



Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY

Report
on the
2nd Annual
Winter Meeting

Vienna

20-21 February 2003

Introduction



This publication reports on the Second Winter Meeting of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, held from 20-21 February 2003 in Vienna. The Meeting was attended by some 250 parliamentarians as well as many OSCE diplomats and officials from around Europe, North America and Central Asia, and observers from North Africa and Asia.

One of the Winter Meeting's main highlights was a special debate on the Iraq crisis, which was placed on the Schedule by the Standing Committee on the proposal of OSCE PA President Bruce George only one day prior to the debate.

Another key element was the presentation of the eighth OSCE Prize for Journalism and Democracy to Russian journalist Anna Politkovskaya.

The Winter Meeting was preceded by a meeting of the Standing Committee of Heads of Delegations, which is also described in this brochure.

The February Winter Meeting in Vienna is the second largest event in the OSCE PA calendar, surpassed only by the Annual Session held each year in July. The Winter Meeting serves as an additional opportunity for the three general committees to be briefed on current OSCE developments by senior OSCE officials, who also take questions from the gathered parliamentarians. Committee work during the Winter Meeting also includes discussion on draft reports and draft resolutions in preparation for the upcoming Annual Session, as well as follow-up to previous Declarations adopted by the Assembly

Standing Committee Meeting

The Winter Meeting was preceded by a meeting of the Standing Committee, which heard welcoming remarks by the Speaker of the Austrian Parliament, Dr. Andreas Khol. OSCE PA President Bruce George presented a summary of his activities during the past six months. He stressed that one of the main achievements of the first six months of his presidency has been improved co-operation between the governmental and parliamentary dimensions of the OSCE. The Treasurer of the Assembly, Mr. Jerry Grafstein, informed Members about the positive annual assessment from the KPMG External Auditors. He commended the Secretary General for the good financial management of the Secretariat, and for keeping the Assembly's expenses within the budget.

Secretary General Spencer Oliver gave an overview of the activities of the Assembly's International Secretariat since the Berlin Annual Session in July 2002. He emphasized that, at the request of Berlin participants, the International Secretariat had produced an extensive follow-up report to the Assembly's Annual Declarations, including comprehensive answers from National Delegations to a questionnaire. In addition, Mr. Oliver noted the substantial growth of PA activities, now including two annual meetings, an autumn conference, three yearly meetings of the Standing Committee, the ongoing work of five ad hoc committees, four Special Representatives, and



Dr. Andreas Khol (left), addressing the Standing Committee continuing leadership in election monitoring projects as well as frequent visits to field missions.

After a debate in the Standing Committee on the issue of representation of the Belarussian National Assembly in the OSCE PA, the Belarussian Delegation was re-seated in the Assembly. Two central opposing views were presented during the debate. One point of view held that according to the Assembly's Rules of Procedure, the Belarussian National Assembly should automatically be seated, as the Belarussian Government is an OSCE participating State. Another group of Delegates argued that because of the lack of progress in Belarus with regard to democratic developments and the



Secretary General Spencer Oliver delivering his report to the Standing Committee



Vice-President Rita Süßmuth reporting on the ad hoc Committee on Kosovo



Uta Zapf reporting on the Working Group on Belarus

rule of law, the decision on seating the Belarussian National Assembly should be postponed. The Head of the OSCE PA Working Group on Belarus, Mrs. Uta Zapf, gave a report in which she welcomed the opening of a new OSCE Office in Minsk as an important step forward. However, she expressed concern about the lack of progress with regard to human rights and democracy in Belarus.

The Standing Committee also heard reports from the four other ad hoc Committees of the Assembly. Mr. Steny Hoyer, Chairman of the ad hoc Committee on Transparency and Accountability, reported that as a consequence of the efforts of the Committee, stronger co-operation between the OSCE and the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly has been achieved.



Steny Hoyer reporting on the ad hoc Committee on Transparency and Accountability



Kimmo Kiljunen reporting on the ad hoc Committee on Moldova

He emphasized the importance of the new practice of receiving feedback from the Governmental side of the OSCE on the Assembly's Annual Declarations as well as of the annual briefing by the OSCE Secretary General on the draft budget. Mrs. Rita Süßmuth, Head of the ad hoc Committee on Kosovo, reported on the activities and recent Committee visits to the region. Mrs. Süßmuth stressed the importance of the presence of international organizations in the region, and she encouraged fellow parliamentarians to strengthen support in national parliaments for international efforts to build democratic institutions in the Balkans. The Head of the OSCE PA ad hoc Committee on Moldova, Mr. Kimmo Kiljunen, informed the Standing Committee of a new initiative to contribute to the resolution of the status of Transdniestria through holding an international parliamentary seminar on federalism in the region. Mrs. Tone Tingsgaard, Chair of the Ad Hoc Committee on Abkhazia (Georgia) expressed regrets that the Committee still has not been able to meet with representatives of Abkhazia. She stressed that the Ad Hoc Committee cannot issue a comprehensive report until direct contact with representatives of Abkhazia has been established.

President Bruce George announced to the Standing Committee that Greece has offered to host the OSCE PA Autumn Conference in 2004. The Standing Committee also approved an amendment to Rule 24 of the Assembly's Rules of Procedure with regard to the procedure for raising questions of urgency.



