Vice-President. In 2010, he led the OSCE election observation mission to Belarus.

Third General Committee

Matteo Mecacci (Italy)

was elected Chair of the Committee on Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Ques-

General Committees



General Committee on Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions



tions at the 2011 Annual Session in Belgrade after having served as the committee's Rapporteur since 2009. Mr. Mecacci has been a member of the Italian Parliament since 2008, where he serves on the Foreign Affairs Committee of

the Chamber of Deputies. From 2001 to 2008 he was based in New York where he co-ordinated various campaigns related to the promotion of democracy, particularly in regards to the International Criminal Court and the United Nations Commission on Human Rights.

Alain Neri (France)

was elected Vice-Chair of the Third Committee at the 2011 Annual Session. He has been a member of the Parliamentary Assembly since 2002 and has served as Deputy Head of the French Delegation since 2007. From 2007 to 2008, and since



2009, he has been Secretary of the Bureau of the French National Assembly, where he has served since 1988. He also served as Vice-President of the National Assembly from 2008 to 2009. He has been a member and Vice-President of the Social Affairs Committee for various years between 1988 and 2008 and is now member of the Foreign Affairs Committee.

Coskun Coruz (Netherlands)



was elected Rapporteur of the Third Committee at the 2011 Annual Session in Belgrade. Mr. Coruz has been a Member of the Dutch Parliament since May 2001, where he serves on the Committees for Foreign Affairs, Security and Justice, and Immigration and Asylum.

Mr. Coruz serves as Head of Delegation of the Netherlands to the OSCE PA. Within the Christian-Democrat faction in the Dutch Parliament, he is actively involved in human rights issues. He was a member of the Dutch Equal Treatment Commission and served as a member of the city council of Haarlem from 1998 to 2001.













Philippe Nobile



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.

Secretary General
Spencer Oliver



Deputy Secretary
General
Tina Schøn



Deputy Secretary
General
Gustavo Pallares



Special
Representative
Andreas Nothelle



Presidential
Advisor
Andreas Baker



Assistant to the
Secretary General
Dana Bjerregaard



Deputy Director of Admin-
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Director of
Communications
Neil Simon



The OSCE Parliamentary Assembly is the parliamentary dimension of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, whose 56 participating States span the geographical area from Vancouver to Vladivostok.

The primary task of the 320 member Assembly is to facilitate inter-parliamentary dialogue, an important aspect of the overall effort to meet the challenges of democracy throughout the OSCE area. 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, has grown into a very active and esteemed member of the OSCE family.

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.



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