

News from Copenhagen

Parliamentary oversight of armed forces critical, says Muttonen in Washington

OSCE PA President Christine Muttonen (Austria) spoke Tuesday at an OSCE conference in Washington, D.C., on the topic of the role of parliaments in promoting democratic control of armed and security forces. The panel discussion also included Jürgen Schatz, Desk Officer-OSCE at the German Federal Ministry of Defence, and Pat Towell of the U.S. Congressional Research Service, and was moderated by OSCE PA Deputy Secretary General Gustavo Pallares.

In her remarks, Muttonen stressed that full implementation of the OSCE Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security is needed today more than ever. “In a time of renewed military tensions and confrontation, democratic control and oversight can contribute to stability and the respect for international and national legal frameworks,” she said. The President emphasized that the involvement of parliaments is



crucial for good governance in the security sector.

United States Senator Roger Wicker, Vice-President of the OSCE PA and Chair of the U.S. Helsinki Commission, welcomed participants to Washington, underlining the continued relevance of the OSCE Code of Conduct and the ongoing commitment of the United States to peace and security in Europe.

Ad Hoc Committee members assess effectiveness of migration strategies in Italy visit

A delegation of five members of the OSCE PA Ad Hoc Committee on Migration, led by Chair Filippo Lombardi (Switzerland), was in Italy last week to assess developments in the response to the surge in irregular crossings on the Central Mediterranean migrant route. Members discussed efforts on the national and local levels to enhance the reception capacity for refugees and migrants, as well as integration policies. The delegation met on 26 October with officials in Rome, where they visited an “extraordinary reception centre” managed by the Italian Red Cross and a centre for asylum seekers and refugees (SPRAR) managed by the Jesuit Refugee Service.

On 27 October, the delegation travelled to the autonomous province of Alto Adige (South Tyrol), near the border with Austria, which experienced an increase in migrant flows following the closure of the border between Italy and France.



The delegation met with the Prefect of Bolzano, the Deputy Chief of Police and a number of other provincial authorities to discuss their response to the situation following the reinforcement of the Italian-Austrian border. The delegation, which was supported by Farimah Daftary from the International Secretariat, also visited a migrant reception centre in Brenner. OSCE PA Secretary General Roberto Montella participated in the Rome leg of the visit.

Sanchez Amor speaks on challenges to democracy at OSCE Human Dimension Committee



Ignacio Sanchez Amor (Spain), Chair of the OSCE PA's human rights committee, addressed the OSCE's Human Dimension Committee on Monday in Vienna. Speaking on the general theme of “challenges to democracy,” Sanchez Amor underlined the need for countries to refocus on constitutional principles and the rule of law. Simply holding elections periodically cannot be a substitute for genuine democracy, he said, which is based on fundamental principles and democratic constitutions. Further, credible election observation by the

OSCE/ODIHR and the OSCE PA must not be replaced by what he called “fake observers,” which is a growing and troubling trend in the OSCE area.

While he was in Vienna, Sanchez Amor met with Amb. Sian Macleod, the United Kingdom's Permanent Representative to the OSCE and Chair of the Human Dimension Committee, for talks focused on OSCE and OSCE PA work on human rights, democracy and humanitarian affairs. He also met with Luca Fratini, Deputy Permanent Representative of Italy, and Silvia Santangelo in charge of the Human Dimension in the Permanent Mission of Italy to the OSCE, for discussions on priority areas in the human dimension for the 2018 Italian OSCE Chairmanship.

Sanchez Amor's visit was supported by Andreas Nothelle and Marc Carillet from the OSCE PA's Vienna Liaison Office and Andreas Baker from the Copenhagen office.