

## President Cederfelt visits the United States for meetings and speaking engagements

OSCE PA President Margareta Cederfelt (Sweden) has been on a visit to the United States, meeting last week in Washington with Members of the US Delegation to the OSCE PA and participating in a number of events. On 16 December, Cederfelt met with OSCE PA First Committee Chair Richard Hudson, and on 14 December, she met with Vice-President Roger Wicker and Special Representative on Anti-Semitism, Racism and Intolerance Ben Cardin, as well as Member of the US Delegation Steve Cohen, for discussions that focused on Euro-Atlantic co-operation and the increasing threats to human rights and territorial integrity in the OSCE area.

Discussions touched on Afghanistan, the human rights situation in Belarus, the Russian military build-up on the border with Ukraine, and the general state of the European security order. Cederfelt expressed appreciation for the dedicated engagement of the US Delegation to the OSCE PA and the US Helsinki Commission, including Special Representative Cardin's work on promoting tolerance and non-discrimination in the OSCE area. The President also met with Helsinki Commission staff and discussed plans for OSCE PA activities in 2022, with a focus on the upcoming Winter Meeting.



Margareta Cederfelt and Ben Cardin



Roger Wicker and Margareta Cederfelt

While in Washington Cederfelt also hosted a roundtable at the Atlantic Council, focused on the issue of European challenges and how the crisis in and around Ukraine is a threat to the European security order. On 17 December, the President spoke at a Council on Foreign Relations event entitled "The OSCE and Human Rights in Europe Today." The discussion focused on challenges to democracy and human rights and the role of the OSCE in addressing them, including the important contributions of the Parliamentary Assembly. Cederfelt emphasized continued dialogue and co-operation within the forum of OSCE in order to secure a more democratic and safe future.

## Special Representative on South East Europe gives interview with Greek newspaper

OSCE PA Vice-President and Special Representative on South East Europe Azay Guliyev (Azerbaijan) gave an interview recently with a Greek newspaper called *To Vima*. The interview, which covers topics such as the migration crisis in the OSCE area and the prospects for European integration of the Western Balkans, can be read at the PA's website: <https://bit.ly/3q3IX3m>

## Special Representative Taverna explores elderly issues in meeting with UK parliamentary group

The OSCE PA's Special Representative on Elderly Issues, Italian parliamentarian Paola Taverna, met virtually with the United Kingdom's All-Party Parliamentary Group for Longevity on Monday. The discussion served as an opportunity for Special Representative Taverna to learn more about the UK's approach to elderly issues in the context of an aging popula-

tion and prospects for senior citizens in the UK. Taverna and her British interlocutors exchanged lessons learned and discussed best practices that can be shared more widely to meet the challenges facing the elderly population in the OSCE area.

Taverna was appointed Special Representative on Elderly Issues in August 2021.

## Season's Greetings from OSCE PA Secretary General Roberto Montella



Season's Greetings and Best Wishes for the New Year

*Frohe Festtage und ein Gutes Neues Jahr*

Сердечные поздравления и наилучшие пожелания в Новом году

*Felices Fiestas y Próspero Año Nuevo*

*Buone Feste e Felice Anno Nuovo*

*Joyeuses Fêtes et Bonne Année*

“At the close of another year of challenges related to the COVID-19 pandemic, I would like to thank all OSCE parliamentarians and the staff of delegations, as well as my team at the International Secretariat, for their adaptability, patience, and continued dedication. And for those who have personally been affected by the disease, I offer my sympathy and support.

As we slowly recover and begin to return to some normalcy following the acute stage of the crisis last year, I look forward to continuing our work together, which will incorporate an inno-

novative hybrid approach to parliamentary diplomacy. Already, we have returned to a comparable level of election observation activities as the pre-pandemic period, with roughly the same number of observers deployed in 2021 as were deployed in 2019, and with this in mind I want to express my appreciation for all those who participated in this essential OSCE endeavor.

The Parliamentary Assembly's three annual statutory meetings – the Winter Meeting, Annual Session and Autumn Meeting – are scheduled, respectively, for Vienna (24-25 February), Birmingham (2-6 July), and Sofia (dates to be confirmed), but based on the continuous changes in national and international preventive measures being introduced, it is difficult to provide definite information regarding their format. The OSCE PA will adapt accordingly to the requirements in place in the host countries to ensure full compliance with the preventative measures to safeguard our delegates. We appreciate your patience and your understanding in this regard.

It is thanks to all of you that the Parliamentary Assembly continues to expand its impact on the most pressing issues facing the OSCE region today, and to uphold our common values and the principles enshrined in the Helsinki Final Act of 1975. It is therefore with deep gratitude and respect that I would like to wish you and your dear ones a happy holiday. May 2022 bring you health, happiness, and success. Thank you for your friendship and co-operation.” - Secretary General Roberto Montella