



Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY

Report on the 2006 Fall Meetings in Malta

- *Conference on Immigration, Integration and Cross-Cultural Dialogue: the Roles of the OSCE*
- *Standing Committee Meeting*
- *Mediterranean Forum*

17-19 November 2006

Prepared by the OSCE PA International Secretariat,
Copenhagen



Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY

2006 Fall Meetings Programme, Malta

Friday 17 November

Parliamentary Conference on “Immigration, Integration and Cross-Cultural Dialogue: the Role of the OSCE”

10:15 – 10:45 OPENING SESSION

- Opening Remarks by Mr. Göran LENNMARKER, President of the OSCE PA
- Welcoming Remarks by Mr. Anton TABONE, Speaker of the House of Representatives of Malta
- Welcoming Remarks by Mr. Jason AZZOPARDI, Head of the Maltese Delegation to the OSCE PA

11:00 – 13:00 SESSION 1: Promoting Integration in the OSCE: Challenges for Multi-Ethnic Societies
Chair/Moderator: Senator Jerry GRAFSTEIN, Treasurer of the OSCE PA

- Mr. Peter SCHATZER, International Organization of Migration, Regional Director for the Mediterranean
- Professor Guido DE MARCO, President Emeritus of Malta
- Ambassador Werner WNENDT, Head of the OSCE Mission in Kosovo
- Open debate

15:00 – 16:45 SESSION 2: Ethnic Identity and Cultural Diversity

- Chair/Moderator: Mr. Roberto BATTELLI, OSCE PA Special Representative from South Eastern Europe
- Mr. Ranier FSADNI, Mediterranean Institute, University of Malta
 - Open debate

17:00 – 18:45: SESSION 3: Migration and Security
Chair/Moderator: Mr. João SOARES, Vice-President of the OSCE PA

- Mr. Karl E. WYCOFF, Head of the OSCE Action against Terrorism Unit
- Mr. José Joaquín GOMÁ TORRES, Co-ordinator for International and Institutional Affairs – State Secretariat for Immigration, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Spain
- Open debate

Saturday 18 November 2006

10:00 – 11:45 SESSION 4: Illegal Migration
Chair / Moderator: Mr. Panos KAMMENOS, Vice-President of the OSCE PA

- Mr. Tonio BORG, Deputy Prime-Minister and Minister of Justice and Home Affairs
- Mr. Gavin GULIA - Opposition Spokesperson on Home Affairs
- Ms. Molly H. BORDONARO, Ambassador of the United States of America to Malta.
- Open debate

12:00 – 12:30 CLOSING SESSION

- Concluding Remarks by Mr. Jason AZZOPARDI, Head of the Maltese Delegation to the OSCE PA
- Concluding Remarks by Mr. Göran LENNMARKER, President of the OSCE PA

15:00 – 18:00 MEETING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE

Sunday 19 November 2006

OSCE Parliamentary Assembly Mediterranean Forum

10:00 – 11:15: OPENING SESSION: The OSCE Mediterranean Dimension

- Opening Remarks by Mr. Göran LENNMARKER, President of the OSCE PA
- Opening Remarks by Mr. Anton TABONE, Speaker of the Maltese Parliament
- Opening Remarks by Mr. Jason AZZOPARDI, Head of the Maltese Delegation to the OSCE PA
- Welcoming Remarks by Mr. Alcee L. HASTINGS, President Emeritus of the OSCE PA
- Keynote Address by Ambassador Marc Perrin DE BRICHAMBAUT, Secretary General of the OSCE

11:30 – 13:00: SESSION 1: The Situation in the Middle East
Chair/Moderator: Mr. Alcee L. HASTINGS, President Emeritus of the OSCE PA

- Mr. Michael FRENDO, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Malta
- Mr. Mehmet DULGER, Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee, Turkey
- Ms. Colette AVITAL, Deputy Speaker of the Knesset, Head of the Delegation of Israel to the OSCE PA
- Ambassador Ahmed KHATTAB, Director of Peoples Assembly & Shoura Council of Dept, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Egypt
- General Debate

