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

**Mr. Roberto Montella**

**VIENNA, 23 FEBRUARY 2017**

**Report to the Standing Committee**  
**2017 Winter Meeting**  
**23 February 2017**

*OSCE PA Secretary General Roberto Montella*

The Autumn of 2016 proved to be an exceptionally busy time for our Assembly and the International Secretariat, due both to external and internal factors. In the months following my last report to the Standing Committee at our meeting in Skopje, we deployed election observation missions on seven occasions and supported President Muttonen's busy schedule of activities. The Secretariat work on consolidating our structure has continued, with a particular focus on administrative and financial matters.

It has been my honour to lead the Secretariat for a full year now, and it was a particular pleasure to do so during our **25<sup>th</sup> anniversary year**. We marked this occasion in appropriate fashion, together with representatives of OSCE participating States in October, and I want to thank President Muttonen for her contribution to this event. I also extend the Secretariat's **thanks particularly** to those countries that hosted Assembly meetings in such a warm manner during these recent months in **Copenhagen, Tbilisi, and Skopje**. Their willingness to host our meetings is a major contribution to the Assembly. In this regard, I want to sincerely **thank Denmark**, which above and beyond their regular budget contribution, hosts our headquarters in the centre of Copenhagen. I also want to thank the **Austrian Government** for their continued support to our Liaison Office in Vienna, and the **Italian Government** for supporting the secondment of two staff members of our Secretariat.

**Strengthening of the International Secretariat (internal reform)**

As I have previously reported, one of my key priorities upon taking up my duties was to work on a **general strengthening and consolidation of the International Secretariat**. This has proved to be a complex and indeed challenging undertaking which first and foremost derived from the need to adapt the work of the Secretariat to evolving needs and changing circumstances. In pursuing this overarching objective and in line with your expectations, I have prioritized the **principles of efficiency, effectiveness, transparency and accountability** as an integral part of the **reform process**.

In the first six months of my mandate as your Secretary General, I put in place effective and clear **Staff Rules and Regulations and a Code of Conduct** that govern our work. In consultation with the President and the Treasurer, Deputy Secretary General Gustavo Pallares and I are now in the process of drafting **Financial Rules and Regulations** governing our internal financial management. We are studying and using the acquis of similar international organizations (OSCE, NATO PA, UN) while elaborating our own rules. The ultimate objective is to provide greater clarity of responsibility as well as enhanced accountability and transparency in budgetary matters of the Secretariat. It is my intention to seek the endorsement of the OSCE PA leadership for such a set of rules in the near future.

To complement these clearer financial rules and regulations that will govern our work, I expect that we will need to make a few **adjustments to the structure of our next budget**. We remain acutely aware of the need for increased financial and operational diligence as means to counteract a protracted general economic downturn. Some of the desired results of these reforms will take additional time, and for the time being, I would like to thank all Members of Parliament for the precious advice you have shared with me in this crucially important undertaking. My sincere thanks and deep gratitude

also go to all my colleagues at the Secretariat for their collective efforts and support during this process, which is in the best interest of our Organization. I consider the improvements being made as a collective success.

In order to better service the Assembly, we have continued to have staff participate in training mechanisms provided by the OSCE. These possibilities for members of our team to undertake training in areas relevant to their responsibilities is an important benefit deriving from our enhanced co-operation with the OSCE's executive structures in the past year. I also take this opportunity to thank **Secretary General Lamberto Zannier** and **Conflict Prevention Center Director Marcel Pesko** and their colleagues in the OSCE Secretariat for the open and pragmatic co-operation we have developed in this and other fields during the past year.

Finally, I offer a personal and institutional thanks to **Mr. Kurt Lerras**, who has been serving the OSCE PA faithfully for 24 years in various capacities, including most recently as Administrative Director. Mr. Lerras has decided to leave the permanent staff of the OSCE PA, but upon request of the management has agreed to continue working for the Secretariat in the coming year on a part-time consultancy basis.

#### **Co-operation with Partners (external outreach)**

Our efforts to strengthen co-operation with our traditional partners (including other OSCE Institutions, PACE, NATO PA, EU Parliament and the CIS IPA) has yielded results in several fields in recent months.

