

REPORT

Eighteenth Annual Session

Vilnius, Lithuania
*The OSCE: Addressing New
Security Challenges*

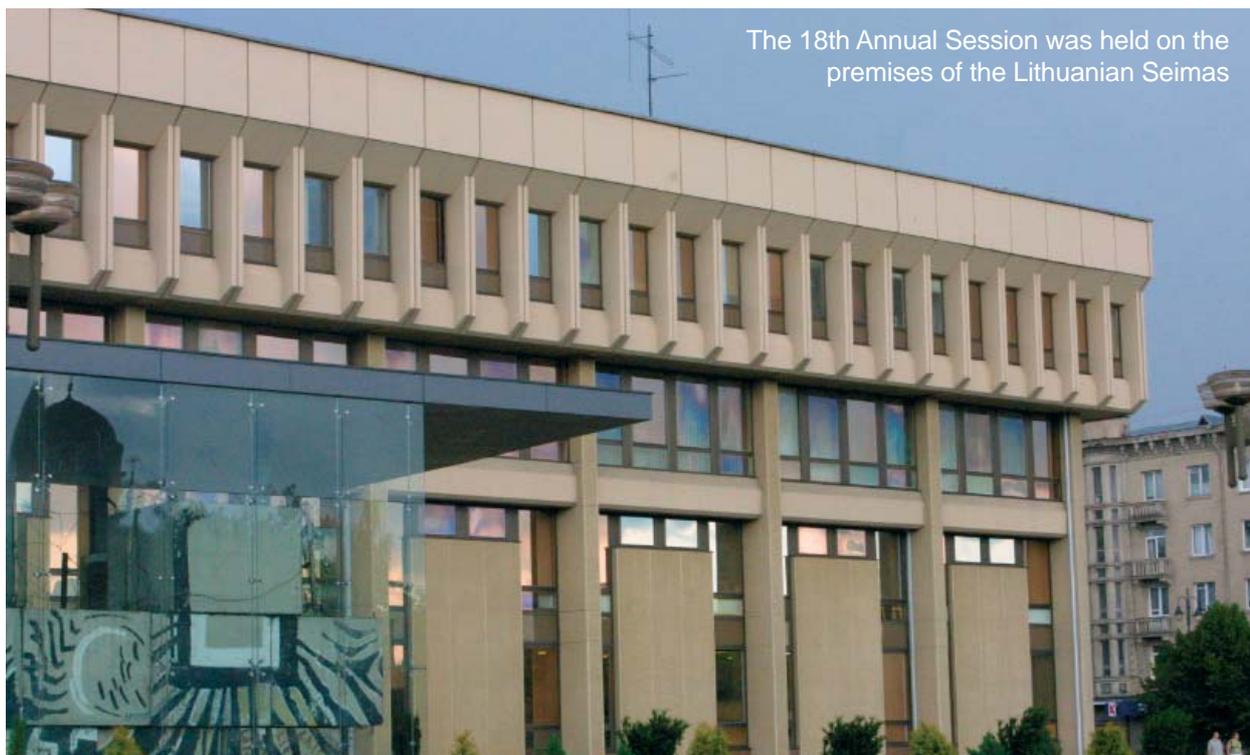


REPORT ON THE 18TH ANNUAL SESSION OF THE OSCE PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY

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Summary



The 18th Annual Session was held on the premises of the Lithuanian Seimas

The OSCE Parliamentary Assembly held its 18th Annual Session in Vilnius, the capital of Lithuania, from 29 June to 3 July 2009. It was the first time the Assembly met for its yearly inter-parliamentary session in a Baltic country.

Hosted by the Lithuanian Parliament under the theme of *The OSCE: Addressing New Security Challenges*, the 18th Annual Session brought together parliamentarians from 50 of the OSCE's 56 participating States.

On the last day of the Session, the parliamentarians adopted its concluding document, the Vilnius Declaration, outlining a set of policy recommendations to the OSCE and its participating States. The Declaration, representing the collective voice of the OSCE parliamentary dimension, contains three resolutions and 25 supplementary items dealing with a wide range of topics.

The resolution on Strengthening the OSCE calls for more transparency in the OSCE in order to enhance its legitimacy and relevance. The resolution on election observation emphasizes the importance of OSCE election observation and calls on participating States to fully implement the 1990 Copenhagen Commitments for democratic elections.

The Declaration emphasizes that food security, as a new and major challenge in the OSCE

area, must become a top priority on the OSCE agenda. Regarding the global economic crisis, the Declaration calls for greater co-ordination among OSCE participating States in the development of a coherent transatlantic response.

The Annual Session unanimously elected President Joao Soares (Portugal) to a second one-year term as head of the Assembly and elected three new Vice-Presidents and a new Treasurer. The Assembly's three Committees also elected new officers for the coming year.

The Assembly met in three separate plenary sessions with senior officials such as Lithuanian President Valdas Adamkus and the Speaker of the Lithuanian Parliament Arunas Valinskas addressing the delegates. The OSCE Chairperson-in-Office, Greek Foreign Minister Dora Bakoyannis, spoke at a special plenary session.

The three Committees met in separate sessions over several days to discuss current issues within their respective areas of responsibility and to consider and amend draft resolutions.

The Standing Committee met on the opening day to consider and approve the following year's budget and to discuss the Assembly's recent work. It also planned the Assembly's future tasks, including the Fall Meetings in Athens, Greece, and the 2010 Annual Session, which is to be held in Oslo, Norway.

Vilnius Declaration



At the close of each Annual Session, the Assembly adopts a Declaration consisting of the resolutions of the three General Committees as well as supplementary items that have been considered. The Declaration, with recommendations in the fields of political affairs, security, and economic, environmental and human rights issues, represents the collective voice of the OSCE parliamentarians.

The 18th Annual Session of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly concluded with the adoption of the Vilnius Declaration, outlining a set of policy recommendations to the OSCE and its participating States. The Declaration, voted on by parliamentarians from 50 OSCE countries, contains three resolutions and 25 supplementary items that had been debated and amended in the three General Committees. One of these resolutions, sponsored by President Joao Soares, calls for strengthening the OSCE in order to enhance its legitimacy and political relevance.

Another resolution relates to election observation, emphasizing the importance of OSCE election observation activities and calling on participating States to fully implement the 1990 Copenhagen Commitments for democratic elections. Other resolutions deal with food security, the world financial crisis, Iran, Afghanistan, human rights and civil liberties, arms control and disarmament in Europe, labour migration in Central Asia, energy security, climate change, water management, freedom of expression on the Internet, and a moratorium on the death penalty.

On food security, the Declaration emphasizes that this is a new and major challenge to security in the OSCE area, and that it must become a top priority on the OSCE agenda. On the world financial crisis, the Declaration calls for greater co-ordination among OSCE participating States in the development of a coherent transatlantic response.

The Declaration expresses grave concern about post-election violence in Iran, condemns the arrests of Iranian employees working at the British Embassy in Tehran, and deplores the arrests and intimidation of foreign and domestic journalists working in Iran. The resolution on Afghanistan urges the OSCE to continue to promote Afghanistan's increasing participation in the activities of the OSCE.

The Declaration is available at the Assembly's website, www.oscepa.org.



Inaugural Plenary Session



President Joao Soares opens the 18th Annual Session on 29 June

OSCE PA President Joao Soares (Portugal) opened the 18th Annual Session by thanking the Lithuanian Government for hosting the event and underlining the significance of holding an Annual Session for the first time in a Baltic country.

President Soares also highlighted the important role of the OSCE considering the wide-ranging scope of the Organization on both the geographic and political levels. Mr. Soares expressed the opinion that the assembled parliamentarians still share the values of the Helsinki Final Act, reaffirmed and symbolized by the value of inclusion that is aimed to build bridges among people and governments. He emphasized in particular the strong commitment of the OSCE in the economic crisis and the August 2008 Russia-Georgia conflict.

The President recalled the Economic Conference held in Dublin in May 2009, at which discussions were held regarding the co-ordination of a comprehensive response to the economic crisis. Mr. Soares praised the OSCE PA's President Emeritus Goran Lennmarker for his work in the South Caucasus, and all the national delegations that participated in the Special Debate on the Russia-Georgia conflict during the 2008 Fall Meetings in Toronto. To enhance the relevance of the OSCE, President Soares called on national delegations to more actively publicize OSCE activities within their countries.

Finally, the President welcomed the plenary speakers: Lithuanian President Adamkus, Speaker of the Lithuanian Parliament Valinskas, Prime Minister of Lithuania Kubilius, Chairman of the Reconstituent Seimas Landsbergis, and wished all participants a fruitful meeting and constructive debates.

Welcoming Address by the President of the Republic of Lithuania, Valdas Adamkus

Valdas Adamkus, President of the Republic of Lithuania, warmly welcomed participants to the 18th Annual Session. Noting the importance of the event being held in Lithuania, he reminded the participants of the significant role of the Helsinki Final Act and the CSCE, which at the height of the Cold War served as a vital multilateral forum for dialogue and negotiation between East and West. President Adamkus highlighted the role that the Helsinki process has played in inspiring hope.

Regarding the current role of the OSCE, he went on to praise its involvement in spreading fundamental democratic values. Further, recalling the theme of the Session, *The OSCE: Addressing New Security Challenges*, President Adamkus argued that “security is indivisible” and stated that what the world needs now is a comprehensive approach to security. Security, he emphasized, cannot be separated from democracy, the rule of law, human rights, and free markets. He stressed the “significant contribution” that the OSCE can give to the goal of collective security, underlining that Europe must not be divided by artificial boundaries or into special spheres of influence because “we are all seeking the same ultimate goal”.

President Adamkus gave an overview of recent events that have occurred in the OSCE area and recalled the OSCE's efforts in building trust among people, promoting territorial integrity and defending national sovereignty. Further, he elaborated on the active role that the

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OSCE has played in the promotion of mutual co-operation in Central Asia.

Finally, the President praised the spirit of dialogue and co-operation that characterize the OSCE and its participating States.

Address by the Speaker of Parliament, Arunas Valinskas

Speaker of Parliament Arunas Valinskas welcomed participants to the Annual Session noting the significance of such an event for the Republic of Lithuania. The date for the Annual Session coincided with the 2009 celebration of Vilnius as the European Capital of Culture, an event that underscores Lithuania's commitment to tolerance and international dialogue.

The Helsinki Final Act, he said, promotes co-operation among participating States in the areas of border co-operation, election administration, and upholding fundamental human rights. Speaker Valinskas pointed to the new challenges facing the OSCE, and emphasized that today's world is more than a union of States, but a union of values to which every participating State should be devoted.