15:00 – 16:30: SESSION 2: Continuation of Debate on Middle East

- Chair/Moderator: Senator Jerry GRAFSTEIN, Treasurer of the OSCE PA
- Continuation of General Debate

16:30 – 17:00: CLOSING SESSION

- Concluding Remarks by Mr. Frederick AZZOPARDI, Member of the Maltese Delegation to the OSCE PA
- Concluding Remarks by Mr. Göran LENNMARKER, President of the OSCE PA

Introduction



From 17 to 19 November 2006, the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly met in Malta for its annual Fall Meetings. The meetings brought together more than 250 participants from 51 countries for a conference, Mediterranean Forum and meeting of the Assembly's Standing Committee. The meetings were addressed by senior representatives from Malta, as well as the OSCE and other countries in the region. Special guest representatives from Libya also participated in the OSCE PA meetings for the first time.

The *Conference on Immigration, Integration and Cross-Cultural Dialogue: the Roles of the OSCE* opened on 17 November and continued on 18 November. In addition to opening and closing sessions, with keynote addresses by OSCE PA President Göran Lennmarker and representatives of Malta, the Conference consisted of four separate sessions: Session 1 on Promoting Integration in the OSCE: Challenges for Multi-Ethnic Societies; Session 2 on Ethnic Identity and Cultural Diversity; Session 3 on Migration and Security; and Session 4 on Illegal Migration. Each session was addressed by experts in the field of discussion, and provided time for debate by the parliamentarians on the issues raised.

On 18 November, the Standing Committee of Heads of Delegations met and discussed ongoing Assembly activities. The President gave an overview of his work since July 2006, and the Heads of Delegations also heard reports on election observation activities and on work by ad hoc Committees and Special Representatives. The Secretary General of the OSCE also outlined the draft 2007 OSCE budget to the Standing Committee.

The 2006 OSCE Parliamentary Assembly Mediterranean Forum, held on 19 November, focused Assembly attention on the situation in the Middle East. The Forum provided Members with an opportunity to debate recent developments in the area, as well as prospects for the future.

This brochure, prepared by the International Secretariat of the Assembly, provides an overview of discussions during the 2006 Fall Meetings.

Standing Committee Meeting



OSCE PA President *Göran Lennmarker* thanked the Members for their support during the Brussels Annual Session, as he opened his first Standing Committee meeting as President. He thanked the Maltese hosts for their excellent work in bringing all of the participants to Malta for this meeting. Lennmarker also thanked President Emeritus Alcee L. Hastings for his leadership of the PA up until the Annual Session in Brussels, and paid tribute to his work in strengthening the Assembly.

President Lennmarker outlined his priority objectives, stressing that he would continue to work to strengthen the Assembly as an essential OSCE Institution. He plans to stress parliamentary work in helping to solve remaining conflicts in the OSCE region, to strengthen respect for human rights, and to strengthen election observation activities by the OSCE. The President reported on his work since being elected, including several official visits to participating States and OSCE Institutions. He

urged Members to actively participate in the Assembly's election observation activities.

The Treasurer of the Assembly, *Senator Jerry Grafstein*, reported that the Assembly remained well within budget, and that the external auditors were expected to once again give high marks for the financial management of the Assembly. He particularly thanked the Secretary General for overseeing the efficient work of the International Secretariat.

Secretary General *Spencer Oliver* reported on the work of the International Secretariat in supporting the activities of Members of the Assembly. He particularly highlighted reports prepared by the Secretariat on recent meetings, support to the President in his active work, as well as in organizing the Assembly's election observation work. The Secretary General also welcomed Andres Blasco, Liaison Officer in Vienna, to the staff of the International Secretariat.