Chris Smith during Standing Committee debate



Charles Janssens and Sattar Safarov during Standing Committee debate



Terry Davis during Standing Committee debate



Geertje Lycklama a Nijeholt, during debate



Oralbai Abdykarimov and Marcello Pacini



Jan Muck Schlichting speaking to Ambassador Andreas Nothelle

First Joint Session of the Three General Committees

Opening remarks and address by the President of the OSCE PA, Mr. Bruce George

President George welcomed participants to the Second Winter Meeting of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, emphasizing his satisfaction with the very high turnout for the Meeting. He thanked the President of the Austrian Republic, the Speaker of the Austrian Parliament, the Chairman-in-Office and the OSCE Secretary General for their support of the Assembly's work.

In his report on achievements since the Berlin Annual Session, President George stressed the enhanced co-operation between the Governmental and Parliamentary sides of the OSCE as a major step forward and emphasized that this will further increase the effectiveness of the Organization. He highlighted the increased role of the Parliamentary Assembly in the OSCE budgetary process and commented on the usefulness of feedback from the OSCE on OSCE PA Declarations. He also spoke of the need for Members of the Assembly to follow up on OSCE PA Declarations in their national parliaments, and described the International Secretariat's report on 'Follow-Up Since Berlin' as a useful tool in this regard. President George emphasized that the OSCE and the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly must stand ready to respond to new threats and challenges by evolving and



President Bruce George opens the Joint Session

adapting to new realities. The theme of the upcoming Annual Session, 'The Role of the OSCE in the New Architecture of Europe' is very timely in this respect. According to President George: *"The enlargement of both the EU and NATO will have consequences for other organizations. The OSCE must reaffirm its place, and – most importantly – reassume its importance. The OSCE's comprehensive approach to security, emphasizing human rights and economic development as well as military security issues, places it in a unique position in this new European*



security architecture”.

Regarding future activities, President George stressed new initiatives on the Mediterranean region and the upcoming Trans-Asian Parliamentary Forum as key developments, which will help implement the goals of promoting parliamentary dialogue. He also emphasized that co-operation and co-ordination with other international organizations must be enhanced, and mentioned his recent visit to the UN in New York as a useful step forward in this respect.



Austrian President Thomas Klestil addresses the Joint Session

Address by the President of the Austrian Republic, Dr. Thomas Klestil

President Klestil opened his speech by expressing his appreciation of the increased role of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly. He welcomed the development of the Winter Meeting into a permanent OSCE PA event and stressed the important role of the OSCE PA Liaison Office in Vienna.

Throughout his speech, President Klestil emphasized the importance of multilateral action in international affairs and the co-existence of states and people on the basis of international law. He also

mentioned the need to ensure strong democratic legitimacy in international politics, and stressed the role of parliamentary dialogue, in particular in a period when the world is facing the threat of war: *“As political decision-making processes are increasingly transferred to international bodies, it is essential to ensure that these bodies derive their legitimacy from the democratic process. Only if people realize that their interests, wishes, fears and worries are taken seriously will they identify with the objectives and work of your Organization. OSCE parliamentarians have a two-fold task: to be the advocates of their citizens and, at the same time, to expound the role and work of the OSCE in the individual member states”.*

President Klestil welcomed the theme of the Annual Session in Rotterdam in view of the consequences that the new European security structure will have on the OSCE’s future responsibilities. He also emphasized the indispensable role of the OSCE as the only Euro-Atlantic structure that ties all of Europe and the former Soviet Union as well as North America into one politically binding acquis of norms and standards for human rights, democracy and the rule of law.

Address by the OSCE Chairman-in-Office, Minister Jaap De Hoop Scheffer

In his address the Chairman-in-Office (C-i-O) urged parliamentarians to use their influence to help reinforce democratic structures and institutions throughout the OSCE region. *“Your wisdom and insight are needed on many levels. If there is nothing that can replace experience, there is certainly nothing that can replace parliamentary experience. In many OSCE regions a reinforcement of democratic structures and institutions is urgently needed. That is something that cannot be achieved through government alone. It requires parliamentary action as well”*, said the C-i-O, who also expressed the hope of the Dutch Chairmanship to involve the Parliamentary Assembly in positioning the 55-nation security Organization in a constantly changing security landscape. According to the C-i-O the PA contributes to preventing the OSCE from existing in a vacuum and floating freely with no connection to the peoples of its fifty-five participating States:



C-i-O Jaap de Hoop Scheffer addresses the Joint Session

“Their voices can and should be heard through you”.

Minister De Hoop Scheffer emphasized the importance of the role played by parliamentarians in OSCE election monitoring missions. The C-i-O also listed the priorities of the Dutch Chairmanship in areas where parliamentary support is needed. These include the task of redesigning the security architecture and the positioning of the OSCE within

that framework, the reinforcing of democratic structures, and the combating of human trafficking. The Chairman-in-Office stressed trafficking in human beings as one of the most pressing and complex human rights issues in the OSCE region, a problem that crosses borders and effects almost all OSCE countries. He emphasized that the OSCE is well suited to deal with this issue through the work of the OSCE Missions. Minister De Hoop Scheffer set forth the role of OSCE Parliamentarians in influencing new legislation, strengthening democracy, exerting pressure on governments and in amplifying the voice of the Chairman-in-Office.