Address by the Prime Minister of the Republic of Lithuania, Andrius Kubilius

In welcoming the 18th Annual Session, Prime Minister Andrius Kubilius expressed gratitude to the OSCE PA and its President for choosing Lithuania as the first host of an Annual Session in the Baltic region. The Prime Minister reaffirmed Lithuania's commitment to OSCE values, highlighting Lithuanian development in the transport and energy sectors.

Within the theme of security, Prime Min-



ister Kubilius noted co-operation among the Baltic countries in the development of a political infrastructure that has resulted in increased security and confidence. He argued that on a global level, security is interconnected militarily and economically among all countries. In closing, he highlighted Lithuanian progress in developing democratic institutions and welcomed the appointment of Lithuania to the 2011 Chairmanship of the OSCE.

Address by the Chairman of the Reconstituent Seimas, Vytautas Landsbergis

Chairman Vytautas Landsbergis addressed the OSCE PA on behalf of the Reconstituent Seimas and thanked the body for hosting the Annual Session in his country. Chairman Landsbergis recalled the long path that brought Lithuania to its independence and noted Lithuania's participation in democratic institutions such as the OSCE, the UN and the European Union, underlines its commitment to playing an effective role in international relations.

Mr. Landsbergis further recalled the 1992 creation of the Council of the Baltic Sea States aimed to develop more regional intergovernmental co-operation among Baltic countries.

Address by the President of the ESDA Parliamentary Assembly, Robert Walter

Robert Walter opened his address by thanking the OSCE PA and the Lithuanian Delegation for the opportunity to report on the valuable work of the European Security and Defence Assembly (ESDA), stressing the importance of parliamentary oversight over intergovernmental policy.

President Walter discussed European strat-

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egy in Afghanistan and the EU's various European Security and Defence Policy operations, with special focus on the Balkans and anti-piracy operations in the Gulf of Aden and off the coast of Somalia.

President Walter also highlighted the complementary nature of the OSCE and the ESDA as two bodies that need work together towards collective security. A comprehensive and cooperative approach to security is necessary in an interconnected world that continues to deal with unresolved conflict, such as in the Middle East. In closing, Mr. Walter presented his recommendations, highlighting the lack of progress in the northern hemisphere's security field. He concluded by calling for each participating State to "engage in a constructive dialogue" in order to improve existing mechanisms that promote the resolution of remaining conflicts.

Address by European Parliament Vice-President Manuel Dos Santos

Manuel Dos Santos spoke about the historic process that has brought the EU and the OSCE closer together since the Helsinki Final Act of 1975. The EU, the principal contributor to the OSCE budget, favors a renewed cooperation with the OSCE, particularly regarding election observation missions.

He also urged that the participating States improve collaboration within new initiatives such as the Eastern Partnership. He highlighted the security challenges of a multi-polar world pointing out major new threats, such as cyber security, energy security, and climate change. Finally, recalling the EU Parliament resolution on the European Security Strategy and European Security and Defence Policy adopted



in February 2009, Vice President Dos Santos expressed public opinion to be a necessary factor in achieving peace, stability and human rights protection.

Address by OSCE PA Special Representative on Gender Issues Tone Tingsgaard

The Assembly's Special Representative on Gender Issues Tone Tingsgaard (Sweden) presented the 2009 Gender Balance Report, which focused on the gender implications of the global economic crisis. In her presentation, Vice-President Tingsgaard paid particular attention to female labour migration and the gendered nature of remittances.

Considering the most recent facts and figures, she noted that 44 per cent of the staff of the OSCE are women, but concerning the higher level positions women occupy only 19 per cent. Ms. Tingsgaard noted that "this is not impressive, but there has been progress" in recent years. Recalling the commitments agreed by the Ministerial Council on implementing the in the OSCE Gender Action Plan of 2004, she called on the participating States to nominate women for high-level positions in the OSCE and support them throughout the recruitment process.

Ms. Tingsgaard thanked the Assembly for its support she received when, at the Winter Meeting, she put forward to the Standing Committee the proposal to change the OSCE PA's Rules of Procedure to make parliaments responsible for having both men and women represented in their national delegations to the Assembly.

She also noted the fact that women comprised only 19.7 per cent of the participants of the 18th Annual Session, which is lower

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than the average in the national parliaments of participating States. She also pointed out that the Bureau elected in 2008 included 6 women out of 21 positions, which makes up 28.5 per cent. Finally, Ms. Tingsgaard emphasized two OSCE publications on gender-related topics. One is the “OSCE Guide on Gender-Sensitive Labour Migration Policies” and the other one “95 Good Practices to Combat Violence Against Women”.

Special Plenary Session

On 30 June 2009, OSCE PA President Soares opened a Special Plenary Session by welcoming OSCE Chairperson-in-Office Dora Bakoyannis (Greece) and Lithuanian Foreign Minister Vygaudas Usackas.

Address by the Foreign Minister of the Republic of Lithuania, Vygaudas Usackas

Minister Vygaudas Usackas discussed the importance of the OSCE’s unique comprehensive approach to security, asserting that Euro-Atlantic security is a common interest for all.

In his view, differing perceptions of security should not prevent the search for common solutions. The Minister referred to the OSCE’s 1999 Istanbul Document as a relevant guide for future European security challenges. The key principles of the Document, Mr. Usackas reminded the delegates, include the right to equal security and the right of a country to choose its own alliances. He said that this document firmly rejects spheres of influence.

Mr. Usackas continued by mentioning that protracted conflicts ought to be solved as soon as possible, asking delegates to investigate whether the OSCE has done enough and why some of the OSCE mechanisms have failed.

He then discussed the human dimension of the OSCE. Human rights, democratization, and rule of law are fundamental freedoms, but they are ones that are difficult to fully implement around the globe. He also mentioned the value of OSCE Institutions and the critical roles that they play. He closed by talking about energy security and the importance of security for the transport of energy.

Address by OSCE Chairperson-in-Office, Foreign Minister Dora Bakoyannis

The OSCE Chairperson-in-Office and Greek Foreign Minister Dora Bakoyannis addressed the delegates. She spoke about the importance of the Parliamentary Assembly’s generation of fresh ideas and debates on current issues.

The Foreign Minister discussed the recent ministerial in Corfu and the discussions there on the future of European security. She described the debate in Corfu as vibrant and also said that it covered the basic principles of interaction between States and their commitments.

She also discussed three priorities that had been outlined in the supplementary items, reports, and resolutions which include the need to take the OSCE forward in the economic and environmental dimensions, and the launch of new high-level dialogue on European security.

Speaking about the economic dimension of the OSCE in the current crisis, Minister Bakoyannis commented that it is essential to mitigate any issues originating from the security impact of the economic challenges. She highlighted the intermingling of the economic crisis with rising energy security problems as an issue that should be carefully followed.

Ms. Bakoyannis also described the situation in Georgia and the efforts of the OSCE in the country, reporting that the OSCE has not given up on returning a mission to Georgia.

Ms. Bakoyannis concluded by highlighting the shared responsibilities of OSCE participating States. She urged all members to implement their own commitments and to develop a security plan that will allow European governments to move forward. She also noted the varied and diverse missions of the OSCE, from the Institutions to the Field Operations to the Parliamentary Assembly.

During the question and answer session, concerns were raised over the August 2008 conflict between Russia and Georgia, and the Russian military presence in South Ossetia and Abkhazia. A Delegate from France insisted that a United Nations presence in Georgia is necessary and that negotiations must continue to extend the OSCE Mission mandate.

Ms. Bakoyannis responded by reiterating the Greek Chairmanship’s commitment to extending the Georgia Mission’s mandate, and that it will continue to promote peace, stability and human rights in the region.



Standing Committee



The Standing Committee consists of the 56 Heads of National Delegations and Members of the Bureau. Meeting three times a year -- at the Winter Meeting, the Fall Meetings and the Annual Session -- the Standing Committee guides the work of the Assembly, approves its budget, and appoints the Secretary General.

OSCE PA President Joao Soares opened the Standing Committee on 29 June -- the first day of the 18th Annual Session -- with a brief report of the Assembly's activities over the past year including his trip to Central Asia and the Dublin Economic Conference. He acknowledged the presence of several Members of Parliament from Afghanistan and mentioned his desire to strengthen that relationship.

Following President Soares's report, OSCE PA Treasurer Hans Raidel reported on the current budget situation and answered related questions. The budget for the 2009-2010 Fiscal Year was approved unanimously.

OSCE PA Secretary General Spencer Oliver then welcomed attending Members of the Standing Committee and gave a brief summary of his activities and work from the past year. He mentioned that the PA had stayed within budget for the 16th consecutive year and was again given a clean audit. He also discussed the Assembly's participation in the recent OSCE Ministerial meeting in Corfu, Greece. The Secretary General concluded by thanking the Lithuanian delegation and Parliament for hosting this year's Annual Session.

The Committee then discussed and submitted 24 supplementary items for debate in the Assembly's three General Committees. The submissions of all supplementary items were approved unanimously with the exception of one.

Chairperson of the Subcommittee on the Rules of Procedure, Pia Christmas-Moeller (Denmark), presented a report on the work of the Subcommittee and amendments to the Rules of Procedure agreed upon by the Subcommittee. The changes include an amendment providing for more gender balance in the OSCE PA, clarifying procedures for early voting in Assembly elections, time frame for

circulation of the Treasurer's draft report to the Standing Committee. All proposed changes to the Rules were approved unanimously.

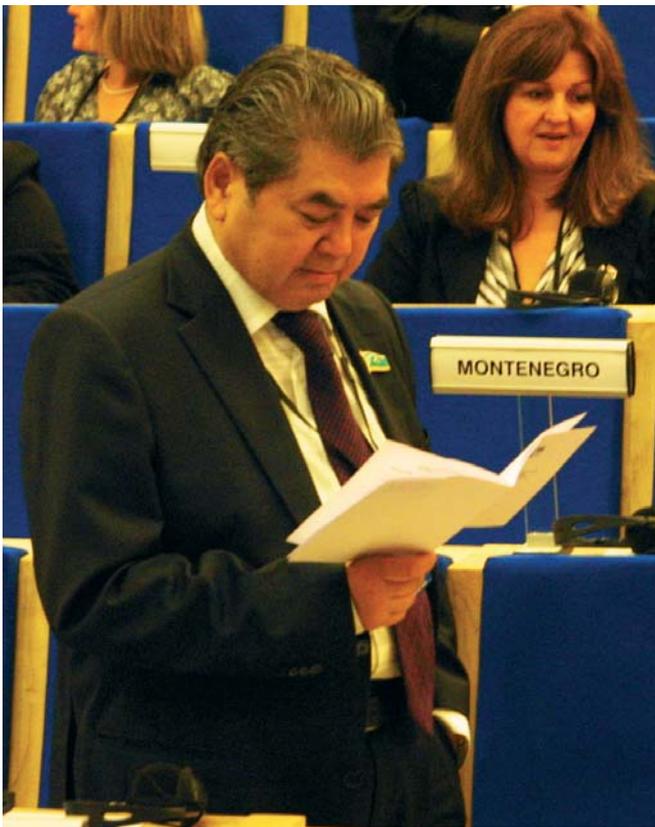
The Secretary General of the OSCE, Ambassador Marc Perrin de Brichambaut, addressed the Standing Committee by discussing the role of the OSCE as a whole during his tenure. He spoke broadly about the many activities and functions of the OSCE Institutions as well as more specifically on the current situation in Moldova and the ending of the OSCE mandate in Georgia. He received several questions following his address, including requests for more information on the situation in Georgia and the aftermath of the Iranian elections.

