

PA webinar focuses on the role of parliamentarians and journalists in fighting corruption



An online discussion Wednesday featuring a distinguished panel of journalists, parliamentarians and experts explored the critical partnership of politicians and the press in the global fight against corruption. The Parliamentary Web Dialogue, initiated by the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly's Special Representative on Fighting Corruption Irene Charalambides (Cyprus), was entitled "Parliamentarians & Journalists: Partners Against Corruption" and included participation by dozens of members of parliament and several leading journalists.

Reiterating the centrality of the principles of accountability, transparency and oversight in protecting democracies from corrupt practices, legislators and journalists discussed policies to reinforce their partnership against corruption. Discussion

focused on the importance of policies that would better enable journalists to pursue investigative reporting without fear of reprisals, including through the protection of whistleblowers and journalists' sources.

Parliamentarians heard expert contributions from Paola Severino, Special Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office on Combating Corruption; Gianluca Esposito, Executive Secretary of GRECO, Council of Europe; Odysseas Ph. Michaelides, Auditor General of the Republic of Cyprus; Drew Sullivan, Editor, Organized Crime and Corruption Reporting Project; and Franz Wild, Editor of The Bureau of Investigative Journalism's Enablers Project.

"Both parliamentarians and journalists are key actors in monitoring authorities' actions and holding them accountable before the public," Charalambides said in her opening remarks. "In fighting corruption, we work in the interest of citizens. When we join forces, we can more successfully prevent abuses of power and uncover corruption scandals, ultimately reinforcing public trust in state institutions, as well as in the work of free and independent media."

The event was moderated by Charalambides and Marco Bonabello from the International Secretariat and also included remarks from OSCE PA President George Tsereteli and Secretary General Roberto Montella.

Report published on climate change webinar

On behalf of Special Representative on Arctic Issues Torill Eidsheim (Norway), the International Secretariat has distributed a document with the highlights of the OSCE PA Web Dialogue "From the Arctic to Global: the Political Role in addressing Climate Change", held on 16 September. Download the document here: <https://bit.ly/2lnzsZm>

DSG Nothelle addresses Uzbek parliamentarians on oversight of the security sector

OSCE PA Deputy Secretary General and Special Representative in Vienna Andreas Nothelle addressed an OSCE event in Tashkent on 8 October focused on the role of parliamentary oversight of the security sector in Uzbekistan. Twenty members of the Oliy Majlis (parliament), many of whom newly elected earlier this year, were briefed on the work of the OSCE, principles of good security sector governance, the role of human rights, and the rule of law and gender equality in this regard.

Amb. Nothelle provided an overview of the work of the OSCE PA and discussed how parliamentary oversight of the security sector actually works in practice and why this is important. The focus was on what parliament can do to put

the 2016 Law on Parliamentary Oversight into practice, with discussion touching on the legislative processes, budget, and monitoring implementation of legislation. He highlighted concrete tools for parliamentary oversight of the security sector through the use of instruments such as oversight through submission of parliamentary questions, organization of public hearings, and inquiry commissions.

The workshop was organized jointly by the OSCE Conflict Prevention Centre and the OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Uzbekistan, and also included participation by the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights. The webinar was held simultaneously at the OSCE Secretariat and in Tashkent.

OSCE parliamentarians appointed to lead election observers in the US and Georgia

Preparations continue to observe elections in Georgia and the United States, on 31 October and 3 November, respectively. For Georgia, OSCE PA Second Committee Rapporteur Elona Hoxha Gjebrea (Albania) has been appointed Special Co-ordinator of the OSCE short-term observer mission and Special Representative on Civil Society Engagement Pia Kauma (Finland) will lead the Assembly's mission of 41 observers, including 30 parliamentarians. The PA will work closely with ODIHR and other international partners.

Nearly 100 observers, including some 70 members of par-

liament, are expected to observe the general elections in the United States. Third Committee Vice-Chair Michael Georg Link (Germany) has been appointed to lead the OSCE short-term observer mission and will deliver the post-election statement at a press conference in Washington on 4 November. OSCE PA Vice-President and Third Committee Rapporteur Kari Henriksen (Norway) will lead the PA's delegation of observers, who are expected to deploy to several US states for election day observation.

For the US mission, the PA will work closely with ODIHR.