Discussion

During the subsequent debate a large number of issues were raised. The role of the OSCE in the future security architecture of Europe was discussed at length. Several Members stressed that the OSCE needs a more balanced division of its activities both between the three baskets and geographically in order to find its niche. One Delegate promoted the concept of setting up OSCE missions in Western European capitals to raise awareness about the consequences of trafficking in human beings and to assist victims. Another Member suggested establishing an OSCE mechanism for dealing with environmental disasters. The situations in Belarus, Moldova and Georgia were discussed, focussing mainly on the role of the OSCE and the contributions of the various OSCE PA ad hoc Committees.



General Committee on Political Affairs and Security



Vice-Chair Panayiotis Kammenos (right) opens the First Committee meeting

The Vice-Chair of the General Committee on Political Affairs and Security (First Committee), Mr. Panayiotis Kammenos, opened the meeting by expressing his concern over the situation in Iraq and its potential effect on terrorism. Following his opening remarks, Mr. Kammenos introduced two guest speakers, the Chairman of the OSCE Permanent Council, Ambassador Justus de Visser, and the Chairman of the Forum for Security Co-operation, Ambassador Zef Mazi.

Ambassador Justus de Visser, Chairman of the OSCE Permanent Council

Ambassador de Visser presented a general overview of the current activities of the Permanent Council and the challenges facing the OSCE in its work. Mr. De Visser catalogued the initiatives undertaken by the Dutch Chairmanship to establish several informal working groups known as 'Groups of Friends' to deal with specific tasks identified by the Bucharest Ministerial Council. The Ambassador highlighted the Group of Friends charged with developing a strategy to address threats to security and stability in the 21st century as being particular

relevant to the theme of the upcoming Annual Session in Rotterdam. Another new initiative is the Annual Security Review Conference, which will be used as the primary instrument for providing updates on activities in this field.

A primary aim of the Dutch OSCE Chairmanship



Ambassador Justus de Visser addresses the First Committee



Ambassador Zef Mazi addresses the First Committee

is to address not only the imbalance between the three baskets, but also between the attention focussed on different OSCE regions. The OSCE must find its place in constantly changing surroundings and it must prepare itself for these changes. Ambassador de Visser also noted that the budgets for the OSCE's field activities in the Caucasus and Central Asia have been increased. This is also true of the budget for the OSCE Secretariat, which has been increased to support heightened activities in the fields of police related issues, border control, anti-terrorism and the economic and environmental dimension. The objective of these changes is to improve the Organization's capacity for planning, programming, budgeting and evaluating. They are also intended to improve the resource management structures and systems to achieve greater cost efficiency and improved transparency.

Ambassador Zef Mazi, Chairman of the Forum for Security Co-operation

Ambassador Mazi provided the Committee with an overview of the Forum for Security Co-operation's (FSC) priorities in the fields of arms control, disarmament, and confidence and security building measures. Mr. Mazi stressed the importance of the Bucharest Ministerial Council decision recognizing the need to strengthen the politico-military dimension of the OSCE and enhance the effectiveness of the FSC. This has led to increased consultations between

the Permanent Council (PC) and the FSC, providing a mechanism that is extremely useful in preparations for the Annual Security Review Conference. These consultations also contribute to the development of the 'Strategy to Address Threats to Security and Stability in the 21st Century' and to general discussions on the OSCE role in peacekeeping operations. Mr. Mazi also described the FSC's focus on the challenge of terrorism and its ongoing efforts to enhance implementation of the Code of Conduct and the Document on Small Arms and Light Weapons.

Following the adoption of the Bucharest Plan of Action, the FSC agreed on a 'Road Map' for its implementation. As envisaged in the Road Map, an Expert Meeting on 'Combating Terrorism within the Politico-Military Dimension of the OSCE' was held in May 2002, bringing together more than 200 participants and producing numerous proposals on fighting terrorism.

Mr. Clifford Lincoln, Rapporteur of the First Committee

Mr. Lincoln presented a general outline of the central ideas that will be featured in his Report to the Annual Session in Rotterdam, July 2003. He stressed the continuing importance of the OSCE as the only regional security organization with a truly pan-European membership that also includes the United States and Canada. Mr. Lincoln emphasized



Rapporteur Clifford Lincoln presents his outline to the First Committee

the importance of the OSCE field missions and stressed that they should receive the political and financial support necessary to retain their flexibility. The current calls for zero real growth in the OSCE budget should be reconsidered, as the most likely victims, in case of significant budget constraints, will be the field missions.

A central part of the First Committee Report to be presented at the Annual Session in Rotterdam will be devoted to 'lessons learned' from the OSCE field missions. The OSCE Mission to Bosnia & Herzegovina is an interesting example as it demonstrates the importance of grass-roots pressure. Such pressure helped institute property laws and the rights of returning refugees, as well as greater integration of women into the political system. Another positive lesson which can be learnt from is that real progress often results from close co-operation between local officials and OSCE staff in field missions. This interaction frequently leads to international staff positions being assumed by locals, thereby furthering capacity building.

Discussion

The delegates took advantage of the presence of the Chairs of the PC and the FSC to discuss the activities undertaken by the OSCE Chairman-in-Office in Central Asia, especially in Turkmenistan. There was also some discussion regarding anti-Semitism in the OSCE area and upcoming events designed to address



Vice-President Nino Burjanadze

this concern. Consideration was given to the link between frozen conflicts, terrorism, international crime and the drugs trade in an atmosphere of anarchy and lack of state institutions. The importance of furthering the new dynamism in the talks in Moldova between Chisinau and Tiraspol was also mentioned.

