

Ukraine debated in plenary session, resolution adopted



Nearly 50 parliamentarians took the floor to debate the supplementary item The Continuation of Clear, Gross and Uncorrected Violations of OSCE Commitments and International Norms by the Russian Federation, principally sponsored by Dean Allison (MP, Canada).

In a spirited debate, Members stressed the need to support Ukraine economically and politically, and called for Russia to end its interference in the country. Halting the deployment of heavy weapons and fully implementing the Minsk agreements were also emphasized. A number of Members objected to the absence of the Russian Delegation from the debate and consequently abstained from the vote.

The resolution, which condemns the Russian Federation's failure to respect the Helsinki Accords' principles of sovereignty and territorial integrity, was adopted by a vote of 96-7, with 32 abstentions. Through the resolution, the PA also "stresses the importance of meaningful and effective economic, constitutional and governance reforms in Ukraine, as well as the Government of Ukraine's continuing efforts to fight corruption." Six amendments were agreed to.

The plenary session also included OSCE PA Special Representative on Gender Issues Hedy Fry (MP, Canada)'s presentation of her report, "Gender and the Future Development of the OSCE," which explores gender balance in the OSCE on the eve of its 40th anniversary. Fry noted that participating States have only partially achieved the goals of gender equality and that more political will is needed in this regard.

Leaders of recent election observation missions, including to the United Kingdom, Tajikistan and Turkey, also presented reports. Following these reports, the plenary session was opened up for general debate.

Committees complete work and elect leaders for 2015-2016

The general committees wrapped up their work on Wednesday with the adoption of supplementary items and the elections of committee officers. The First Committee amended and adopted the items on Helsinki principles in inter-state relations, the OSCE Code of Conduct, and foreign terrorist fighters, principally sponsored by Azay Guliyev (MP, Azerbaijan), Ida Glanzmann (MP, Switzerland), and Cristina de Pietro (MP, Italy), respectively.

The Third Committee adopted resolutions on detained Ukrainian citizens in the Russian Federation and the vulnerability of women and girls in conflicts, sponsored by

Ostap Semerak (MP, Ukraine) and Hedy Fry (MP, Canada), respectively. The First and Second Committees re-elected their leadership by acclamation, while in the Third Committee, the Rapporteur and Chair were re-elected and Ivana Dobesova (MP, Czech Republic) was newly elected as Vice-Chair.



Parliamentarians discuss gender equality at working lunch



Opened by OSCE PA President Ilkka Kanerva (MP, Finland) and Special Representative on Gender Issues Hedy Fry (MP, Canada), Wednesday's Gender Lunch featured a keynote address by former Defence Minister of Finland and Undersecretary General of the United Nations Elisabeth Rehn. The discussion focused on gender equality and the impact of armed conflict on women.

Speakers stressed the importance of fully implementing UN

Security Council Resolution 1325, which provides a blueprint for women's participation in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and peacekeeping work.

Following the keynote addresses, participants discussed how to promote gender equality in the OSCE and the PA, focusing in particular on what is lacking in international efforts to empower women and girls. Parliamentarians noted that education and political commitment are essential elements to the successful implementation of gender equality goals.

Programme ~ Thursday, 9 July

09.00 – 12.00	Plenary Session (Finlandia Hall)
12.00	Adjournment immediately followed by a reception offered by the PA President