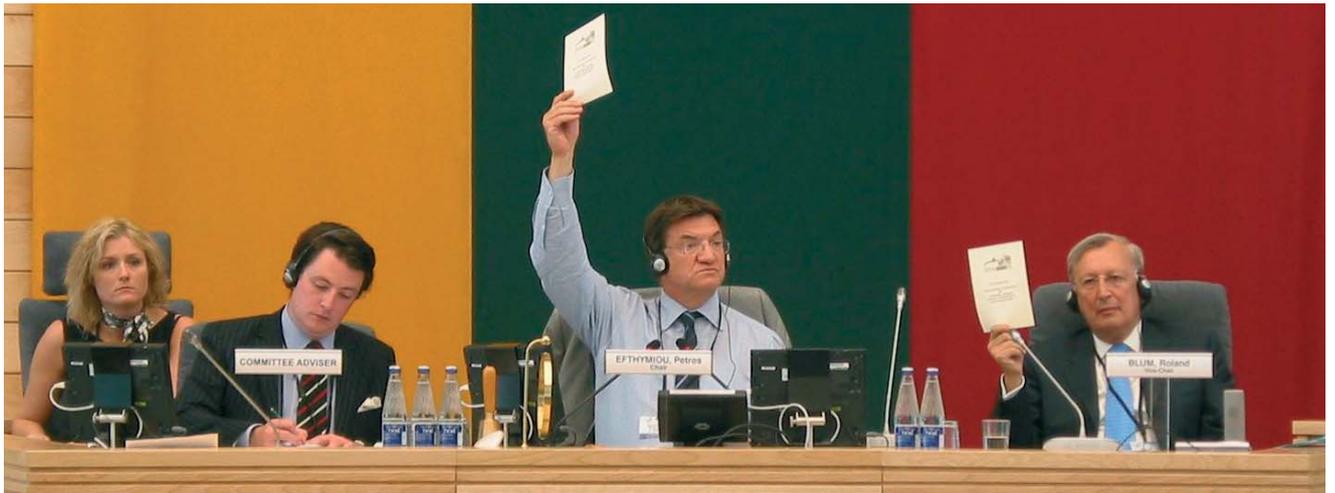
Following the Secretary General, several members of the Committee described recent election observation missions in Moldova and Montenegro. In addition, Deputy Secretary General Tina Schoen addressed the upcoming observation missions to Kyrgyzstan and Moldova.

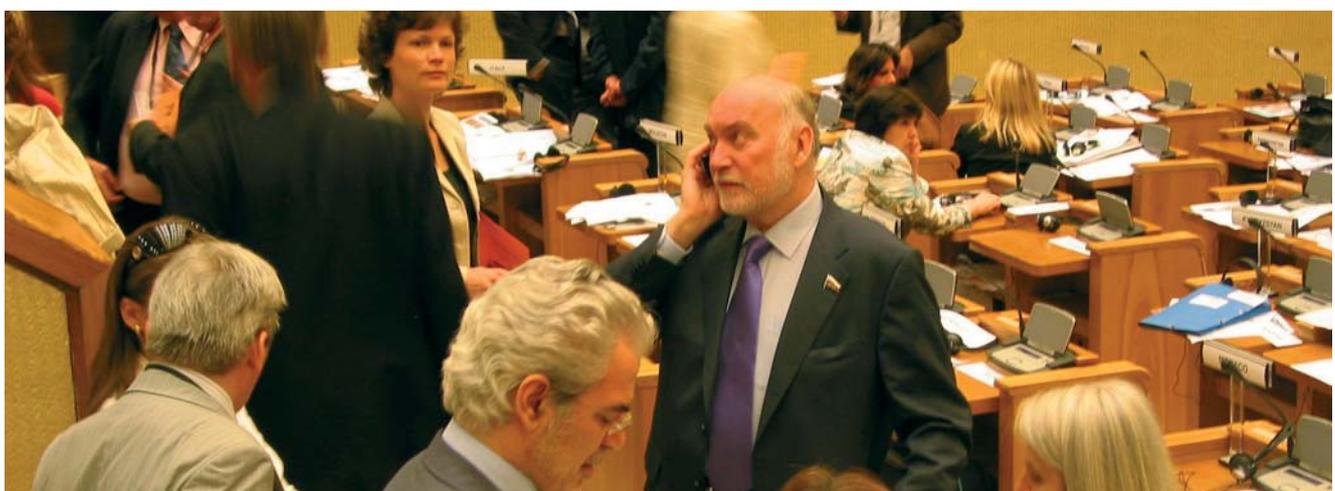
Uta Zapf (Germany), the Chairperson of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Belarus, discussed the current situation in Belarus and President Emeritus Goran Lenmarker (Sweden), who serves as Special Representative on Nagorno-Karabakh and Special Envoy to Georgia, discussed the situation in the South Caucasus. The Special Representative for Afghanistan, Michel Voisin (France), addressed the current situation on the ground there.

Upcoming meetings and conferences were mentioned and highlighted as Committee Members begin to plan for the upcoming months.

Finally, after a discussion following Secretary General de Brichambaut's address, a draft resolution on the current situation following the recent Iranian elections was adopted by the Committee for inclusion in the debate later in the week.







General Committee on Political Affairs and Security



Under the Chairmanship of Jean-Charles Gardetto (Monaco), the General Committee on Political Affairs and Security discussed a wide range of topics including the Rapporteur's draft resolution on food security in the OSCE area.

Address by OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities, Knut Vollebaek

Ambassador Knut Vollebaek opened his address stressing the relevance of the OSCE in the prevention of ethnic conflict, which has been the root of most tension in the OSCE area. He gave an overview of the three themes that according to his experience have an impact on inter-ethnic relations across the OSCE area: education, participation by minorities in public life, and relations between States and their kin-minorities in neighbouring States.

The High Commissioner explained that integration involves a balance of rights and responsibilities on both sides. On the one hand, the State must respect the right of the minorities to maintain their identity and, on the other hand, members of the minority must pursue their objectives through democratic means and refrain from challenging the territorial integrity of the State.

He cited education as an excellent tool for integration and expressed his concern regarding the trend towards increased separation along ethnic lines in education. He added that segregated education has far-reaching and long-term repercussions on security, also expressing his strong support for multicultural education.

The High Commissioner highlighted the importance of providing national minorities a meaningful role in political decision-making as the best method of preventing discontent and conflict. He also argued that if the international community intervenes when human rights are violated on a large scale, unilateral intervention by kin-States -- particularly neighbouring States -- can cast doubts on their motives and credibility of their actions. Finally, he emphasized that reciprocity has no place in the debate on minority issues. Real or perceived mistreatment of a country's minority should not be used as a justification for suppressing or discouraging minority identity at home.

Report and Resolution

In his report and draft resolution, the Committee Rapporteur, Riccardo Migliori (Italy), highlighted the indivisibility of the OSCE's comprehensive approach to security and asserted that the promotion of food security must be included in this approach.

Although the food crisis may not at first glance seem to be a security concern, Mr. Migliori explained, it affects the whole OSCE community and the security of all citizens. It is important therefore for the OSCE and the OSCE PA to play a role in resolving the food crisis, he stressed. The OSCE can either ignore the issue, he said, or decide that politics may, indeed, play a role. He cited the Helsinki Final Act and the indivisibility of security to find responses to food security.

Drawing attention to the decrease in food

General Committee on Political Affairs and Security



self-sufficiency and sovereignty, he mentioned the growing needs of China and India; the use of agricultural areas by private companies to generate energy, which leads to reduction of food crops; the surge in oil costs and increase in use of bio-fuels as sources of negative effects on food security.

After having debated and voted on the amendments, the Committee adopted the Resolution. The final version urges parliaments to adopt food security laws and policies that permit the establishment of adequate instruments, regulations, and tools in order to prevent hunger and malnutrition among the population. It urges participating States to take a co-ordinated and consistent approach and requests parliaments to commit themselves to measures to help curb increases in the price of agricultural commodities. In addition, it urges parliaments to adopt legislation to encourage balanced agricultural use of land to meet both food and energy demands.

Supplementary Items

Six supplementary items were debated and adopted in the First Committee. The supplementary item “Security Sector Stabilization and Compliance with UN Black Lists”, sponsored by Asa Lindestam (Sweden), stresses the need to learn from the Yugoslavia, Iraq and Sudan experiences, with regard to security sector stabilization. The supplementary item on Afghanistan, sponsored by Mike McIntyre (United States), underlines the importance of a comprehensive approach to challenges facing Afghanistan.

The following supplementary item, “Small Arms and Light Weapons”, was sponsored by Francois-Xavier de Donnea (Belgium). It welcomes the progress made within the OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation and especially the adoptions of FSC Decisions introducing a guide to good practice to prevent destabilising shipments by air of small arms and light weapons. Hans Widmer (Switzerland) proposed the supplementary item regarding arms control and disarmament in Europe, which stresses the importance of maintaining and improving collective security.

Another supplementary item, sponsored by Oleh Bilorus (Ukraine), addresses the important role of the OSCE in bolstering security across the Euro-Atlantic area.

The final supplementary item was sponsored by the Special Representative for Central Asia, Kimmo Kiljunen (Finland), and dealt with labour migration in Central Asia. The resolution focuses on one of the main goals of the OSCE, which is to further promote regional co-operation through participation from Central Asian parliaments to activities of the OSCE.

After being amended, all supplementary items were adopted by the Committee.