Pieter De Crem, Chairman of the Sub-Committee on the Rules of Procedure, reported on the work of this Committee in recent months. He noted that the Sub-Committee had considered a wide range of suggestions. The Standing Committee subsequently passed several proposals put forward by the Sub-Committee, including changes affecting the composition of the Bureau, the holding of Fall Meetings, and duties of the Vice-Chairs of the General Committees.

The Standing Committee heard reports on recent activities related to election observation. The Secretary General reported on a briefing that he and several Members of the Assembly had conducted for members of the Permanent Council in Vienna on the OSCE PA's leading role in OSCE election observation work. *Joao Soares* (Portugal), reported on his leadership and on the results of the OSCE election observation mission in Montenegro in September, and on the elections in Bosnia and Herzegovina in October, and in Tajikistan in November, where he served as Deputy Head of Delegation. Mr. Soares stressed that the political leadership of these missions by parliamentarians was critical. *Jesus Lopez-Medel* (Spain), Rapporteur of the Third Committee, reported on the PA's limited election observation mission to the Latvian parliamentary elections in October.

The Secretary General of the OSCE, Ambassador *Marc Perrin de Brichambaut*, addressed the Standing Committee, and presented the proposed OSCE budget for 2007. He gave a brief outline of the budgetary process as well as indicating some of the long-term budget trends that have been developing in the Organization, and answered questions from Members. In this context, the newly appointed OSCE PA Special Representative on the OSCE Budget, *Petur Blondal* (Iceland) outlined



his plans for the future. The Secretary General also gave an indication of issues which would likely be addressed during the OSCE Ministerial Council in Brussels in December 2006.

The Heads of Delegations heard a report by the Chair of the ad hoc Committee on Abkhazia (Georgia), Vice-President *Tone Tingsgård* (Sweden), in which she explained that a planned visit to the region in October had been cancelled due to tensions in the area. The Special Representative on South Eastern Europe, *Roberto Battelli* (Slovenia), reported on his activities and discussed future plans including an upcoming visit to the region with President Lennmarker, and plans for the coming year, during which the Assembly will chair the Parliamentary Troika on the Stability Pact.

Finally, Members were also briefed on preparations for future OSCE PA meetings in the coming year.



Conference Opening Session



Welcoming remarks by Anton Tabone, Speaker of the House of Representatives of Malta

Mr. Anton Tabone welcomed the parliamentarians to the Fall Meetings of the OSCE in Malta and thanked those who had contributed to the organization of the meeting.

Mr. Tabone spoke about the relevance of the OSCE structures and stressed that because of its strategic location, Malta is in a unique position to promote dialogue between cultures and serve as a meeting place for the Mediterranean countries. He highlighted that the international community should proceed from 'multiculturalism' to 'interculturalism' and that immigration, integration and cross-cultural dialogue are closely linked. Speaker Tabone also noted that illegal migration has become a threat that needs concrete and effective action from governments and international organizations. An effective multilateral approach requires dialogue as well as national and international co-operation. He explained that Malta, as a southern Mediterranean country, has had a high number of illegal immigrants arrive on its coasts. He also underlined the special necessity for Malta to tackle immigration due to its limited land area, its high population density and its lack of human and financial resources. Mr. Tabone also stressed the long-standing commitment of Malta to assisting those who need humanitarian assistance. Finally, he called upon the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly to give migration issues greater parliamentary attention, which is still lacking at the international level.



Welcoming remarks by Jason Azzopardi, Head of the Maltese Delegation to the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly

Mr. Jason Azzopardi welcomed all Delegations to Malta for the Fall Meetings. He highlighted that the Maltese meeting was the largest ever OSCE PA Fall Conference, with the attendance of 47 states, and 4 partner countries, as well as Libya as a special guest.

He reminded the Delegates that in 1975, Malta was one of the first countries to introduce the idea that security in Europe is interlinked with security in the Mediterranean. Today, all countries accept this argument. Mr. Azzopardi explained that Malta, with its unique geographical situation, had originally put the issue of illegal migration on the agenda of the European Union. He also stressed the importance of the work done in recent years by Malta together with Italy, Greece and Spain, to convince the EU of the need to develop a common immigration and asylum policy





in Europe. He underlined that Malta has the highest population density in Europe and the third highest in the world, with 1 200 people per square kilometer.