Our intensive participation in early January in the Annual Meeting of Heads of Missions and Institutions with the OSCE Chairmanship was a clear display of our close co-operation within the OSCE, as are our regular co-ordination meetings with OSCE senior officials and the daily interaction between the Vienna Liaison Office and the OSCE Secretariat.

In the field of election observation, thanks also to the wise and **constructive leadership of Director Michael Link**, we have further **enhanced our co-operation with ODIHR** by introducing an additional focus on the period after elections. Given the important role that legislative **follow-up** often plays in addressing challenges that may be identified, we have agreed with ODIHR that when possible and appropriate, the Special Co-ordinator, an OSCE PA senior official leading the short-term OSCE observer mission, will also participate in the presentation of ODIHR's Final Report. This typically takes place some 2-3 months following an election, and presents an excellent opportunity to encourage appropriate follow-up at the domestic level to recommendations that our observers may have. In recent months, Mr. Kent Harstedt and Mr. Ilkka Kanerva participated, respectively, in visits to Belarus and Russia to this end. We hope that similar visits can take place when feasible in the coming future.

In the field of elections, we've continued our usual good co-operation with our traditional parliamentary partners, and are planning to meet again at senior staff level, as we did the late Summer of 2016 north of Copenhagen. I also took the opportunity to participate in an 'implementation meeting' of the Declaration of Principles for International Election Observation, to examine opportunities that may arise from our adherence to this document.

The International Secretariat is also working closely with colleagues from the Inter-parliamentary Assembly of the **CIS (CIS IPA)** on a **conference on combating terrorism**, expected to take place in

St. Petersburg in March. We see this as the continuation of our traditional good co-operation with the CIS IPA, and look forward to a successful conference.

I also participated in a meeting of the Secretaries General of PABSEC countries, which served as an opportunity to solidify our relations, as well as to exchange views with colleagues from the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean, CIS IPA, PACE, TURK PA, and the Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference among others.

### **Activities of the International Secretariat in support of Members**

Our Secretariat team and I have taken special care to keep abreast of developments of relevance within the OSCE region and particularly regarding the vast array of activities and initiatives undertaken by the OSCE Secretariat, by the Executive Structures and by the other OSCE Institutions. I believe our efforts have enabled the OSCE PA International Secretariat to better provide analytical support and policy advice on issues of strategic importance to the OSCE and the Parliamentary Assembly. This has strengthened the Assembly's input and contributed to increased and more incisive public messaging by the PA in the best interest of the OSCE participating States and of the Organization. Together, we have contributed to elevating the profile of the PA within the OSCE and beyond. We plan to continue to do our utmost to best support and advise on Assembly policies.

We recently organized the **deployment of election observation missions on seven different occasions** within a two-month period. This required calling on almost all of our small team of staff to support the election observation teams. We supported teams of observers in **Georgia** (8 October and again for the second round on 30 October) led by Ignacio Sanchez Amor and Guglielmo Picchi; in **Montenegro** (16 October) led by Margareta Cederfelt and Azay Guliyev; in **Moldova** (30 October and again for the second round on 13 November) led by Arta Dade and Geir Joergen Bekkevold; in the **United States of America** (8 November) led by President Christine Muttonen and Makis Voridis; and finally in **the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia** (11 December) led by Roberto Battelli and Azay Guliyev. Further details on all our 2016 election observation activities can be found in the attached '2016 Election Observation Overview.'

We have provided appropriate support to **President Muttonen**, who has been very active in this first part of her Presidency. The President has paid **official visits to London and to Moscow**, held several meetings with senior **UN** officials in **New York** and also took the opportunity to address a Summit of Women Speakers of Parliament, organized by the Inter-parliamentary Union. The President also held several substantive bilateral meetings with Foreign Ministers on the sidelines of the Hamburg Ministerial Council meeting, in addition to presiding over our Bureau meeting on that occasion, and participating in the opening of the OSCE Chairmanship in Vienna.