Election of Officers

Chair:	Consiglio Di Nino (Canada)
Vice-Chair:	Canan Kalsin (Turkey)
Rapporteur:	Riccardo Migliori (Italy)

General Committee on Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and the Environment



Second Committee Chair Petros Efthymiou (Greece) opened the first session of the Committee on 30 June by reminding delegates of the rules and procedures for supplementary items and amendments to those items. A total of eight supplementary items were debated and adopted by the Second Committee, dealing with topics ranging from energy security to freedom of expression on the internet to Mediterranean free trade.

Report and Resolution

The Committee Rapporteur, Senator Ivor Callely (Ireland), delivered remarks on his report and draft resolution dealing with the destructive effects of the global economic crisis. The report specifically highlights the deep impact of the crisis across the OSCE area, the effects of which include economic and humanitarian concerns as well as its political and security ramifications.

The Rapporteur focused much of his attention on the need for national governments to avoid protectionism and economic nationalism when addressing the decline in world trade.

Senator Callely also described the solutions and remedies that many countries and organizations have initiated including job creation and monetary adjustments. He touched on the United States' and other countries' economic stimulus plans as well as the growing call for stronger financial regulation.

Finally, he called on all parliamentarians to bring this discussion to the top of their own par-

liaments' agendas and reiterated the statement that this is an international problem that requires an international solution.

Mr. Efthymiou, along with other delegates in the room, commended the Rapporteur for his strong and precise words on the matter. One Member specifically praised the recommendation in the resolution that "encouraged participating States to invest in and support environmentally friendly industries, including the development of energy efficiency and renewable energies".

Several other Members described Senator Callely's report and resolution as an accurate portrayal of the intentions of many parliaments and governments, pointing to work that is already being done on the national level to address the crisis within their countries.

The delegates highlighted the ongoing support of environmental policies and the avoidance of economic nationalism as issues to pay particular attention to in the near future. Nineteen amendments were debated with most being adopted by the Committee, while one was defeated and another withdrawn.

An amendment put forth by the Armenian Delegation called for open borders in the OSCE region and was adopted following a lively debate among the delegates.

After a debate on the amendments, Senator Grafstein made a statement calling on the need to once again be aware of the effects of protectionism in international trade.

The draft resolution was adopted with one abstention.

General Committee on Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and the Environment



Supplementary Items

Vilija Aleknaite-Abramikene (Lithuania) introduced a supplementary item on the topic of energy security. She noted the importance of energy security around the world and how this topic has been raised in many recent political discussions. The resolution, which stresses the importance of developing new energy supply corridors, was adopted as amended.

Jean-Pierre Placade (France) opened the debate on the next supplementary item regarding tax havens, emphasizing the increased relevance of this topic given the global financial crisis. The resolution calls, *inter alia*, for greater co-operation between participating States and the international financial institutions on the matter of tax evasion. Mr. Efthymiou spoke about the need to support this item due to the implications of tax havens on the average citizen. The supplementary item was adopted unanimously.

Another supplementary item taken up by the committee dealt with Mediterranean free trade. Sponsored by Jerry Grafstein (Canada), the resolution welcomes the initiatives of participating States in the promotion of free trade and investment in the Mediterranean area. Mr. Grafstein opened the discussion by telling Committee Members that this item intends to foster free trade, which, he argued, will help promote peace in the region. The item was adopted.

A resolution dealing with the topic of energy co-operation was introduced by Marieluise Beck (Germany). Calling on participating States to develop measures to inform and educate about

renewable energies, energy efficiency and energy saving and one on climate change, the resolution was unanimously adopted.

Jeppe Kofod (Denmark) introduced a supplementary item on climate change, which stresses that this challenge should not be given a lower priority in a long-term perspective due to the economic crisis. Following a lively discussion, the resolution was unanimously adopted. The next item, “Freedom of Expression on the Internet”, was offered by Chris Smith (United States). The resolution inspired a spirited discussion about weblogs, internet filtering, censorship, and was subsequently adopted.

Another resolution taken up by the Committee dealt with water management in the OSCE area. The resolution’s sponsor, Jerry Grafstein (Canada), spoke of the strategic importance and the basic right to clean, fresh drinking water throughout the world. The item was adopted.

The final session of the Second Committee featured a discussion on the European Union’s ban on seal products. Consiglio Di Nino (Canada) introduced and argued in favor of the measure, which calls for lifting the ban. Following a spirited debate, it was adopted in a close vote.

Election of Officers

Chair:	Roland Blum (France)
Vice-Chair:	Ivor Callely (Ireland)
Rapporteur:	Serhiy Shevchuk (Ukraine)

General Committee on Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions



The Chair of the Third General Committee, Walburga Habsburg Douglas (Sweden), presided over the four Committee meetings during the Annual Session. Over the course of these meetings, Members discussed issues raised by Rapporteur Natalia Karpovich (Russian Federation) in her report and draft resolution. Eight supplementary items were also considered.

Report and Resolution

In her report and draft resolution, the Rapporteur focused on the consequences of the economic crisis, particularly on women, youth, and children. Ms. Karpovich pointed out that the crisis has not only “exacerbated the age-old problems of vulnerable social groups” but has also caused new present-day challenges. Along with the main problems stemming from the recession such as growing unemployment and lower real income of households, the crisis has also exacerbated social and human rights issues. Ms. Karpovich called on all delegations to not only adopt the resolution but also create effective instruments to solve these problems.

The Rapporteur highlighted the necessity of urgently concluding international bilateral agreements on co-operation in child adoption issues as well as the need for a new international instrument to define the rules of caring for children after the divorce of their parents who are nationals of different countries. This point was strongly supported during the general debates by representatives of the Italian and British delegations. The French delegation mentioned that state involvement is desperately needed to make these decisions work.

In the Resolution, the Rapporteur called for

equitable access to education for all young people to facilitate their entry into the labour market and also highlighted the crucial role of the family and traditional societal networks in assisting at-risk individuals and groups. In addition, she urged participating States to vigorously combat child labour through national legislation, train proper law enforcement personnel, and adopt protection mechanisms and school-entry support programmes for victims.

Participants in the debate also agreed that the economic crisis has led to a social crisis. The human rights, social and economic aspects of Roma people, one of the major European minorities, were also discussed. Following the consideration of a number of amendments, the resolution was adopted.

Supplementary Items

On 2-3 July, the Third Committee considered, amended, and approved eight supplementary items.

The supplementary item “Protecting Unaccompanied Minors and Combating the Phenomenon of Child Begging” was presented by Laura Allegrini (Italy). Considering the protection of minors to be an OSCE priority, the resolution urges participating States to ratify the UN Convention and relevant Protocols and the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings. The resolution also suggests that an OSCE representative with observer status be present at all international fora that discuss this topic. The resolution also calls on participating States to introduce appropriate legislation.

The widely debated supplementary item titled

General Committee on Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions



“Divided Europe Reunited: Promoting Human Rights and Civil Liberties in the OSCE Region in the 21st Century” was sponsored by Roberto Battelli (Slovenia). Expressing deep concern at the glorification of totalitarian regimes, the resolution reiterates the call for participating States to open their historical and political archives. In addition, the resolution urges States to continue research into these regimes and to raise public awareness of the totalitarian legacies.

The supplementary item “A Moratorium on the Death Penalty and Towards its Abolition”, presented by Matteo Mecacci (Italy), called for the death penalty’s abolition in Belarus, Kazakhstan, Latvia and United States. The Belarus delegation informed the Committee that, according to the amendments to the Criminal Code, the articles for which the death penalty can be executed were reduced by two times and measures are being taken to announce a moratorium on death penalty with its further possible abolition in the future. The delegate from Kazakhstan, Svetlana Bychkova, informed that the law on abolition of the death penalty has been recently adopted by both chambers of the Kazakh Parliament.

The supplementary items “Guidelines on Aid and Assistance to Refugees” and “Co-operation for the Enforcement of Criminal Sentences”, presented by Claudio D’Amico (Italy), were adopted without amendments. The first resolution invites participating States to lend economic and material support to UN intervention missions to ensure the prompt distribution of aid to refugees while the second resolution urges participating States to effectively implement regulations of existing treaties to “accommodate principles of mutual recognition of crimi-

nal sentences and the enforcement of a sentence in the country of origin”.

The unanimously adopted supplementary item on anti-Semitism was sponsored by Jerry Grafstein (Canada). Referring to the declaration at the London Conference on Combating Anti-Semitism and other relevant documents, it reaffirms the importance of anti-Semitism programs, education, training and public awareness campaigns aimed at combating anti-Semitism.

The supplementary item “Strengthening OSCE Engagement on Freedom of Opinion and Expression”, presented by Tony Lloyd (UK), urges participating States to address the remaining challenges in the area freedom of expression, refrain from imposing restrictions incompatible with OSCE standards, fully investigate remedies against journalists as well as review relevant procedures, practices and legislation.

The supplementary item on maternal mortality, presented by Gwen Moore (USA), aims to ensure access to quality healthcare and education for vulnerable girls and women, calls upon participating States to strengthen the efforts to reduce maternal mortality through financial investment and participation in global initiatives, and encourages the UN, World Bank and IMF to get involved in the matter.

Election of Officers

Chair:	<i>Walburga Habsburg Douglas</i> <i>(Sweden)</i>
Vice-Chair:	<i>Robert Aderholt</i> <i>(United States)</i>
Rapporteur:	<i>Matteo Mecacci</i> <i>(Italy)</i>

Closing Plenary Session



President Joao Soares (Portugal) outlined the agenda for the Closing Plenary session which included a presentation by Treasurer Hans Raidel (Germany), discussion of a resolution on post-election turmoil in Iran, consideration of committee resolutions, adoption of the final document and the announcement of Assembly election results.

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Hans Raidel reported that the OSCE PA's finances continue to be in good order. For the 16th year in a row, he said, the Assembly has remained within the approved budget for the financial year 2007/2008, while also receiving a positive assessment from its external auditors.

Mr. Raidel said he found it remarkable that the Assembly continues to operate in such an efficient way on such a low budget. With by far the smallest staff and budget of all similar parliamentary organizations in Europe, the OSCE PA continues to expand its activities, and remain within budget, he said.

Mr. Raidel thanked all of the delegations that had made their contributions for fiscal year 2008/2009. The proposed budget for 2009/2010, he noted, complies with and reflects the efforts of the national legislatures to minimize expenses, considering the ongoing economic crisis. Therefore, Mr. Raidel continued, the proposed budget contains no increases for the next year and freezes the budget at the same level as this year's budget, meaning that national contributions to the Assembly will remain the same.



The Treasurer mentioned that some categories have been modified in this year's budget in order to better reflect the real needs of the Assembly. The importance of election observation and the increasing number of missions in that field requires a budget increase of 24 per cent compared to this year's allocation. The Bureau unanimously supported this proposed budget at its meeting in Lisbon last April.