Mr. Azzopardi also highlighted that Malta had recently been chosen to host the Executive Secretariat of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean, which has been set up under the auspices of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU).

Opening remarks by Göran Lenmarker, President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly

President Lenmarker welcomed Members to the Fall Meetings and highlighted the presence of the delegations from OSCE Partner States Algeria, Egypt, Israel and Tunisia. In addition, he particularly welcomed the Delegation of Libya who were in attendance at an OSCE PA Conference as special guests for the first time.

Mr. Lenmarker spoke about his priorities for his presidency of the OSCE PA. He noted the importance of strengthening the role of the Parliamentary Assembly as an essential OSCE Institution and promoting dialogue with the governmental side of the OSCE. He also stressed the particular role of parliamentarians in strengthening human rights and fighting against trafficking in human beings. He encouraged parliamentarians to attend OSCE election observation missions and highlighted the importance of increasingly involving Central Asia in the work of the OSCE PA. In this regard, he expressed his support for Kazakhstan's bid to Chair the OSCE in 2009.

President Lenmarker reminded the Assembly that migration is not only a problem but is also an asset. He noted that many countries have immigrants and

that they contribute positively to the development of societies. Mr. Lenmarker stressed the importance of integrating immigrants, while at the same time ensuring that they can preserve their own culture, and in this context highlighted the importance of inter-cultural dialogue, tolerance, non-discrimination and education.

The President welcomed the meeting of the EU-Africa Ministerial Council on Migration and Development, scheduled to take place in Libya at the end of November 2006. He also expressed appreciation for the initiative introduced by Spain and Turkey on engaging in a 'Dialogue of Civilizations,' and highlighted the important contribution that the OSCE provides to this. Finally, he invited all delegates to actively participate and intervene in the ensuing debates and thanked the Maltese hosts for their hospitality and for giving Members the opportunity to come to Malta.



Conference Session 1: Promoting Integration in the OSCE: Challenges for Multi-Ethnic Societies



The first session was chaired and moderated by Senator *Jerry Grafstein*, Treasurer of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly. In welcoming the participants, Mr. Grafstein spoke about the importance of cultural and ethnic integration. He introduced the example of Canada as an open society and more specifically, he mentioned his own city of Toronto, composed of many national minorities that are treated equally.

Peter Schatzer, Regional Director for the Mediterranean at the International Organization for Migration, on “Managing Migration: Integration and Diversity Policies”

Mr. Schatzer introduced the issue of integration and diversity policies by pointing out that while the EU’s population in total grew by 0.5% in 2004, 1.9 million people came through migration and only 400 000 were added by natural growth. He noted that in Europe most of the entries happen with a valid passport or a valid visa, although illegal immigration continues. He underlined that while immigrants make up an important and increasing labour force in Europe, their integration continues to be difficult.

In order to manage migration policies, considering both ‘regular’ and ‘irregular’ migration is required, stressed Mr. Schatzer. With increasing security concerns in recent years, especially in relation to the movement of people, it is a real challenge for States

to avoid hindering the free movement of people. According to Mr. Schatzer, effective migration management must include many levels in all countries, including human rights groups, trade unions and health authorities along with inter-ministerial and international co-ordination.

Mr. Schatzer called on the international community to work to develop a better understanding of the problems faced by transit countries. More specifically, he mentioned the problems of the countries in the east and south-east of Europe as well as in Turkey. Many of these countries do not have the capacity to send the immigrants back to their countries of origin or to accommodate them. This situation often results in illegal work, corruption and violation of human rights.

The speaker also addressed the role of the International Organization for Migration and presented different methods to deal with illegal migration. He explained that the IOM tries to directly help the governments of transit countries to respond in a more co-ordinated way to the challenges of illegal migration. The Organization also tries to inform the populations of countries of origin about the risks of irregular migration.