In his closing remarks Mr. Kammenos reminded delegates that the Supplementary Item on The Holy Basin of Jerusalem, which was postponed by the First Committee during the Annual Session in Berlin, will be on the agenda of the First Committee during the upcoming Annual Session in Rotterdam.



Vice-President Alcee Hastings during the First Committee debate



Roberto Battelli during the First Committee debate

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

The Chairman of the General Committee on Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and the Environment (Second Committee), Mr. Oleg Bilorus, opened the meeting of the Committee by welcoming all members and stressing the importance of the economic and environmental dimensions of the OSCE. Mr. Bilorus emphasized the important link between democracy and economic development, reminding members that economic development is ultimately linked to and facilitated by democratization. He continued by outlining the importance of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly in contributing to the discussion and debate of economic and environmental issues. As an example, Mr. Bilorus referred to the Third Sub-regional Economic Conference, taking place in Berne this May. This Sub-regional Conference will be devoted to the 'promotion of small and medium-sized enterprises,' a key subject when dealing with sustainable economic development, especially in transitional economies.

Dr. Marcin Swiecicki, Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities

Dr. Swiecicki began his presentation by announcing that a major step has been taken by the OSCE to reinforce the Economic and

Environmental Dimension. At the Ministerial Council meeting, held in Porto in December 2002, the OSCE participating States adopted a decision that stipulates the development of a new OSCE strategy document in the economic and environmental dimension. In this decision the participating States task the Permanent Council to develop, through its Economic and Environmental Sub-Committee, a new OSCE strategy document to provide guidance for further enhancement of OSCE capabilities in this dimension. This new document should be based on an assessment of the current situation in the OSCE region, should complement the 1990 Bonn Document on economic co-operation, and provide recommendations and commitments for addressing economic and environmental threats to security and stability in the OSCE region. Dr. Swiecicki welcomed contributions from the members of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly in the discussion of the new strategy document.

Dr. Swiecicki continued by outlining the activities of his Office and briefing members on current OSCE projects. The focal point will be the Eleventh OSCE Economic Forum to be held in Prague in May. This year's Economic Forum will focus on the theme 'Trafficking in Human Beings, Drugs, Small Arms and Light Weapons: National and International Economic Impact.'



Rapporteur Leonid Ivanchenko (right) outlines his draft report for the Second Committee, with Chairman Oleg Bilorus (left)



Rapporteur Leonid Ivanchenko

Mr. Leonid Ivanchenko, Rapporteur of the Second Committee

The Rapporteur of the Committee, Mr. Leonid Ivanchenko, informed the Committee that he had already prepared a draft report dealing with a number of themes related to the topic chosen for the Rotterdam Annual Session; however, his report focuses primarily on the consequences of economic integration. When talking about economic integration in an area as vast as the OSCE, one should always bear in mind the heterogeneous conditions that exist between the many countries. The future enlargement of the European Union will undoubtedly affect the OSCE area both in positive and negative ways, as it may create further significant economic differences.

Mr. Ivanchenko continued by addressing themes related to the environment – including the ecological disaster caused by the sinking of the *Prestige* – and the important consequences of ecological disasters for regional, national, and international economies. The Rapporteur also addressed the issue of human trafficking, which he considered one of the biggest problems in the OSCE area, and one that has both economic and political roots.

Discussion

Several members of various delegations intervened in the discussion. The EU and NATO were mentioned as key aspects of the European architecture and it was deemed essential for the OSCE to examine the consequences of the enlargements of these entities. Consideration was given to strategies the OSCE can use in order to encourage the use of economic development as a mechanism for conflict prevention. The debate also addressed the problems stemming from trade relations between the EU and Russia, and between the EU and non-applicant countries in the framework of the World Trade Organization. It was stressed that trade is one of the vital components of sustainable economic development.

The importance of the environmental dimension of the OSCE was emphasized, especially in relation to the high level of economic and industrial competition resulting from the integration process. The role of sub-regional organisations in conflict resolution and environmental co-operation was mentioned, particularly in light of recent ecological disasters. The upcoming third Sub-regional Conference in Berne will raise awareness among parliamentarians of the importance of small and medium-sized enterprises for sustainable economic development. The debate also raised the important issue of scientific and applied research as a strategic element for enhancing competitiveness, especially in those countries soon to join the European Union. The need for increased co-operation in this field among OSCE participating States was stressed.



Panayiotis Kammenos speaking to Ambassador Aristidis Sandis

General Committee on Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions

The Chair of the General Committee on Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions (Third Committee), Mrs. Elena Mizulina, opened the meeting by welcoming delegates and reminding them that the Winter Meeting provided the opportunity for Assembly Members to hear from, and ask questions of, OSCE Officials. She proceeded to thank Mr. Gert Weisskirchen, former Chair of the Third Committee, for his work in raising the profile of the issues addressed by the Committee. Finally she pointed out that the strengths of the OSCE PA lie in the diversity of opinion represented, the use of discussion and debate as primary tools, and the ability of participants to listen to others and to contribute their own views.