Mr. Raidel welcomed the initiative of the Rules Sub-Committee headed by Pia Christmas-Moeller to establish a new rule calling for the Treasurer to circulate the proposed draft budget for the next financial year at least 30 days before the opening of the Annual Session, thereby enhancing the transparency and accountability of the OSCE PA.

Mr. Raidel congratulated Secretary General Spencer Oliver and his staff for their efficient management of the finances. After 20 years in the German Bundestag and many years of membership in the Parliamentary Assembly, Mr. Raidel said that he would not be a candidate in next elections to the Bundestag and would therefore not seek re-election as Treasurer of the Assembly.

Wishing the new Treasurer success, he emphasized the difficulty of the task in such a tense economic period and expressed his support to the strengthening of the OSCE.

Secretary General's Report

OSCE PA Secretary General Spencer Oliver delivered a report on the activities of the Assembly over the past year. He thanked Hans Raidel for his service as Treasurer, as well as

Closing Plenary Session



one of the longest-serving and the most active member of Parliamentary Assembly.

He emphasized the expanding geographic reach of the Assembly, mentioning that the last Annual Session took place for the first time in Central Asia and that a Baltic State was hosting for the first time this year. This annual gathering of elected parliamentarians helps to underpin the OSCE and give it a democratic platform, Mr. Oliver noted.

The Secretary General thanked all Parliamentarians who have taken the time to participate in election observation missions during the past year, stressing that it is a vital endeavor for the Assembly. In December 2008, the Bureau members held an extensive discussion

of OSCE election observation activities and noted the necessity of leadership by elected Members of Parliament from the OSCE PA.

He also recounted the main activities during the past year, such as the debate on the crisis in Georgia during the Fall Meetings in Toronto 2008. A record number of parliamentarians, representing 49 OSCE countries, attended the conference, which was hosted by the Parliament of Canada. The year was also marked by a lively debate at the PA's Winter Meeting on proposals for a new European security architecture.

The Secretary General also reported on the 2009 Spring Bureau Meeting, which was hosted by the Portuguese Parliament, and the Economic Conference, hosted by the Irish Parliament in May.

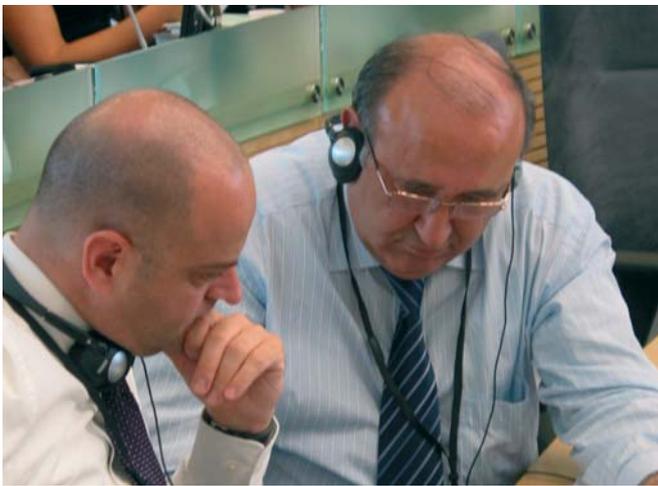
The Rules Sub-Committee, chaired by Pia Christmas-Moeller, met several times during the spring to prepare amendments to the Assembly's Rules of Procedure, which were debated and approved in Vilnius.

Mr. Oliver ended by thanking the Parliament of Lithuania for the tremendous work that it had done in preparation for the Vilnius session, the Members of the OSCE PA for their active participation in the work of the Assembly, and the national parliaments for hosting the meetings and conferences the past year.



Secretary General Spencer Oliver speaks with ODIHR Director Janez Lenarcic at the close of the 18th Annual Session





Gender Lunch



A working lunch on gender issues, co-hosted by the Head of the Lithuanian Delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly, Vilija Aleknaite Abramikiene and the Assembly's Special Representative on Gender Issues, Vice-President Tone Tingsgaard, took place on 1 July. The lunch provided an opportunity to learn more about the Lithuanian Ombudsman Institution as well as the challenges met by women in view of the current economic crisis.

The Lithuanian Ombudsman, Ausrine Burneikiene, and the OSCE Senior Advisor on Gender Issues, Jamila Seftaoui, gave presentations about their work. Then several participants took the floor to express views on how to improve gender equality in national and international institutions.

Ms. Burneikiene opened her address recalling the establishment in Lithuania of the Office of Equal Opportunities Ombudsmen ten years ago. Since then, gender equality has been a priority for Lithuania, and the activity of the Ombudsman has increased.

She stated that the Office, which is accountable to the Parliament, is one of the key institutions within the gender equality machinery in Lithuania supervising and implementing the Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men. She underlined the expansion of the Office's mandate in 2003 to deal with discrimination related to race, ethnic origin, religion, age, disabilities, etc.

The Ombudsman's duty is to investigate individual complaints on direct and indirect gender discrimination and sexual harassment. Moreover, Ms. Burneikiene stressed the fact that the Ombudsman may start investigations

on his/her own initiative. She then gave an overview of the Lithuanian legislation regarding gender equality.

In practice, some positive improvements must be noted such as a decrease in the gap between men's and women's employment rate and an increase in the rate of women managers. However, she said, serious challenges remain in terms of gender equality: women are under-represented in decision-making processes, and must deal with gender segregation in the labour market and pay differentials. Also, stereotyping and violence against women still exist.

Jamila Seftaoui, the OSCE Senior Advisor on Gender Issues, provided an overview of gender equality within the OSCE. According to the Secretary General's Report, women continue to be under-represented in higher management positions. She therefore called on OSCE participating States to nominate more women for positions within the OSCE. Ms. Seftaoui underlined the challenges faced by women in times of economic crisis, especially regarding the jobs cuts and increase of domestic violence.

The OSCE Senior Advisor on Gender Issues highlighted labour migration of women which represents 50 to 80 per cent of the total. She stressed the fact that in times of crisis or war, power relations often change. In this respect, she warned against discrimination against women during the current economic crisis. She also stressed the continued need to address the prevention of domestic violence.

Vice-President Tingsgaard concluded the gender lunch by calling on women to run for leadership positions within the OSCE PA.

Belarus & Afghanistan Meetings



The OSCE PA Ad Hoc Working Group on Belarus, chaired by Uta Zapf (Germany) organized a meeting with the Belarusian Delegation to the OSCE PA, led by Deputy Speaker Valery Ivanov on 30 June 2009. Meeting on the margins of the Annual Session, the participants focused most of their discussion on the Eastern Partnership Initiative of the European Union.

Members of the Working Group, Cecilia Wigstrom (Sweden) and Pawel Poncyłjusz (Poland) outlined some of the main points of the Polish-Swedish Initiative, which was also commented on by Goran Lennmarker (Sweden), President Emeritus of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly.

The Belarusian Delegation commented on the new European initiative and suggested steps forward in co-operation. Nina Mazai, Deputy Head of the Belarusian Delegation proposed possible roles of the OSCE PA Working Group in supporting this Initiative. The discussion also focused on joint initiatives aimed at helping Belarus meet its OSCE commitments.

Ambassador Hans-Jochen Schmidt, Head of the OSCE Office in Minsk, participated in the meeting. The Belarusian Delegation welcomed the work of the Ad Hoc Working Group and invited the Group to visit Minsk in the fall, and proposed to organize another joint seminar in Belarus in the coming months.

President Soares met with representatives of the Afghan Delegation consisting of parliamentarians and senators on 30 June.

The main issues of discussion were the security situation in Afghanistan and the upcoming Afghan elections. During the meet-

ing, Mr. Soares also expressed the OSCE PA's willingness to join the Bishkek Initiative, which would ensure the OSCE's participation on a parliamentary level in this discussion platform.

Recalling his recent trips to Central Asia, Mr. Soares expressed his readiness to increase co-operation with the Afghan Parliament. Noting the interest by OSCE parliamentarians in the Afghan elections, he said that the security of Members remains an obstacle to any possible election observation.

The Members of the Afghan Delegation stated that even Afghan parliamentarians cannot safely move freely within the country. They also stated that they may have only a limited impact on the situation as their requests and adopted strategies often get rejected by the Afghan government.

Another issue discussed was the Taliban. Due to the lack of jobs and low salaries, the local population joins the Taliban, the parliamentarians stated, which is supported financially by its partners in the drug trade. The Members of the Delegation also mentioned the Afghan population's disappointment with the new democratic system of government and the disastrous consequences of the ongoing war with the Taliban. They stated that, for these and other reasons, up to 50 per cent of the population may not turn out to vote in the upcoming elections.

Reaffirming his willingness to get involved in election observation in the country, President Soares concluded the meeting by expressing his openness to the proposals and suggestions from the Afghan side.

Officers of the Assembly

The Officers of the Assembly, also known as the Bureau, include the President, Vice-Presidents, the Treasurer, General Committee Officers and the President Emeritus. The Bureau is responsible for ensuring that the decisions of the Standing Committee are carried out, as well as for the efficient operation of the Assembly between meetings of the Standing Committee. The Bureau takes decisions by majority vote.

OSCE PA Bureau Members meeting on the margins of the 18th Annual Session



Joao Soares (Portugal)

was re-elected President of the Assembly for one year at the Annual Session in Vilnius. He had previously served for two years as Vice-President. Mr. Soares has been particularly active in OSCE PA election observation missions. Currently a Member of the Committee on National Defence, Mr. Soares was first elected to the Portuguese Parliament in 1987 and has also served as a Member of the European Parliament, including as a Member of the EP Bureau. From 1995 to 2002, Mr. Soares was Mayor of Lisbon, during which time he also served as a Member of the State Council.



sions, Mr. Lennmarker served as the Assembly's Special Representative on the Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict and Special Envoy to Georgia. Mr. Lennmarker has been a Member of the Swedish Parliament since 1992 and serves as Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee.

Roberto Battelli (Slovenia)

was elected Treasurer of the Parliamentary Assembly in Vilnius in 2009. A long-time member of the Assembly (joining in 1992), he has been particularly active in election observation.



He has observed 19 elections across the OSCE area, and has served as head of the OSCE PA delegation and as Special Co-ordinator of the OSCE short-term observers twice, in Serbia and Montenegro. Mr. Battelli has been active in the Democracy Team for Moldova, the Subcommittee on Rules of Procedure, and the Subcommittee on Transparency and Accountability. Since 2006, he is also currently also the OSCE PA's Special Representative on South East Europe. He has been a member of the Parliament of Slovenia since 1990.