Mr. Schatzer noted that the responsibility for integration rests on many actors: migrants themselves, governments, private and public institutions as well as communities. He stressed that integration does not necessarily imply permanent settlement but that it is important to consider the rights and obligations of migrants. This includes access to services, the labour market and identification, while at the same time respecting the values of immigrants and the host



communities. Finally, he underlined that basic human rights apply to all migrants, regardless of how integrated they may be.

**Professor Guido de Marco,
President Emeritus of Malta, on
“Promoting and Protecting a Multi-Ethnic
and Multi-Cultural Europe”**

Professor de Marco started his presentation by highlighting that the multi-ethnic and multi-cultural approach is a novel concept in Europe. Europe was traditionally built on the concept of the nation-state, based on an ethnic approach. Other places in the world, notably the United States, have origins based more on a multi-ethnic and multi-cultural approach.

Professor de Marco noted the difference between migration within Europe, where people have a relatively common culture, religion and similar languages, as opposed to migration into Europe from the outside. He underlined the importance of effectively handling the challenge of integrating immigrants into host countries and avoiding the formation of ghettos. Professor de Marco reminded the participants that European countries must make an active effort in order to achieve a multi-ethnic society. The process of absorption and integration is at the core of this, he noted, but it is also important that immigrants are able to maintain their own culture, religion and languages.

**Ambassador Werner Wnendt,
Head of the OSCE Mission in Kosovo, on
“The Role of the OSCE in Multi-Ethnic
Societies: the Case of Kosovo”**

Ambassador Wnendt gave Members a presentation focused on the Balkans and specifically on the situation in Kosovo. He highlighted that the conflicts in the Balkans have caused trauma and have damaged the trust between different communities and the public’s confidence in state institutions. The Ambassador noted that reconciliation is only possible with communication between individuals, communities and institutions. The OSCE Mission in Kosovo has facilitated this dialogue, has helped to empower democratic institutions and has also implemented human rights initiatives and civil society-building programs.

Ambassador Wnendt pointed out that regional co-operation in the Western Balkans is essential for the



political stability and economic growth of the region. He noted that co-operation is necessary for Kosovo and the entire region to pave the way towards greater European integration.

In conclusion, he noted that much needed to be done to reconcile and build the trust of communities in Kosovo, and that this remains a prerequisite for regional co-operation and European integration.

Debate

In the debate of the first session, Members of Parliament discussed the challenges presented in integrating national minorities. There was general agreement that countries of destination should respect the rights of the immigrants and help them to integrate into society. Several speakers also noted that immigrants should respect the culture and values of the country of destination. A number of Delegates shared experiences from their own countries. Some of the participants pointed out the important role of the OSCE in Kosovo and others mentioned the importance of integration of Balkan countries into the EU as the best vehicle for conflict resolution.



Conference Session 2: Ethnic Identity and Cultural Diversity



Roberto Battelli, OSCE PA Special Representative on South Eastern Europe, moderated the second session focused on “Ethnic Identity and Cultural Diversity” – a subject he described as extraordinarily complex. Mr. Battelli noted that participating States are not always working to confront the issues associated with identity and diversity in the OSCE area directly, and hoped that this Conference would make a constructive contribution to the issue.

**Ranier Fsadni, Mediterranean Institute,
University of Malta, on
“Promoting Ethnic Identity and
Cultural Diversity”**

Highlighting the expanded concept of security, in which he included cultural relations and communication, Mr. Ranier Fsadni addressed the Conference on “Promoting Ethnic Identity and Cultural Diversity.”