Mr. Rolf Ekeus, OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities

Mr. Ekeus began his remarks by drawing attention to the treatment of minority issues in the newly emerging European architecture. The Copenhagen criteria for applicant states includes “respect for and protection of minorities,” yet minority rights are not mentioned in the EU’s founding values. Such a contradiction needs to be corrected in the ongoing formation of an EU Convention

On issues regarding specific states, Mr. Ekeus noted the considerable attention he has devoted to the Hungarian Law ‘On Hungarians Living in Neighbouring States’ and to resolving the tension the law has caused among Hungary’s neighbours. He expressed his belief in the principle of ‘integrating diversity’, which can be furthered by language training of minorities in the state language to facilitate their integration. Mr. Ekeus’ office has been working with the Moldovan government on a project to improve the level of training in the state language for minority communities. Education on all levels can facilitate integration and Mr. Ekeus has supported policies and projects in Kyrgyzstan, Moldova and the FYR of Macedonia that focus on minority education. Mr. Ekeus has taken a more comprehensive approach to the question of minorities in Georgia due to the fragility of that situation. He



Third Committee Chairwoman Elena Mizulina

has also assisted with legislation that deals with minority rights in Croatia and Yugoslavia.

Finally, Mr. Ekeus highlighted the role of language in official communication, and the role of a multi-ethnic police force as a peace-building tool. In the future, he intends to look at the use of minority languages in the electronic media.



High Commissioner Rolf Ekeus addresses the Third General Committee



Mr. Freimut Duve, OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media

Now in his sixth and final year, Mr. Duve pointed out that in some respects the overall media situation was better five years ago when he first took up his position. Much of the deterioration has come from negative interference by governments and business conglomerates in the media as well as the misuse of libel in some countries.

Specifically, Mr. Duve pointed to the growth of industrial ownership of media in Russia by a small number of businesses and an ownership situation in Italy that allows the executive to control both public and private broadcasting media. Mr. Duve raised the case of three Belarussian journalists who have been sentenced to forced labour as well as the continuing use of defamation lawsuits against independent newspapers in Azerbaijan. He also spoke about the abysmal situation in Turkmenistan, where there is not even a semblance of freedom of expression.

Mr. Steven Wagenseil, First Deputy Director, OSCE ODIHR

Mr. Wagenseil reported on ODIHR's election observation activities, which are the top priority of the Office's work. Hundreds of observers were deployed last year for elections in Serbia and Montenegro and FYROM, and this year large missions are being deployed in Montenegro and Armenia, among others. Small assessment missions

have also been sent to elections in the U.S. and Turkey.

On the democratization side, the ODIHR is engaged in numerous projects with regard to consolidating rule of law, broadening civil society, gender equality and trafficking in human beings. Mr. Wagenseil noted the significance of the Moscow Mechanism with regard to human rights abuses in Turkmenistan. He also pointed out the unfortunate fact that during a recent 'Community of Democracies Forum' he attended in Seoul, 11 of the 55 OSCE participating States could not be considered to be democracies and were thus not invited to participate in the meeting.



Vice-Chair Svend Robinson during Third Committee debate



Vakhtang Kolbaia during debate

Discussion

The discussion that followed the presentations touched on a variety of issues. One delegate pointed out that certain unfree and unfair recent elections were not monitored by the ODIHR. There was discussion of the media situations in both Moldova and Azerbaijan. One member called into question the freedom of the recent local elections that took place in Belarus, and raised the possibility of ODIHR's engagement with electoral issues in that country. Another delegate applauded the High Commissioner on National Minorities for his support for ethnic diversity and noted that many of the criteria that have been set for EU applicant countries are not necessarily being followed by the current EU members. Finally, there was also debate regarding the media situation in Italy.

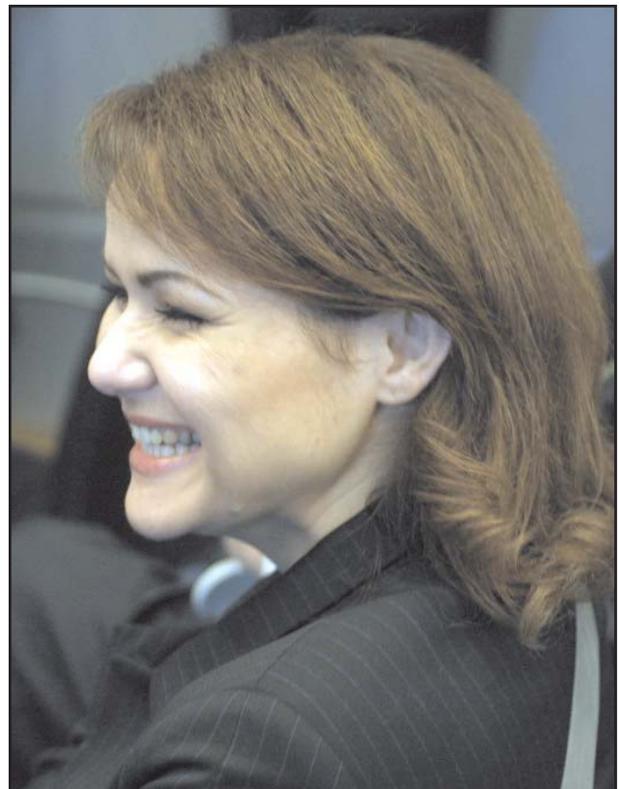
Ms. Nebahat Albayrak, Rapporteur of the Third Committee

Ms. Albayrak introduced her report by noting that the enlargement of NATO and the EU could contribute to strengthening the rule of law in countries seeking membership in those institutions. The OSCE will continue to have certain assets because of its comprehensive approach to security, although new opportunities will arise for co-operation with other institutions. The enlargement process will affect OSCE participating States in different ways, but will have less impact on certain areas, such as the Central Asian countries.