Goran Lennmarker (Sweden)

currently serves as President Emeritus, after having served two terms as Assembly President and three terms as Chair of the Assembly's First General Committee. In addition to serving on numerous OSCE PA election observation mis-

Benjamin Cardin (United States)

was elected Vice-President of the Assembly at the Annual Session in Brussels in July 2006,

Officers of the Assembly



and re-elected in Vilnius in 2009. Prior to that, he had served as Chair of the Second Committee. Senator Cardin was elected to the U.S. Senate in 2006, and is currently the Chairman of the U.S. (Helsinki) Commission on Security and Co-operation in Europe. As a Senator, he serves on the Foreign Relations Committee, Judiciary Committee, Environment and Public Works Committee, Budget Committee and Small Business Committee. Before his election to the Senate, Mr. Cardin served for 20 years in the U.S. House of Representatives.



Pia Christmas-Moeller (Denmark)

was elected Vice-President during the Annual Session in Washington in July 2005 and re-elected during the 2008 Annual Session. She has been a Member of the Danish Parliament since 1987, and was from 2001-2007 the Political Affairs spokesperson for the Conservative People's Party, with particular expertise in foreign affairs and human rights issues. Ms. Christmas-Moeller is now an independent Member of Parliament. She has a background in public policy, with extensive experience working with unemployment insurance.



Petros Efthymiou (Greece)

was elected Vice-President of the Assembly in Vilnius. He had served as Chair of the Second General Committee since 2008 in

Astana after having served as Vice-Chair of the Committee. A former Minister of Education and Religious affairs, Mr. Efthymiou has had a long and distinguished career in both print and broadcast journalism. A founding member of the Greek Social Party (Pasok), he is now a member of the Committee of Defence and Foreign Affairs of the Greek Parliament. Mr. Efthymiou has also been a Member of the European Parliament.

Jean-Charles Gardetto (Monaco)

was elected Vice-President of the Assembly in Vilnius, after having served as Chair of the First Committee since 2006 and as Vice-Chair before that. Mr. Gardetto has



been a Member of the National Council of Monaco since 2003, and is Head of Delegation of Monaco to the OSCE PA. Mr. Gardetto has served as Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee and a Member of the Legislative, Finance, Education & Youth and Women's Rights Committees. He is also active in the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, where he serves as Chair of the Subcommittee on Human Rights. As an attorney he is active in international legal organizations and associations.

Jerry Grafstein (Canada)

has been re-elected as Assembly Vice-President three times, after serving two terms as Treasurer and two terms as Vice-Chair of the Second General Committee. He was appointed Senator in 1984, while continuing his law practice in corporate and communications law. In 1966 he founded and edited the



Officers of the Assembly

Journal of Liberal Thought and is a co-founder of a range of media companies in Canada, South America, Europe and elsewhere. He has written and edited numerous articles, papers and books on various topics within communications and politics.



Wolfgang Grossruck (Austria)

was re-elected Vice-President of the Assembly at the 2008 Annual Session in Astana. It is a post he has held since July 2006. He has also served as Rapporteur of the

First General Committee. Mr. Grossruck was first elected to the Austrian Parliament in 1995 and has been a Member of the Austrian Delegation to the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly since 1996. He is a frequent participant in election observation missions. With a background in insurance, Mr. Grossruck is also active in municipal politics and is the Mayor of Grieskirchen.



Kimmo Kiljunen (Finland)

was elected Vice-President of the OSCE PA during the Annual Session in Kyiv in 2007 and re-elected in 2008. He also serves as the Assembly's Special Representative for

Central Asia. Dr. Kiljunen, a Member of the Finnish Parliament since 1995, has long been active in the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, including having served as Vice-Chair and Chair of the General Committee on Political Affairs and Security, and as Chair of the Parliamentary Team on Moldova. With a background in development issues, Dr. Kiljunen has published many books, both in England

and Finland, on global development.

Isabel Pozuelo (Spain)

was elected Vice-President at the 2009 Annual Session in Vilnius. She has been a Member of the Spanish Delegation to the OSCE PA since 2004 and is presently the Head of its Delegation. She has been particularly active in election observation activities,



having participated in election observation missions to, among others, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Serbia, Montenegro, Russia, Georgia, and Armenia. Ms. Pozuelo has been a member of the Spanish Congress of Deputies since 1996, having served as a member of the Foreign Affairs Committee, as well as the Finance Committee and the Healthcare and Consumer Affairs Committee.

Kassym-Jomart Tokayev (Kazakhstan)

was elected Vice-President in July 2008, in Astana. Head of the Kazakh Delegation to the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, he has been Chair-



man of the Senate of Kazakhstan's Parliament since January 2007. Mr. Tokayev came to the Kazakh Parliament after a long career in diplomacy and politics. He has been Deputy Minister as well as Minister of Foreign Affairs and Prime Minister of the Republic of Kazakhstan. He is presently also a member of the CIS Interparliamentary Assembly Council and Head of the Kazakh Delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe. A Doctor of Political Science, Mr. Tokayev is the author of a number of books and articles on international affairs.

General Committee Officers



First General Committee on Political Affairs and Security

One of the most important aspects of the work of the Annual Session is the deliberation that takes place in the three General Committees.

Following the 1991 Madrid Declaration, three committees were established along the lines of the three main “baskets” or sections of the Helsinki Final Act: The First General Committee on Political Affairs and Security; the Second General Committee on Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and Environment; and the Third General Committee on Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions. The Rapporteur of each Committee is responsible for preparing a report and a draft resolution to be presented to the Committee. Other speakers and experts may also be invited to address the Committees. After debate and discussion, a draft resolution is adopted by each Committee for presentation to the Annual Plenary Session of the Assembly, which is then included in the Final Declaration.

The staff of the International Secretariat receives invaluable assistance from the British House of Commons, adding experience and expertise to the General Committees, the plenary sessions, and the drafting Committees. The Officers of the three General Committees join with the President, Vice-Presidents, Treasurer, and President Emeritus to form the Assembly Bureau, which works to ensure the efficient operation of the Assembly between meetings of the Standing Committee.

First General Committee



Consiglio Di Nino (Canada)

was elected Chair of the First General Committee during the Annual Session in Vilnius in 2009. He was elected Vice-Chair in 2007 and re-elected in 2008. He is also the Head of the Canadian Delegation to the OSCE PA. Senator Di Nino has been a Member of Parliament since 1990, and is currently the Chair of the Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade. He has also been particularly active in OSCE PA election observation activities. Senator Di Nino has a background in business affairs.

Canan Kalsin (Turkey)

was elected Vice-Chair of the First General Committee at the 2009 Annual Session in Vilnius. She has served as a member of the Turkish delegation to the OSCE PA since 2007. In the Grand National Assembly of Turkey, she serves on the Committee on Foreign Affairs and is also the founding president of the Woman Branch of the Justice and Development Party. Ms. Kalsin holds an M.A. in Business Administration and a Ph.D. in Global Politics and International Relations.



General Committee Officers



Second General Committee on Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and Environment

Riccardo Migliori (Italy)

was re-elected Rapporteur of the First General Committee during the Annual Session in Vilnius. Mr. Migliori has been a member of the Italian delegation to the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly since July 2006 and was elected Head of the Delegation in June 2008. A member of the Chamber of Deputies, he has served on the Constitutional Affairs Committee and as Deputy Chair of the Bicameral Regional Affairs Committee. A member of the PDL (Popolo della Libertà) Parliamentary Group, he is also a member of the Committee on Foreign Affairs. With a degree in law from Florence University, Mr. Migliori has served on the Florence City Council as well as on the Tuscany Regional Council.



where he has served since 1986. From 1984 to 1988 Mr. Blum was a Member of the European Parliament. As a member of the Foreign Affairs Committee, he has been Rapporteur of several missions, including on the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, Non-Governmental Organizations and the World Trade Organization. He has been President of the mission on the future of the Euromed.

Ivor Callely (Ireland)

was elected Vice-Chair of the Second General Committee in Vilnius, after having served as Rapporteur of the Committee since 2008 in Astana. Mr. Callely is a member of the 23rd Seanad of Ireland and serves as Chairman of the All Party Oireachtas Human Rights Committee and as Head of the Irish Delegation to the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly. He is presently Government Spokesman on Enterprise, Trade and Employment as well as a member of the Joint Committee on Enterprise and Small Business and the Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs.



Second General Committee

Roland Blum (France)



was elected Chair of the Second General Committee in Vilnius, after having served as Vice-Chair and as Rapporteur of the Committee. He is Vice-President of the Foreign Affairs Committee in the French National Assembly,

Serhiy Shevchuk (Ukraine)

was elected Rapporteur of the Second Committee at the 2009 Annual Session



General Committee Officers



Third General Committee on Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions

in Vilnius. A member of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, Mr. Shevchuk has served as a delegate to the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly since 1998. Since 2006, he has served as Deputy Chairman of the Committee on European Integration of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine. In 2008, he was elected Chairman of the Committee on Economic Affairs, Science and Environment of the Inter-Parliamentary Assembly of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania and Senate of the Republic of Poland.

Third General Committee

Walburga Habsburg Douglas (Sweden)



was elected Chair of the Third General Committee during the Annual Session in Vilnius, after having served for one year as its Rapporteur and then as Vice-Chair and Interim Chair. Ms. Habsburg Douglas is also the Head of the Swedish Delegation

to the OSCE Parliamentary. With a background in law and journalism, Ms. Habsburg Douglas served as Secretary General of the International Pan-European Movement prior to being elected to parliament in 2006.

Robert Aderholt (United States)

was elected Vice-Chair of the Third Committee at the Annual Session in Vilnius. He has served seven terms in the United States House of Rep-



resentatives, where he is active on the House Appropriations Committee, the House Budget Committee, the Subcommittee on Legislative Branch, and the Commerce, Justice and Science Subcommittee. Since 2001, Mr. Aderholt

has also served on the Commission on Security and Co-operation in Europe.

Matteo Mecacci (Italy)

was elected Rapporteur of the Third Committee at the Annual Session in Vilnius. Mr. Mecacci has been member of the Italian Parliament since 2008, where he serves on the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Chamber of the Deputies. From 2001



to 2008 he was based in New York where he co-ordinated various campaigns related to the promotion of democracy, particularly in regards to the International Criminal Court and the UN Commission on Human Rights. He is currently the President of the Italian Parliamentary Intergroup for Tibet and Vice-President of the Nonviolent Radical Party, Transnational and Transparty, an NGO with ECOSOC Consultative status with the UN.

Parliamentary Assembly Overview

The main elements of the Parliamentary Assembly are the Assembly Plenary, the Standing Committee of Heads of Delegation, the Bureau and the three General Committees.