Issues related to culture can arise from a street level until politicians address them, said Mr. Fsadni. Culture, according to Mr. Fsadni, is complex and often defies traditional security categories. As an example, he discussed immigration in France, which has created a group of people who are neither solely French nor solely North African, but belong to a new category. Traditional security issues deal with conflicts that are essentially resolvable, however cultural identity often involves conflict

with conflicting interests. He explained that this tension is well-reflected in the EU slogan of “unity in diversity.” Mr. Fsadni argued that Europe does not have a clearly articulated vision of its relations with its neighbours in cultural terms beyond 2010, and that without this vision it will find it very difficult to manage these relations in the future.

The speaker also highlighted the long history of intercultural exchange between Christianity and Islam and their shared common heritage. He explained that this can be seen in the many similarities between countries in both the eastern and the western Mediterranean.

Debate

Members raised a number of issues related to the topics addressed. One participant discussed the importance of globalism, and called for increased support for multicultural approaches which help to cope with diversity. The importance of education in avoiding social exclusion was addressed. Within the field of respect for cultural diversity, Members also discussed the role of freedom of expression. One Member pointed out the dangers of outdated stereotypes, particularly given the rapid changes which have happened in some regions of the OSCE. Participants also discussed the important positive aspects that migration has had on societies throughout the ages in contributing to ethnic identities, and this phenomenon can still be seen today, it was noted.



Conference Session 3: Migration and Security



In welcoming the participants, OSCE PA Vice-President *Joao Soares* pointed out the relevance and significance of the session's topic of "Migration and Security". Commenting on the commonly-made link between migration and terrorism, Mr. Soares noted the potential risk to human rights when combining questions of security and immigration.

Karl E. Wycoff, Head of the OSCE Action against Terrorism Unit, on "Global Migration and Threats to Security,"

Mr. Wycoff addressed the participants on the issue of "Global Migration and Threats to Security," noting that refugee and asylum issues are closely connected to the vigorous debate surrounding immigration and national security. In addressing

the issue of border management, Mr. Wycoff noted the substantial work of the OSCE in improving the ability to prevent terrorists and other criminals from crossing international borders. Mr. Wycoff also drew the participants' attention to the problem of 'home-grown' terrorism.

The OSCE ATU operates three primary programmes, he explained. It addresses travel document security, one of the longest running OSCE counter-terrorism programmes; legal co-operation in criminal matters related to terrorism; and container security, dealing with the security of supply chains. These programmes are co-ordinated with other international institutions and organizations working in the security sector, he noted. Mr. Wycoff stressed the important role of the OSCE as a political organization in ensuring high standards in the sector among participating States.



**José Gomá Torres,
State Secretariat for Immigration, Ministry
of Labor and Social Affairs, Spain, on
“Migration and the Role of Borders”**

Mr. Gomá opened his presentation with a description of types of migration and the potential effects of immigration on national security. Immigration policy objectives are focused on achieving a legal and orderly immigration process that respects the rights of immigrants, he noted. However, Mr. Gomá highlighted that immigration policies become inefficient when immigrants are placed in an illegal situation. Mr. Gomá outlined several common immigration routes to Europe, as well as the security measures and different co-operation agreements that are being used to counter illegal immigration. In conclusion, Mr. Gomá pointed to the vulnerability of border crossings and their effect on state sovereignty and control of territory, and the necessity of inter-state co-operation.

Debate

During the following debate, Parliamentarians discussed the challenges presented in fighting illegal migration. Participants also highlighted the positive contribution of immigration, in particular the economic contributions in the country of destination. Parliamentarians also pointed out the need to co-ordinate action between states in the fight against human trafficking and the important role played by the OSCE in this sector. It was also noted that in the fight against terrorism, states sometimes allow for ethnic and religious discrimination against migrants – and care should be taken not to jeopardize human rights while working to combat terrorism and illegal migration.



Conference Session 4: Illegal Migration



Panos Kammenos, Vice-President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, welcomed all Members and keynote speakers to the session on “Illegal Migration”. He reminded participants that trafficking in human beings is one of the most pressing and complex issues in the OSCE region and beyond. Mr. Kammenos stressed the importance of defining illegal migration and pointed out that it is often employers who benefit from the illegal status of migrants. He encouraged participants to focus on issues related to the economic and human dimensions of migration, and also on the role of the OSCE in promoting tolerance and non-discrimination.