Angelo Farrugia during discussion

Within this framework, Ms. Albayrak announced her intention to focus her report primarily on two issues: trafficking in human beings and migration issues, with a particular focus on how western democracies are dealing with these questions. She stated her intention to propose in the draft resolution the creation of an OSCE institution to deal with trafficking in human beings as well as an extension of the mandate of the HCNM to include the 'new' minorities in the West.



Third Committee Rapporteur Nebahat Albayrak

Extraordinary Debate on Iraq



Marcello Pacini (left) speaking on Iraq

A special debate on the Iraq situation was one of the main highlights of the Winter Meeting. The extraordinary debate was placed on the schedule by the Standing Committee, upon the proposal of President Bruce George, and demonstrated the importance of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly as a forum for interparliamentary dialogue. Twenty-five parliamentarians spoke during the debate, offering a full spectrum of national and personal views on the present crisis. Members spoke directly and passionately about the possibility of war and the hope for a peaceful solution. The unique debate was the first of its kind on a specific subject related to a current international crisis.

Overwhelmingly, the speakers recognized the

dangers presented by the Iraqi regime. While supporting the goal of liberating the Iraqi people, a number of parliamentarians expressed deep concern over a variety of issues. The current crisis could create dangers such as driving wedges between allies within the Atlantic Alliance and the EU, and weakening the United Nations as an institution. Support was voiced for redoubling efforts to strengthen the EU's common foreign and security policy. Also, speakers warned that the consequences of war in Iraq may not be contained within that country, and may exacerbate other problems in the region. One speaker urged continued engagement by the OSCE with the Iraq issue in light of the OSCE's considerable experience with both pre- and post-conflict situations.



Vice-President Gert Weisskirchen during debate on Iraq



OSCE PA Special Representative Michel Voisin addresses the Assembly, on Iraq



Vice-President Barbara Haering during debate on Iraq

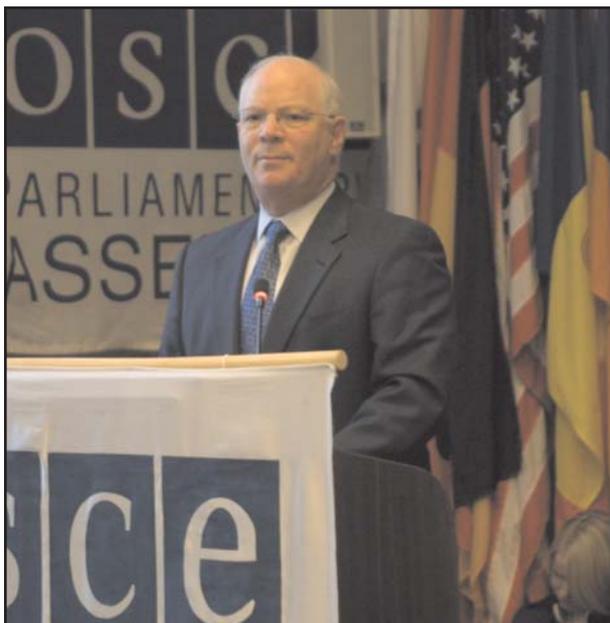


Abdelhamid Latreche during debate on Iraq

Opinions varied considerably on a number of issues. In particular, the link between Al Qaida and the Iraqi regime was a matter of debate. Opposing interpretations of the legal case for war were also made; while some speakers asserted that current UN Security Council resolutions suffice, others argued that this is not the case, and that diplomacy must continue. Similarly, different speakers stressed different approaches to the ongoing inspections; while some urged continuing and reinforcing the inspections, others stressed that these inspections should not go on endlessly. Pleas were made for bringing Saddam Hussein before the International Criminal Court, as well as for lifting sanctions against Iraq. Also, a number of parliamentarians

emphasized the importance of avoiding unilateral action.

However, there were also a number of unifying points expressed; for example, speakers acknowledged the historic American role in preserving freedom in Europe. A number of speakers also presented basic principles that they believed all those present could subscribe to; for example, there was general agreement that war is undesirable, that Iraq must disarm, and that United Nations commitments must be fulfilled by all countries. Finally, speakers stressed the importance of taking advantage of the current momentum in the fight against terrorism.



Ben Cardin addresses the Assembly, on Iraq



Urban Ahlin during the Iraq debate

Closing Session of the Three General Committees



OSCE Secretary General Jan Kubis addresses the Joint Session

Address by the OSCE Secretary General, Ambassador Jan Kubiš

Ambassador Kubiš expressed his appreciation for the improved relations between the governmental and parliamentary sides of the OSCE, and welcomed the opportunity he was given to brief Members of the PA on the OSCE draft budget at the October Standing Committee meeting in Madrid. He also emphasized the important role of the newly established OSCE PA Liaison Office in Vienna in contributing to improved communication and co-ordination between the OSCE and the OSCE PA. The Secretary General stressed the importance of the early adoption of the 2003 budget and outlined the main objectives of the Secretariat for the coming year. Key objectives include continuation of institutional and administrative reform, obtaining a better balance in the OSCE's work, and building enhanced and systemic co-operation with international partners. The Secretary General emphasized that the increase of resources provided to the Secretariat is related to the newly established Strategic Police Matters Unit, the Anti-Terrorism Unit and the strengthening of the position of the OSCE

Co-ordinator on Economic and Environmental Activities. In addition, Ambassador Kubiš highlighted that the OSCE is still a field-oriented organization – large missions take up 69 percent of the budget and smaller missions and operations make up another ten percent.

