

OSCE Parliamentarians debate crisis in Ukraine



Delegates voting in plenary session

Parliamentarians voted by a margin of 92 in favour to 30 against with 27 abstentions on a resolution that condemns Russia's recent actions in Ukraine in plenary session on Tuesday. The item, introduced by Deputy Head of the U.S. Delegation Benjamin Cardin, specifically "condemns the clear, gross and uncorrected violation of the Helsinki principles by the Russian Federation with respect to Ukraine, including the particularly egregious violation of that country's sovereignty and integrity."

It further expresses "unequivocal support for the sovereignty, political independence, unity and territorial integrity of Ukraine."

The resolution was adopted, following a vigorous debate, with six amendments agreed to.

In the special debate that preceded the consideration of the resolution, parliamentarians welcomed new initiatives being introduced in the Parliamentary Assembly promoting Russian-Ukrainian dialogue with a view towards de-escalating the crisis as important steps in parliamentary diplomacy. Christine Muttonen (Austria) pointed out that parliamentarians, through their informal transnational networks, have more

options available than traditional diplomats.

OSCE PA Vice-President Doris Barnett (Germany), whose initiative brought the Russian and Ukrainian Delegations together for the first time in April, suggested that the two-track dialogue set a primary goal of encouraging a genuine truce in Ukraine.

Mykola Katerynychuk, Deputy Head of Ukraine's Delegation to the OSCE PA, said Kyiv is "ready at any moment to go back to a unilateral ceasefire," but that Russia must first stop its alleged funnelling of weapons to separatists.

Alexey Pushkov, Deputy Head of Russia's Delegation, praised the contact he had with Ukrainian MPs during the Annual Session, urging all sides to "stake everything on efforts to move closer together rather than stress our differences."

Other parliamentarians in the debate offered ideas to resolve the crisis, including appealing to the Russian President to use his influence to compel Ukrainian separatists to disarm, while others suggested negotiating with the separatists, and possibly holding a national referendum on federalization.

The resolution agreed to on Tuesday is now included in the draft version of the Baku Declaration, to be voted on in plenary session on Wednesday.

Programme - Wednesday, 2 July

09.30 – 12.30 Plenary Session ~ Grand Ballroom

12.30 Adjournment immediately followed by a reception offered by the President of the OSCE PA

First and Third Committees complete work and elect leadership



Azay Guliyev, Asa Lindestam and Pia Kauma

The First Committee adopted three supplementary items on Tuesday: "Regional Co-operation in South East Europe;" "The Fight against Terrorism;" and "The OSCE's Further Engagement with Afghanistan."

Following the debates on supplementary items, the committee chose its leadership for the coming year, re-electing Azay Guliyev (Azerbaijan) and Pia Kauma (Finland) by acclamation as Vice-Chair and Rapporteur, respectively. Asa Lindestam (Sweden) was elected Chair in a close contest with Roger Wicker (United States).



Mehmet Sevki Kulkuloglu, Isabel Santos and Gordana Comic

Parliamentarians adopted five supplementary items in the Third Committee on Tuesday: "Protection of Cultural Property in the OSCE Area;" "Prevention of Child Sex Trafficking;" "The Situation of Refugees in the OSCE Area;" "Combating Torture;" and "Democratic Control of the Public and Private Security Sectors."

The committee chose its bureau at the close of the meeting, with its current leadership re-elected by acclamation. Isabel Santos (Portugal) will remain Chair, Sevki Kulkuloglu (Turkey) Vice-Chair, and Gordana Comic (Serbia) Rapporteur.