Tonio Borg, Deputy Prime-Minister of Malta and Minister of Justice and Home Affairs, on “Illegal Migration - effects in small countries”

Mr. Borg outlined the experience of Malta in dealing with illegal immigrants. He voiced Malta’s proposal to adopt a co-ordinated and unified approach which addresses the countries of origin from which irregular immigrants depart, the countries of transit through which they pass and their destination countries.

Minsiter Borg pointed out five separate elements of the problems related to illegal migration: the return, re-admission and re-integration of irregular immigrants to their countries of origin; the need for improvements to the efficiency and effectiveness of border management in countries of origin and transit countries; the elimination of human smuggling and trafficking; the need for improvements to the management of irregular migration by transit countries; and the better integration of immigrants in destination countries. He highlighted and enumerated specific actions that need to be taken

in each area. In conclusion, Mr. Borg underlined that illegal immigration can and must be treated as a shared international responsibility, because the problems posed by it are not unique to Malta.

Gavin Gulia, Opposition Spokesperson on Home Affairs

In dealing with the question of illegal migration, Mr. Gulia drew on the experience of Malta. He pointed out two types of illegal immigration that characterize the problem in Malta: firstly, legal immigrants who entered the territory by means of a valid visa, but have then stayed in Malta; and secondly the massive and sudden influx of immigrants arriving on small boats without notice, posing both humanitarian and security problems. Mr. Gulia stressed that immigration is not only a problem for the receiving states of the EU, but a problem for the EU as a whole. He reminded the participants that there is still no effective policy in this area and that financial assistance may help to share the burden, but it does not solve the existing problem.

Molly H. Bordonaro, Ambassador of the United States of America to Malta, on “Illegal Migration - effects in large countries”

Ambassador Bordonaro addressed the participants, sharing the experience of the United States in dealing with illegal immigration. She stressed the fact that one cannot discuss the importance of promoting democracy and freedom around the world without recognizing that the absence of these values is what is driving many people to leave their country of birth in the hope of finding a better future. She noted that in the US



frustration with illegal immigration is growing, and is blurring the important discussion about the numerous benefits of legal migration and immigration.

Differences exist between the problems associated with illegal immigration in the US and that which is occurring in Europe, noted the Ambassador. However, Ms. Bordonaro highlighted that there are also similarities and that people on both sides of the Atlantic are united in the fact that it is a human rights issue when it comes to the human smuggling of illegal migrants and that there are benefits in sharing experiences as to how the issue should be approached. The Ambassador provided a brief overview of the scale and impact of illegal immigration in the US. She also listed the three main areas of debate on illegal immigration in the United States: the enhancement of border security; the enforcement of current immigration laws; and creation of mechanisms for legalizing the status of some illegal immigrants who are already part of the labour force. Finally, Ms. Bordonaro outlined the approach of President Bush and his administration to this issue.



Debate

During the discussions that followed the presentations, Delegates discussed the scope of the problem of illegal migration, sharing experiences from their own countries. Several speakers pointed out the necessity of establishing a multilateral mechanism for reception of immigrants. Several speakers urged the OSCE to encourage the EU to assist Malta and other small countries in order to ensure real co-ordination and share the financial burden of this problem. Participants also emphasized that there is a great deal of work to be done in countries of origin since poverty and war are often root causes behind illegal migration.



Mediterranean Forum Opening Session: The OSCE Mediterranean Dimension



Opening remarks by Göran Lennmarker, President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly

President Lennmarker opened the Forum on the Mediterranean and stressed the importance of the region for the OSCE. Lennmarker noted that the Mediterranean holds special importance because it was the place where civilization started. Today, broadly speaking, the situation is that the North Mediterranean is experiencing fast development and the South Mediterranean is relying on oil and gas. These natural resources must be spent in a wise way and investment on education and people should be stressed.