The Secretary General expressed his appreciation for the participation of parliamentarians in OSCE events, such as the Mediterranean Seminars, the Seminar on the Code of Conduct on Politico-Military matters and the September 2002 meeting with regional and sub-regional organisations on preventing terrorism.

Discussion

In the discussion following the Secretary General's presentation, it was noted that more parliamentary involvement and increased transparency would contribute to greater visibility of the work of the Organization. There was discussion on the issue of management, including staff regulations and the special conditions of locally hired staff in the Missions. In addition, the role of the OSCE in relation to the so-called frozen conflicts was discussed; including the need for mission mandates to deal with the issue of small arms and light weapons.



Vice-President Gennady Seleznev



Special Representative Paula Kokkonen delivers her report to the Joint Session

Address by the OSCE PA Special Representative on the Gender Issue, Mrs. Paula Kokkonen

In her report, Mrs. Kokkonen affirmed that the so-called glass-ceiling, preventing women from entering top-level positions, still exists within the OSCE. As demonstrated in the report prepared by the Gender Unit at the International Secretariat, in all OSCE Institutions and in the Secretariat in Vienna as well as in most OSCE Missions, the leadership is predominantly male. Mrs. Kokkonen expressed regret that no progress has been made in this area in spite of the good-will expressed by the participating States in the OSCE Gender Action Plan of 1999. She also emphasized that the situation within the OSCE

Parliamentary Assembly – which reflects the poor gender balance in many member parliaments – should be improved. Mrs. Kokkonen generally encouraged participating States to promote female candidates to professional positions within the OSCE – in particular to higher-level positions. In addition, Mrs Kokkonen reported on the findings of a questionnaire that she had distributed during the Berlin Annual Session on the perception of gender equality in the Assembly. She concluded that while Members, in general, find that there are too few women in their delegation, the respondents seem to have little hope that this will change in the near future.

Discussion

In the following discussion, Members stressed the need to implement relevant international conventions in all member States of the OSCE, as well as to update national legislation on anti-discrimination against women. Several delegates raised the issue of trafficking in human beings, emphasizing the development of an action-oriented approach rather than holding more seminars.

Brief Report by Mr. Panayiotis Kammenos, Vice-Chair of the First Committee

The Vice-Chair of the General Committee on Political Affairs and Security, Mr. Kammenos, reported on the presentations made during the First Committee meeting by the Chairs of the Permanent Council and the Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC). He highlighted that the Chairman of the



Riitta Uoskukainen, and Mirja Ryyänen

Permanent Council had reported on efforts undertaken by the Dutch Chairmanship to further the fight against organized crime and corruption, particularly in relation to trafficking in human beings and small arms and that the Chair of the FSC had given a detailed overview of the Forum's current and upcoming priorities. Both presentations were followed by questions from the floor and general debate. Lastly, the Rapporteur had outlined his ideas for the First Committee Report to be presented during the Annual Session in Rotterdam.

Brief Report by Mr. Oleg Bilorus, Chair of the Second Committee

The Chair of the Committee on Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and Environment informed members about the presentations and debates held in the Committee. He welcomed the decision taken by the participating States at the Porto Ministerial Council meeting stipulating the development of a new OSCE strategy document in this dimension, as reported by the OSCE co-ordinator for Economic and Environmental activities. The discussions in the Committee – based on the presentation by the Rapporteur – focused on the economic consequences and problems of European integration. Economic development in the OSCE area is an essential mechanism for the prevention of conflicts.



Marcello Pacini, and Ambassador Guido Lenzi

Brief report by Mrs. Elena Mizulina, Chair of the Third Committee

Ms. Mizulina informed the Joint Session that the Third Committee had heard presentations by the High Commissioner for National Minorities, the Representative of Freedom of the Media and the Deputy Director of the ODIHR. This was followed by discussions that were especially heated on the topic of freedom of the media. The fact that there exists such a diversity of views on norms of free media is perhaps a good reason for devoting more time to discussion of this subject. Ms. Mizulina also conveyed the main





Tone Tingsgaard during debate



Eugenia Ostapciuc during debate

ideas of the draft report of the Third Committee as presented by the Rapporteur. She expressed her regret that there wasn't enough time for a discussion of the Rapporteur's remarks because the Committee meeting had to be cut short.

**Closing statement by Mr. Bruce George,
President of the OSCE Parliamentary
Assembly**

President George closed the 2003 Winter Meeting by thanking all those involved in its success, including the Austrian Parliament, the Austrian Government, the Secretary General of the OSCE and all representatives of OSCE Institutions. He continued by stating that the objectives set when the Assembly decided to establish the Winter Meetings have been accomplished. There has been a very fruitful interaction with the governmental dimension of the OSCE, and the Meeting has proved to be a good opportunity for dialogue and interaction on OSCE topics and issues in preparation for the Rotterdam Annual Session.

Although Iraq is not geographically an OSCE issue, the general debate held on this subject was a great success, providing the opportunity for members of the Parliamentary Assembly to express their views on the crisis. The debate on Iraq proved the capability of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly to engage with issues of great concern to the citizens of the OSCE,

while re-asserting the PA as a Euro-Atlantic and Euro-Asian forum for inter-parliamentary dialogue.