The Secretariat has also continued to support activity by other Assembly bodies. Deputy Secretary General Semyon Dzakhaev has overseen our support to the **Sub-Committee on Rules of Procedure and Working Practices led by Lord Peter Bowness** which has produced **amendments** that have been proposed to the Standing Committee for the Vienna Winter Meeting. I would also like to highlight the continued active work of Programme Officer Farimah Daftary in supporting our **Ad Hoc Committee on Migration**, whose Members, under the leadership of **Chairman Filippo Lombardi**, have maintained an ambitious approach and held useful and substantive policy-focused meetings in Brussels and Geneva last month.

In Copenhagen and in our Liaison Office in Vienna under the leadership of Ambassador Andreas Nothelle, we continue to welcome visits by national delegations, and since Skopje we have received visits by parliamentarians from Austria, Finland, France, Portugal and Sweden.

### **Upcoming Events**

Continuing preparations for our statutory meetings, our Secretariat team has paid two visits **to Minsk in preparation for our Annual Session** this coming summer. We very much hope that it will be a productive and successful event. Looking ahead further, the Secretariat has also visited **Andorra** to work with colleagues there in preparation for our **2017 Autumn Meeting**, and visits will also take place soon to **Berlin in preparation for the 2018 Annual Session** and to **Bishkek** in preparation for the 2018 Autumn Meeting.

We are also actively preparing to deploy an election observation mission for the 2 April **elections in Armenia**; in early December last year Programme Officer Loic Poulain travelled to Yerevan as a part of ODIHR's Needs Assessment Mission for the elections. In addition, we have started planning for a mission to observe the parliamentary elections in **Albania**, scheduled for the 18<sup>th</sup> of June.

Preparations are also ongoing for another Leinsweiler retreat in early May, and we appreciate the German government's decision to once again fully finance this project.

I would like to conclude by **thanking** all the Members of the Bureau, the Standing Committee and the numerous **Members of Delegations** who have personally approached me with advice, suggestions, and proposals during the past year. I value and deeply appreciate the personal interaction and the informal and friendly communication I have with Members. I would also like to express my deep gratitude for the commitment and the professional delivery of all the members of the **staff**, including the valuable contribution of the **Research Fellows** both in Copenhagen and in the Vienna Liaison Office. As I have underlined in the past, the International Secretariat works as a team and it is with this renewed team spirit that we look forward to continuing serving the Members of the Assembly.

## **Annex I**

### **List of Meetings/Interlocutors from 3 October 2016 to 22 February 2017**

#### **OSCE Representatives**

##### **OSCE Secretariat**

Ambassador Lamberto Zannier, Secretary General

Marcel Pesko, Director of the CPC

Ambassador Miroslava Beham, Senior Adviser on Gender Issues

Ambassador Paul Bekkers, Director of the Office of the OSCE Secretary General

##### **ODIHR**

Michael Georg Link, Director

##### **OSCE Field Operations**

Ambassador Bernd Borchardt, Head of the OSCE Presence in Albania

Ambassador Jonathan Moore, Head of the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina

Ambassador Jan Braathu, Head of the OSCE Mission in Kosovo

Ambassador Andrea Orizio, Head of the OSCE Mission to Serbia

Ambassador Nina Suomalainen, Head of the OSCE Mission to Skopje

Ambassador John MacGregor, Project Co-ordinator in Uzbekistan

#### **OSCE PA Delegations**

##### **Delegation of Austria**

Christine Muttonen, Deputy Head of Delegation, OSCE PA President

##### **Delegation of Azerbaijan**

Azay Guliyev, Member of Delegation, OSCE PA Vice-President

##### **Delegation of Finland**

Ilkka Kanerva, Member of Delegation, OSCE PA President Emeritus

##### **Delegation of France**

Alain Neri, Member of Delegation

##### **Delegation of Georgia**

George Tsereteli, Member of Delegation, OSCE PA Vice-President

##### **Delegation of Germany**

Doris Barnett, Head of Delegation, OSCE PA Treasurer

##### **Delegation of Greece**

Mavroudis (Makis) Voridis, Member of Delegation

##### **Delegation of Italy**

Marietta Tidei, Member of Delegation, Rapporteur of the OSCE PA General Committee on Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and Environment

Guglielmo Picchi, Member of Delegation, Vice-Chair of the OSCE PA Committee for Political affairs and Security