The Plenary

At the Annual Session, the Assembly meets in Plenary to adopt a Final Declaration and Resolutions and elect Assembly Officers. Decisions at the Annual Session are taken by majority vote.

General Committees

The work of the Assembly is divided into three General Committees, which correspond to the three main sections of the Helsinki Final Act:

- The First General Committee on Political Affairs and Security;
- The Second General Committee on Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and Environment;
- The Third General Committee on Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions.

A Chair, Vice-Chair and Rapporteur are elected for a one-year term by the members of each Committee. The General Committees meet during the Annual Session and the Winter Meeting. At meetings during the Annual Session, decisions are taken by majority vote.

Standing Committee

The Standing Committee consists of the 56 Heads of National Delegations and Members of the Bureau. The Standing Committee guides the work of the Assembly, approves its budget, and appoints the Secretary General.

Bureau

The Assembly's Bureau consists of the President, the nine Vice-Presidents, the Treasurer, and the Officers of the three General Committees. The President Emeritus (immediately preceding former President) is also an ex officio non-voting Member. The Bureau is responsible for ensuring that the decisions of the Standing Committee are carried out. Decisions are taken by majority vote.

Budget

The Assembly's budget covers most of the organizational expenses related to the Annual Session, Winter Meeting, Fall Meetings, Standing Committee and Bureau Meetings, official visits, the election observation programme, as well as the costs of the International Secretariat. Host Parliaments of the Annual Sessions have all contributed significantly by providing considerable support to these regular events, ensuring their success and contributing substantive cost savings. The Danish Folketing has very generously provided excellent office facilities free of charge for the Assembly's International Secretariat.

Annual Session

The Annual Session, held in early July every year, is the most important event in the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly calendar. At the end of each Annual Session, the Assembly Plenary

Annual Sessions and Declarations



So far, 18 Annual Sessions have been held, the first in Budapest in 1992 and the latest in Vilnius in 2009.

Budapest 1992



The Assembly passed the Budapest Declaration which addressed issues relating to European security, peacekeeping, environmental co-operation, human rights and the crisis in the former Yugoslavia. The Declaration also urged parliamentarians of the CSCE to participate more actively in the prevention, management and settlement of conflicts, and invited all national parliaments to participate in a session or a debate each year to discuss the state of progress in CSCE co-operation. Furthermore, the Budapest Declaration recommended that the CSCE send observers to Kosovo and Vojvodina and other threatened regions to monitor the protection of minorities. The Budapest Session also resolved to accept the invitation of the Danish Parliament (Folketing) to locate the International Secretariat of the CSCE PA in Copenhagen, Denmark.

Helsinki 1993



The Helsinki Declaration included a full chapter on the crisis in the former Yugoslavia, illustrating the importance attached to this issue. The Declaration also called for the establishment of a CSCE Security Committee and a CSCE decision-making procedure which no longer requires consensus or “consensus-minus-one”. The Assembly expressed its determination to emphasize monitoring of elections as an important task on the CSCE Parliamentary agenda. The Helsinki Declaration appealed to the parliaments of the CSCE participating States to intensify their efforts to support the transformation process in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union.

Vienna 1994



Again the Assembly included a chapter on the crisis in the Former Yugoslavia in the adopted Decla-

Annual Sessions and Declarations

ration. The Vienna Declaration also included the development of a Code of Conduct in the field of political and military security, the Chernobyl tragedy, the International War Crimes Tribunal and the human rights situation in Turkey. The Vienna Declaration furthermore requested that the CSCE Budapest Summit Meeting debate the creation of a formal procedure for considering CSCE PA resolutions and recommendations, so that co-operation between the CSCE Assembly and the CSCE could be further strengthened. At the same time, the Assembly also urged national parliaments to consider the creation of a formal procedure for consideration of the resolutions adopted by the Parliamentary Assembly of the CSCE. The Assembly continued to call for change in the CSCE's consensus rule, in order to accelerate and streamline CSCE decision-making procedures.

Ottawa 1995



The Ottawa Declaration encompassed a series of resolutions and recommendations relating to OSCE activities regarding the Former Yugoslavia, the Baltic region, Nagorno-Karabakh, Chechnya and Moldova. The Assembly stressed the need for strengthening the Institutions of the OSCE and called for the development of criteria that would allow for the suspension of a participating State in case of “flagrant failure to implement OSCE decisions and commitments”. The Ottawa Declaration also urged the OSCE and its participating States to actively explore decision-making procedures based on an approximate consensus.

The Assembly called upon participating States to ensure that equal rights are given to all individuals as citizens rather than as mem-

bers of a particular national or ethnic group. The Assembly also strongly supported the establishment of an international criminal court.

Stockholm 1996



The Fifth Annual Session focused on the discussion of a Comprehensive Security Model for Europe for the 21st Century. The final Declaration reiterated the Par-

liamentary Assembly's support for the adoption of a broad concept of security, stressing, inter alia, the importance of economic stabilization and environmentally sustainable development in

“It is the task of the Assembly to bring the views and suggestions of democratically elected Parliaments and Parliamentarians to the governments of the CSCE.”

Illka Suominen,

first CSCE PA President, 1992-94

the security dimension. The Assembly called for the creation of a common European security area in which existing OSCE commitments could be implemented. To carry out these OSCE commitments, the Declaration also emphasized the need to develop and strengthen preventive diplomacy, conflict prevention and post-conflict rehabilitation.

The Stockholm Assembly also adopted a draft Code of Conduct on the “Politico-Democratic Aspects of Co-operation,” which recognized the increased interdependency of States and stressed that international conflicts should only be resolved through peaceful political means.

Warsaw 1997



The Sixth Annual Session focused on enhancing the implementation of commitments undertaken in the context of the CSCE and OSCE, including the Helsinki Final Act, the Charter of Paris and the Budapest and Lisbon Summit documents.

The Resolution concerning Political Affairs

Annual Sessions and Declarations

and Security focused on implementing the principles of territorial integrity and the inviolability of State frontiers. In the field of Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and the Environment, a resolution was passed to promote economic co-operation and provide assistance to the countries undertaking the transition to market economies. The Resolution on Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions focused on the importance of the media in a democracy, stressing that an independent, pluralistic and free media can play a decisive role in the resolution of existing conflicts.

Copenhagen 1998



The Copenhagen Declaration stated that in order to meet the challenge of implementing OSCE principles and commitments with greater effectiveness, a refinement of existing OSCE tools and

resources should be pursued. The Assembly also continued to call for revision of OSCE decision-making procedures and urged the OSCE Ministerial Council to “consider expanding those circumstances under which the existing consensus-minus-one decision-making mechanism is utilized to include, inter alia, approval of budgets, deployment of missions and selection of senior personnel”.

A supplementary item on Kosovo appealed to all parties in the Kosovo conflict to return to the principles of non-violence, and denounced the policies of the Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia for its military aggression against the Albanian population of Kosovo.

The Declaration urged the OSCE to implement gender mainstreaming in all its activities.

St. Petersburg 1999

Looking ahead to the new millennium, resolutions were passed on the general theme of Common Security and Democracy in the Twen-



ty-First Century. The St. Petersburg Declaration also included resolutions on the situation in Kosovo, which welcomed the end of military hostilities, the democratic

deficit within the OSCE, the role of the OSCE in crisis prevention and conflict settlement, the problem of human trafficking, as well as resolutions concerning specific issues in Belarus, Russia and South-Eastern Europe.

Reiterating the Assembly’s commitment to reforming the Institutions of the OSCE and redressing the democratic deficit in the Organization, the St. Petersburg Declaration called for the Parliamentary Assembly to be consulted more widely on issues of major importance, such as the appointment of the Secretary General and the budgetary activities of the main OSCE Institutions.

Bucharest 2000



Covering a wide range of issues, the Assembly passed resolutions calling on all sides to pave the way for free, fair and internationally

recognizable parliamentary elections in Belarus and, regarding Moldova, expressing its concern about the stalemate in the negotiations on the status of Transnistria and emphasizing the need for a common State for all the peoples of Moldova.

The Assembly also adopted a resolution on developments in the North Caucasus, calling for a political solution to the conflict in Chechnya. The Assembly also passed a resolution calling for a convention regulating the arms trade.

The Assembly adopted a resolution calling for reduced reliance on secondment in the long-term field missions to ensure the continuity of the missions’ work. On economic and environmental issues, the Assembly appealed

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to all OSCE participating States to honour their commitments under the Kyoto and Aarhus Protocols. Other resolutions included appeals to abolish the death penalty for all crimes.

Paris 2001



The Paris Declaration included a unanimously adopted a resolution on strengthening transparency and accountability

in the OSCE and proposed that before making major decisions the Ministerial Council should take into account the opinion of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly. The Assembly also recommended that as long as the OSCE complies with the strict consensus rule the decision-making process should not be secret and that objections to any proposal must be made known to any interested OSCE participating State or OSCE Institution.

An Ad Hoc Committee was established to monitor the implementation of the resolution and to promote transparency and accountability in the OSCE.

Resolutions were also adopted on the abolition of the death penalty; prevention of torture, abuse, extortion or other unlawful acts; combating trafficking in human beings, corruption and international crime.

Berlin 2002



The Berlin Declaration resolutely condemned all acts of terrorism, whatever their motivations or origin, and under-

lined the solidarity of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly in the struggle against terrorism.

The Declaration reminded all OSCE participating States that any measures taken to address terrorism must fully respect international law

and relevant OSCE commitments. It also called upon the governments of participating states to revise the Bucharest Plan of Action for Combating Terrorism by including provisions relating to the impact of terrorism on women, and by recognizing the need for increased participation of women in the process of conflict prevention and conflict resolution.

The Assembly urged the government of Belarus to co-operate with the OSCE in facilitating compliance with OSCE commitments, and the leadership of Moldova and Transnistria to resume dialogue on the status of Transnistria.

The resolution on anti-Semitic violence condemned the alarming escalation of anti-Semitic violence in the OSCE region.

Rotterdam 2003



The Rotterdam Declaration stated that with Europe's ongoing development in security structures, the OSCE's real

strength lies in its capacity to respond to security threats and challenges and in its strong field presence. To uphold the credibility of the OSCE, it added, it is imperative to provide the OSCE field activities with adequate funding and high-quality staff.

The Declaration recommended that the OSCE Permanent Council be requested to consult the PA prior to making a decision to terminate any OSCE field activity. The Declaration also suggested that the OSCE should adopt a more balanced regional approach to promoting the implementation of the participating States' human dimension commitments. The Assembly also adopted a resolution on the parliamentary follow-up of OSCE activities at the national level. National Parliaments were encouraged to introduce practices whereby annual reports on the activities of the OSCE PA by national OSCE PA delegations are regularly debated in an appropriate manner in national parliaments.

