

Town Hall Meeting offers opportunity to discuss OSCE PA work

In response to requests from national delegations for more information on the activities and working practices of the OSCE PA, President Margareta Cederfelt (Sweden) and Secretary General Roberto Montella convened a virtual “town hall meeting” with OSCE PA Members and staff from across the OSCE region on 14 October. Secretary General Montella explained the purpose of the town hall meeting, which he described as providing an informal and open forum for OSCE PA Members to hear on topics of interest and discuss upcoming activities.

President Cederfelt provided an overview of the Assembly’s activities, noting that once a month a meeting is held to discuss the war in Ukraine and its consequences. She also highlighted the work of Special Representatives working on various aspects of the Ukraine war, including promoting accountability for war crimes and addressing the refugee crisis.

Deputy Secretary General Gustavo Pallares offered a brief overview of upcoming OSCE PA statutory meetings, including the Autumn Meeting in Warsaw on 24-26 November. He announced that the theme of the parliamentary conference at the Autumn Meeting will be focused on the war in Ukraine, and pointed out that there will be a Bureau meeting on the margins in Warsaw, rather than the usual practice of holding a Bureau meeting on the eve of the OSCE Ministerial Council.

OSCE PA Head of Elections Andreas Baker provided a briefing on upcoming PA election observation missions, including to the United States for the 8 November congressional midterm elections, and potential elections further down the road in 2023. The town hall participants also heard reports by Vice-President Reinhold Lopatka (Austria), who provided an overview of the work of the Ad Hoc Committee on Countering Terrorism (CCT), highlighting the recently established Counter-Terrorism Parliamentary Co-ordination mechanism among parliamentary assemblies which the OSCE PA is serving as the first president of. Lopatka also described his efforts as Special Representative for



Margareta Cederfelt chairs the OSCE PA Town Hall Meeting on 14 October in Copenhagen

Parliamentary Dialogue on Ukraine, noting that the international community is focused primarily on the military aspects of the Ukraine war and that there is currently little appetite for diplomacy. Special Representative on Arctic Issues Bryndis Haraldsdottir (Iceland) described her work, noting that she was attending the 2022 Arctic Circle Assembly in Reykjavík.

OSCE PA Senior Advisor Marco Bonabello offered remarks on the CCT, describing its background and composition, followed by a briefing by Senior Advisor Farimah Daftary who offered an overview of the Ad Hoc Committee on Migration’s work and its upcoming activities. President Cederfelt also mentioned the work of the Sub-Committee on Rules of Procedure and Working Practices, which considers proposed rules changes and makes recommendations to the Standing Committee. OSCE PA High-Level Expert Lamberto Zannier briefed parliamentarians on the work of the Call for Action – Helsinki +50 initiative, previewing upcoming activities and meetings. The OSCE PA’s Special Representative in Vienna, Ambassador Miodrag Pančeski, and Head of the OSCE PA Vienna Office Daria Boyarskaya provided an overview of what is happening on the governmental side of the OSCE.

In the discussion, a number of issues were raised, including the work of the young parliamentarians network in the Assembly, procedures for early voting at OSCE PA Annual Sessions, and proposed changes to the Assembly’s Rules of Procedure.

Today’s Call for Action - H+50 webinar to focus on Ukraine

The OSCE PA is holding a meeting on the war in Ukraine and its consequences today from 14:30 to 17:00. The meeting will be moderated by OSCE PA High-Level Expert Lamberto Zannier, and will feature remarks by Head of Ukrainian Delegation to the OSCE PA Mykyta Poturaiev, OSCE PA President Margareta Cederfelt, and Professor of International Law at the University of Milan Marco Pedrazzi.

PA Special Representative on Arctic Issues participates in 2022 Arctic Circle Assembly

Bryndis Haraldsdottir in Reykjavik



On October 13-16, the Arctic Circle Assembly gathered more than 2,000 participants in Reykjavík, including heads of states and governments, ministers, members of parliaments, indigenous leadership and representatives, scientists, entrepreneurs, business leaders, and environmentalists, from more than 60 countries. OSCE PA Special Representative on Arctic Issues Bryndis Haraldsdottir (Iceland) attended the four-day event where she exchanged views with other legislators, policymakers, and climate activists on Arctic Issues.

Haraldsdottir took the opportunity at conference to focus on climate change, which she noted is nowhere as apparent as it is in the Arctic. She noted that the Arctic Council member states, including the Russian Federation, had previously engaged in non-military discussions, but following the Russian invasion of Ukraine, unfortunately the work of the Arctic Council has been frozen. “The future of the Council, the main co-operating forum for the Arctic states, is thus uncertain,” she said. “Therefore, it is important that Arctic issues are discussed as widely as possible and the OSCE PA should definitely be a forum for that.”