**Delegation of Portugal**

Isabel Santos, OSCE PA Vice-President

**Delegation of Spain**

Jose Ignacio Sanchez Amor, Head of Delegation, Chair of the Committee for Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions, Special Representative on OSCE Border Issues

**Delegation of Sweden**

Kent Harstedt, Head of Delegation, OSCE PA Vice-President

**Delegation of the United Kingdom**

Lord Peter Bowness, Head of Delegation, OSCE PA Vice-President

Lord Alfred Dubs, Member of Delegation

**Delegation of the United States of America**

Benjamin Cardin, Member of Delegation, Special Representative on Anti-Semitism, Racism and Intolerance

**OSCE Ministerial Council**

Sergey Lavrov, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Russian Federation

Vladimir Makei, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Belarus

Erlan Abdyldaev, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Kyrgyzstan

**International Organizations**

**IOM-UN Migration Agency in Denmark**

Jacob Jørgensen, Programme and Liaison Officer

**NATO Parliamentary Assembly**

Paolo Alli, Head of NATO PA EOM to Georgia, now NATO PA President

David Hobbs, Secretary General

**Parliamentary Assembly of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (PABSEC)**

Asaf Hajiyevev, Secretary General

**Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE)**

Wojciech Sawicki, Secretary General

**Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean (PAM)**

Sergio Piazzi, Secretary General

**Interparliamentary Assembly of Member Nations of the Commonwealth of Independent States (IPA CIS)**

Alexey Sergeev, Secretary General

**Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference (BSPC)**

Bodo Bahr, Secretary General

**Parliamentary Union of the OIC Member States (PUIC)**

Mahmud Erol Kilic, Secretary General

**Parliamentary Assembly of Turkic Speaking Countries (TURKPA)**

Fuad Alakbarov, Deputy Secretary General

**United Nations (UN)**

Jeffrey Feltman, Under Secretary General, Department of Political Affairs

Levent Bilman, Director Europe Division, Department of Political Affairs

**UN Women**

Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, Executive Director

**Diplomatic Corps**

Ambassador Kastriot Robo, Ambassador of Albania to Denmark

Ambassador Hrachya Aghajanyan, Ambassador of Armenia to Denmark

Ambassador Jiri Brodsky, Ambassador of the Czech Republic to Denmark

Ambassador Nikoloz Rtveliashvili, Ambassador of Georgia to Denmark

Ambassador Stefano Queirola Palmas, Ambassador of Italy to Denmark

Uffe Balslev, Head of Department for European Neighbourhood, Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Ambassador Alexios Zannos, Permanent Representative of Greece to the OSCE

Ambassador Alessandro Azzoni, Permanent Representative of Italy to the OSCE

Ambassador Jan Kickert, Permanent Representative of Austria to the United Nations

Ambassador Sebastiano Cardi, Permanent Representative of Italy to the United Nations

Ambassador Kairat K. Abdrakhmanov, Permanent Representative of Kazakhstan to the United Nations, now Minister of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan

Ambassador Ian Kelly, Ambassador of the United States of America to Georgia

**Working Visits**

**Implementation Meeting of the Declaration of Principles for International Election Observation**

Craig Jenness, Director, Electoral Assistance Division, United Nations Department of Political Affairs

Michael Svetlik, Vice-President, IFES

David Carroll, Director, Democracy Program, The Carter Center

Pat Merloe, Director of Electoral Programs, NDI

Richard Lappin, Deputy Head of Elections Department, OSCE/ODIHR

**Meeting of the Secretaries General of the Parliaments of the BSEC Member States**

Safa Mirzayev, Secretary General, Milli Mejlis of the Republic of Azerbaijan

Ivan Slavchov, Secretary General, National Assembly of the Republic of Bulgaria

Shota Goshadze, Deputy Secretary General, Parliament of Georgia

Svetislava Bulajic, Secretary General, National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia

Mehmet Ali Kumbuzoglu, Secretary General, Grand National Assembly of the Republic of Turkey

Petro Bodnar, Acting Secretary General, Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine

**Georgia**

Mikheil Janelidze, Minister of Foreign Affairs

Tamar Zhvania, Chairperson of the Central Election Commission

Giorgi Kandelaki, candidate, United National Movement

Tinatin Bokuchava, candidate, United National Movement

Kakha Kaladze, candidate, “Georgian Dream – Democratic Georgia” party; now Deputy Prime Minister