Mr. George concluded by assuring members that the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly will continue with its numerous activities – field visits, conferences, seminars and election monitoring, among others – in order to provide the necessary parliamentary input into the activities of the OSCE.



President George addresses the Assembly

Journalism Prize



Freedom of the Media Representative Freimut Duve presents Prize to Anna Politkovskaya

“And what about Europe? Europe keeps silent. It bides its time. It says that you have a President who speaks German pretty well, who is capable and so therefore we love him with all his mistakes. I’m a journalist. I’m neither a politician nor a diplomat. And so I’m not polite - I say what I think. And what I think about is what I see with my own eyes. My job is simple: to look around and to write what I see. And I see the criminal consequences of Europe’s silence and its connivance in Chechnya. Everybody wants to live. Everybody wants to be free. To take a walk in the street. To wander around in the forest. To teach. And to learn. There is still nothing of this in Chechnya. There is a curfew there. Looting. There are checkpoints at every step. And your life depends neither on the Constitution nor on the President – they will not defend you. Rather, your life depends on the man with the machine gun whom you are walking past at that particular moment. And it doesn’t matter for you to which side he belongs - the separatists or the federalists. You will simply die”,

thus said Russian journalist Anna Politkovskaya after receiving the 2003 OSCE Prize for Journalism and Democracy. The Prize Ceremony was opened by OSCE PA President Bruce George, who said that “granting her this honour is a strong statement by the Parliamentary Assembly in support of courageous and professional journalism, for human rights and freedom of the media”. The award, consisting

of 20.000 US Dollars, was presented to Anna Politkovskaya by the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media Freimut Duve, a former member of the German Bundestag who in 1996 took the initiative to establish the annual OSCE Prize. Mr. Duve praised Anna Politkovskaya for her journalistic courage in pursuing her work in conflict regions. “Anna has more than fifty times crossed the bridge into a war region that is considered a ‘no mans land’ for independent journalism. She felt obliged to go to Chechnya again and again. She felt obliged to publish her articles in a book called *The Dirty War – a Russian Reporter in Chechnya.*”



Prize winner, Anna Politkovskaya

Mr. Duve emphasized that Ms. Politkovskaya has contributed to the reality that all those responsible for war have to accept: that war zones will not remain silent. “It is either the courageous journalist of the present time, or later the work of the historians who will open the dark windows”, said Mr. Duve.

The purpose of the annual OSCE Prize for Journalism and Democracy is to promote the principles of free journalism as laid down in the OSCE Budapest Declaration of 1994. The Prize was awarded in 1996 to Adam Michnik, in 1997

to ‘Reporters sans frontières’, in 1998 to Timothy Garton Ash, in 1999 to Christiane Amanpour, in 2000 to Andrei Babitsky and in 2001 posthumously to both Georgiy Gongadze and José Luis López de Lacalle. Last year the Prize was shared between the Austrian TV-journalist Friedrich Orter and the Belarusian TV-journalist Pavel Sheremet. The Annual Prize for Journalism and Democracy has been made possible by the dedicated and generous assistance of the following donors: Bertelsmann AG, Germany; Bonnier Group, Sweden; and Shibsted ASA, Norway.



Kobsak Chutikul during debate



Eldar Ibrahimov during debate



Jesus Posada addresses the Assembly



Nevzat Yalcintas addresses the Assembly

Programme

Thursday, 20 February

08.30-11.30 **Standing Committee**

11.30-13.30 **Joint Session of the three General Committees:**

- Call to order;
- Opening remarks by the President of the OSCE PA;
- Address by the President of the Austrian Republic;
- Address of the OSCE Chair-in-Office followed by a question/answer session;
- Presentation of Prize for Journalism and Democracy

15.00-18.00 **General Committee on Political Affairs and Security**

- Opening remarks by the Committee Chair;
- Address of the Chair of the OSCE Permanent Council followed by a question/answer session;
- Address of the Chair of the Forum for Security Cooperation followed by a question/answer session;
- Discussion;
- Follow-up to the Resolutions adopted by the General Committee on Political Affairs and Security;
- Introduction by the Rapporteur of the concept of his Report to the Annual Session in Rotterdam followed by discussion

15.00-18.00 **General Committee on Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and Environment**

- Opening remarks by the Committee Chair;
- Address of the Coordinator for OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities followed by a question/answer session;
- Discussion;
- Follow-up to the Resolutions adopted by the General Committee on Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and Environment;
- Introduction by the Rapporteur of the concept of his Report to the Annual Session in Rotterdam followed by discussion

Evening

- Buffet Reception hosted by the President of the Austrian Nationalrat

Friday, 21 February

09.00-11.00 **General Committee on Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions**

- Opening remarks by the Committee Chair;
- Addresses by:
 - OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities;
 - OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media;
 - Director of the ODIHR;followed by a question/answer session;
- Discussion;
- Follow-up to the Resolutions adopted by the General Committee on Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions;
- Introduction by the Rapporteur of the concept of her Report to the Annual Session in Rotterdam followed by discussion;

11.15-12.30 **Debate on Iraq**

14.30-17.00 **Closing Joint Session of the three General Committees**

- Call to order;
- Address by the OSCE Secretary General followed by a question/answer session;
- Report by the OSCE PA Special representative on the gender issue followed by a debate;
- Reports by the Chairs of the three General Committees;
- Concluding statement by the OSCE PA President