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Edinburgh 2004



The Edinburgh Declaration condemned terrorism in all forms and manifestations and called upon the international community to target the profound political, social, economic and environmental causes of terrorism and to ensure that the fight against terrorism be carried out in compliance with the principles of the UN Charter and international law.

The Assembly also adopted a resolution on torture calling upon all participating States to abide by the obligation that no exceptional circumstances may be invoked as a justification of torture.

A resolution called on sustained OSCE attention to fulfilling commitments regarding the fight against racism, anti-Semitism and xenophobia. In the resolution on Kosovo, the Assembly called upon participating States to provide the additional forces necessary to maintain stability and to ensure a secure environment for those persons wishing to return to their homes in Kosovo.

A resolution on co-operation between the OSCE and the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly reiterated previous recommendations that the OSCE carry out the necessary reforms with regard to its consensus decision-making procedure. The resolution also requested that the OSCE PA be given free access to all OSCE meetings and recommended that the Special Representative of the OSCE PA in Vienna be included in consultative processes.

Washington 2005



In the Washington Declaration, the Assembly addressed a range of political issues, including increasing information exchanges with non-OSCE States on trafficking and upgrading the status of the OSCE's Forum for Security Co-operation.

The importance of respecting human rights commitments was also emphasized, including voting rights. In this context, the Assembly recalled the obligation of participating States to allow international OSCE observers of election procedures.

The document supported recommendations on OSCE reform, based on reports by the 2005 Panel of Eminent Persons appointed by the Chairman-in-Office and the OSCE PA's June 2005 colloquium on 'The Future of the OSCE'.

The PA also called upon the OSCE to improve the gender balance in the organization and to adopt more transparency and accountability in its working methods. The document addressed issues on fighting piracy, relations in the Mediterranean region, countering corruption, stopping the traffic in small arms, and combating trafficking in human beings. The Assembly also issued a recommendation calling for the citizens of Washington, D.C., to be granted voting representation in the U.S. Congress.

Brussels 2006



The Brussels Declaration called for increased support for OSCE Field Missions and closer co-operation with other international organizations on this issue. The Assembly also emphasized the importance of energy security, calling for increased dialogue between participating States to ensure reliable supplies of energy.

Regarding election observation, the Assembly urged continued political leadership by parliamentarians, who provide "visibility and credibility" to such missions. The Declaration also called attention to 'crimes of honour,' and urged legislative action to combat these practices. The Assembly also noted the need for greater attention to the protection of children's rights, and legislative action to combat child pornography.

The Assembly issued a specific call for OSCE States to ensure that their territory is not used to assist rendition flights or to operate

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secret detention centres. Recommendations on settling the Transnistrian conflict in Moldova, dealing with the consequences of natural disasters, combating corruption, and anti-Semitism and other forms of intolerance were also issued by the parliamentarians.

The Assembly offered strong support to the work of the United Nations in Afghanistan, and recommended further consideration of increased co-operation with representatives of Afghanistan.

Kyiv 2007



The OSCE Parliamentary Assembly ended its 16th Annual Session in Kyiv by adopting a Declaration that expresses regret at the lack of progress in resolving so-called ‘frozen con-

flicts’ in the OSCE region and recommends strengthened action in several fields including migration and energy and environmental security.

Reaffirming the crucial importance of all democratic values, the Declaration called on Belarus and governments of other OSCE participating States to pursue their international commitments and principles linked to the notion of each being a free and democratic country.

Ukrainian President Victor Yushchenko, and the OSCE Chairman-in-Office, Spanish Foreign Minister Miguel Angel Moratinos, addressed the meeting.

The Declaration urged all OSCE participating States to sign and ratify the Energy Charter Treaty and the Kyoto Protocol. It also called for greater action on migration and against human trafficking, especially children, and for the dismantling of criminal networks which facilitate illegal migration. In addition, it contained provisions on women; peace and security; cluster

bombs; environmental security; human rights and intolerance.

Astana 2008



The OSCEPA adopted a Resolution in Astana calling on the governments of the 56 participating States to “fully commit themselves, at the highest

political levels, to the full implementation of all of their OSCE commitments and to future strengthening of the Organization”. To do so, governments should make use of the Assembly as “a key element in the Organization’s efforts to be credible in promoting democracy.” The Resolution “requests the Permanent Council to regularly discuss and take into consideration the initiatives taken by the Parliamentary Assembly.” It also cites the need for the OSCE

“The Parliamentary Assembly has developed into one of the most important OSCE institutions continuously providing new ideas and proposals. We welcome this increasing role, particularly in the field of democratic development and election monitoring.”

OSCE Summit, Istanbul 1999

to “carry on further reform aiming at reducing the democratic deficit (and) strengthening transparency and accountability”.

The Declaration calls for more transparency in the organization of, and access to, political and historical archives. It also urges participating States to increase transparency in the use of private military contractors and to ensure that these contractors operate under international law.

The OSCE PA implored all States to sign and ratify the Kyoto Protocol and take concrete steps to address the threat of global climate change. The Declaration, however, recognizes that the environmental threat is not confined to global warming, and hence calls on participating States to undertake better waste management, draw up plans for co-ordination in the event of nuclear accident, and set up early warning networks for natural disasters.

Programme of the 2009 Annual Session



Sunday, 28 June

- 12.00 – 20.00 Registration on the premises of the Lithuanian Parliament
- 18.00 – 19.00 Briefing for Secretaries of Delegations (March 11 Hall)
- 19.00 – 19.30 Reception for Secretaries of Delegations hosted by the Parliament of Lithuania (Lobby, Building 1)

Monday, 29 June

- 09.00 – 12.00 Meeting of the Standing Committee
- 14.30 – 16.00 Inaugural Plenary Session (March 11 Hall)
- 16.30 - 18.30 General Committee on Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions (March 11 Hall)
- 19.30 - 22.00 Concert followed by a reception hosted by the Speaker of the Seimas

Tuesday, 30 June

- 07.00 – 08.45 Time reserved for meetings of various groups
- 09.00 – 11.00 General Committee on Political Affairs and Security (March 11 Hall)
- 09.00 – 11.00 General Committee on Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and Environment (Plenary Chamber)
- 11.30 – 13.30 Special Plenary Session (March 11 Hall)
- 19.30 – 21.30 Reception hosted by the Lithuanian Delegation (Belmontas Entertainment and Recreation Center)

Wednesday, 1 July

- 07.00 – 08.45 Time reserved for meetings of various groups
- 09.00 – 10.30 General Committee on Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions (March 11 Hall)

- 09.00 – 10.30 General Committee on Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and Environment (Plenary Chamber)
- 11.00 – 12.30 General Committee on Political Affairs and Security (March 11 Hall)
- 12.45 – 14.15 Working Lunch on Gender Issues (Seimas Restaurant)
- 14.30 – 16.00 General Committee on Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and Environment (Plenary Chamber)
- 14.30 – 16.00 General Committee on Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions (March 11 Hall)
- 16.30 – 18.00 General Committee on Political Affairs and Security (March 11 Hall)

Thursday, 2 July

- 07.00 – 09.00 Time reserved for meetings of various groups
- 09.00 – 11.00 General Committee on Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and Environment (Plenary Chamber)
- 09.00 – 11.00 General Committee on Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions (March 11 Hall)
- 11.00 – 11.30 Meeting of the Bureau (Constitution Hall)
- 11.30 – 13.30 General Committee on Political Affairs and Security (March 11 Hall)
- 13.30 – 14.00 Meeting of the Bureau (Constitution Hall)
- 15.00 – 18.00 Plenary Session (March 11 Hall)
- 19.00 – 22.00 Reception hosted by the Prime Minister followed by the evening “Modern Folklore” in the framework of the Song Festival (Kalnu Park)

Friday, 3 July

- 07.00 – 09.15 Time reserved for meetings of various groups
- 09.30 – 12.30 Plenary Session (March 11 Hall)
- 12:30 Adjournment immediately followed by a reception offered by the President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly (Lobby, Building 1)





Philippe Nobile



Secretary General
Spencer Oliver

The OSCE PA International Secretariat provides administrative support for the Assembly in its various activities. The Secretariat organizes the meetings of the Assembly, and provides support for election observation projects, special missions and Presidential activities. Its work is carried out in co-operation with other OSCE Institutions and international parliamentary organizations. The Secretariat, which is hosted by the Danish Parliament, is headed by Secretary General Spencer Oliver, and has a permanent staff of 17, including three staff members at the liason office in Vienna.



Deputy Secretary
General
Tina Schøn



Deputy Secretary
General
Gustavo Pallares



Special
Representative
Andreas Nothelle



Presidential
Advisor
Andreas Baker



Director of
Communications
Klas Bergman



Assistant to the
Secretary General
Dana Bjerregaard



Liaison Officer
Marc Carillet



Programme
Officer
Anna Chernova



Senior Counsellor
Semyon Dzakhava



Logistics Officer
Petra Jezkova



Conference
Co-ordinator
Odile LeLarge



Administrative
Director
Kurt Lerras



Senior Secretary
Connie Mathiesen



Programme Officer
Roberto Montella



Research / Publi-
cations Officer
Nat Parry



IT-Supporter
Stephen Paul



The OSCE Parliamentary Assembly is the parliamentary dimension of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, whose 56 participating States span the geographical area from Vancouver to Vladivostok.

The primary task of the 320 member Assembly is to facilitate inter-parliamentary dialogue, an important aspect of the overall effort to meet the challenges of democracy throughout the OSCE area. Recognized as a regional arrangement under Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter, the OSCE is a primary instrument for early warning, conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict rehabilitation in its area. The Parliamentary Assembly, originally established by the 1990 Paris Summit to promote greater involvement in the OSCE by national parliaments, has grown into a very active and esteemed member of the OSCE family.

The basic objectives of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly are:

- To assess the implementation of OSCE objectives by participating States;
- To discuss subjects addressed during meetings of the Ministerial Council and the summits of Heads of State or Government;
- To develop and promote mechanisms for the prevention and resolution of conflicts;
- To support the strengthening and consolidation of democratic institutions in OSCE participating States;
- To contribute to the development of OSCE institutional structures and of relations between existing OSCE Institutions.

To pursue these objectives, the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly employs a variety of means:

- A Final Declaration and a number of resolutions and recommendations are adopted each year at the Annual Session in July;
- Committee work addresses important contemporary international issues;
- Programmes and Seminars designed to develop and strengthen democracy including an extensive election observation programme;
- Special parliamentary missions to areas of latent or active crisis.



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PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY

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