Irakli Kobakhidze, candidate, “Georgian Dream – Democratic Georgia” party; now Chairman of Parliament

Nino Burjanadze, candidate, Democratic Movement

**Russian Federation**

Valentina Matvienko, Speaker, Federation Council of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation

**United Kingdom**

Lord Peter Fowler, Lord Speaker

Matthew Hamlyn, Clerk of the Overseas Office

**Others**

Eka Gigauri, Executive Director of Transparency International Georgia

Mikheil Benidze, Executive Director of ISFED, Georgia

## Annex II

### OSCE PA activities from 3 October 2016 to 22 February 2017

#### October 2016

Date	Activity
4	OSCE Adviser on Gender Issues Mira Beham's visit to the OSCE PA International Secretariat, Copenhagen
5-10	Election Observation Mission to Georgia - first round (37 participants)
12-18	Election Observation Mission to Montenegro (42 participants)
18-20	Implementation meeting of the Declaration of Principles for International Election Observation
26 Oct - 1 Nov	Election Observation Mission to Moldova - first round (11 participants)
27	Address by OSCE PA President Muttonen to the OSCE Permanent Council, Vienna
27	OSCE PA 25th anniversary reception
28 Oct - 1 Nov	Election Observation Mission to Georgia - second round (8 participants)

#### November 2016

Date	Activity
2	Address by OSCE PA President Emeritus Kanerva at ODIHR seminar on election observation and follow-up recommendations, Vienna
2-10	Election Observation Mission to the USA (106 participants)
9-11	OSCE PA President Muttonen and Secretary General Montella's visit to the United Nations, New York
11-15	Election Observation Mission to Moldova - second round (11 participants)
16	Address by OSCE PA President Emeritus Kanerva at OSCE Group of Friends of Mediation meeting, Vienna
16-17	OSCE Secretariat assessment visit to Malta, Valletta
19-21	Address by OSCE PA President Muttonen at NATO PA Annual Session, Istanbul
22-23	Conference team's visit to Minsk for 2017 Annual Session preparations, Minsk
28-30	OSCE PA President Muttonen and Secretary General Montella's visit to the Russian Federation, Moscow
30 Nov - 2 Dec	Needs Assessment Mission in preparation for elections in Armenia, Yerevan

#### December 2016

Date	Activity
5	Alain Neri, Member of French Delegation to the OSCE PA, visit to the OSCE PA International Secretariat, Copenhagen

7-13	Election Observation Mission to the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (24 participants)
7	OSCE PA Bureau Meeting, Hamburg
8-9	23rd OSCE Ministerial Council, Hamburg
12-13	Address by OSCE PA President Muttonen at the IPU Global Summit of Women Speakers of Parliament
20-22	Presentation of ODIHR's final report on elections in Belarus, Minsk

### January 2017

Date	Activity
5-6	OSCE PA Presidential team's meetings with counterparts at PACE, Strasbourg
11-13	Opening of the OSCE Austrian Chairmanship and meeting of the Chairmanship and the Secretariat with the Heads of Field Operations and Institutions, Vienna
15-17	OSCE PA Ad Hoc Committee on Migration briefings, Brussels and Geneva
17-20	Presentation of ODIHR's final report on elections in the Russian Federation, Moscow
23-24	Address by OSCE PA Second Committee Chair Sena at the first Preparatory Meeting of the Economic and Environmental Forum "Greening the economy and building business partnerships", Vienna
24-25	OSCE PA President Muttonen and Secretary General Montella's meetings with OSCE PA UK delegation, London
26	OSCE PA Vice-President Kent Hårstedt's visit to the OSCE PA International Secretariat, Copenhagen
31	OSCE PA President Emeritus Ilkka Kanerva's visit to the OSCE PA International Secretariat, Copenhagen

### February 2017

Date	Activity
3	Meeting on Belarus chaired by OSCE PA Vice-President Hårstedt, Vienna
5-7	PABSEC Meeting of the Secretaries General of the Parliaments of the BSEC Member States, Istanbul
9-10	OSCE PA Secretary General Montella's meetings at the OSCE, Vienna