President Lennmarker called for the Mediterranean dialogue to focus on three issues: free trade as an important aspect of economic development; social development, ensuring that this is not forgotten in the process of economic development; and the environment.



Anton Tabone, Speaker of the Parliament of Malta

Speaker Tabone stressed in his opening remarks that, for obvious reasons, the Mediterranean has been and remains high on Malta's agenda. The linkage between security in Europe and that in the Mediterranean has been emphasized time and again in OSCE activities. He stressed that the Mediterranean is a dynamic space which stimulates a continuous exchange of economic, social and cultural activity.

Speaker Tabone outlined Malta's involvement in different Mediterranean fora, in particular, Malta has played an active role in the Barcelona Process since its launch in November 1995. In addition to the Euro-Mediterranean process, Malta is active in other Mediterranean regional or sub-regional processes which contribute to the launch of new initiatives and the formulation of new policies. In this context, Speaker Tabone referred to the recent establishment of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean, whose Executive Secretariat will be set up in Malta under the auspices of the Inter-Parliamentary Union.

Jason Azzopardi, Head of the Maltese Delegation to the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly

Mr. Azzopardi briefly outlined why Malta is historically, in addition to geographically, at the heart of the Mediterranean. He noted that despite its small size, Malta has played an important role in the Mediterranean. Malta was the first participating State of the CSCE to advocate the pact of stability for the

Mediterranean. “It is our vocation,” he said, “to build bridges across Europe and the Mediterranean.” Mr. Azzopardi concluded by praising what he defined as a developing Pax Mediterranea.

Alcee L. Hastings, President Emeritus of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and Special Representative on Mediterranean Affairs

President Emeritus Hastings thanked President Lennmarker for appointing him as Special Representative for the Mediterranean. Congressman Hastings explained that during his mandate as President of the Assembly, he visited all six Mediterranean partners and emphasized the importance of having the parliaments of all Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation more directly involved in the work of the Assembly. He underlined that security in the world and in Europe is integrally linked to security in the Mediterranean.

Keynote address by Ambassador Marc Perrin de Brichambaut, Secretary General of the OSCE

Ambassador de Brichambaut briefed Members of the Assembly on the recent developments of the OSCE Mediterranean dimension. He referred to the conclusions of the annual OSCE Mediterranean Seminar, held in Sharm-el-Sheikh, Egypt, on 6 and 7 November 2006. He outlined three main themes corresponding to the wishes of the partner States: follow up of the Rabat and Sharm-el Sheikh meetings; pursuing work on integration policies, tolerance, non-discrimination and inter-cultural dialogue; and



the necessity to create a permanent working team to fight xenophobia, for example through a series of Mediterranean seminars.

The Secretary General also underlined that it is largely thanks to Malta that the Helsinki Document and the OSCE in general attach such great importance to co-operative security in the Mediterranean. The Mediterranean dialogue in the OSCE, he noted, has not been wholly achieved and he urged the Parliamentary Assembly to continue to bring forward ideas and suggestions in order to enhance this dialogue.



Mediterranean Forum Session 1: The Situation in the Middle East



OSCE PA President Emeritus Alcee Hastings chaired the first session of the Forum devoted to the debate on the situation in the Middle East.

Michael Frendo, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Malta

Foreign Minister Frendo stressed that peace in the Middle East is identified as a priority area in Malta's foreign policy strategic objectives, launched by the Maltese Foreign Ministry in 2006. Malta has focused on the promotion of dialogue between Israelis and Palestinians in the hopes of pursuing a durable solution

that safeguards the security and prosperity of both populations. However, nobody can impose a two-state solution, he noted. This has to be negotiated with the support of moderate forces on both sides of the conflict and of the international community, particularly the European Union and the United States.

Minister Frendo also underlined the importance of enhancing dialogue between Europe and the Arab world. As a new member of the European Union, Malta has stressed the need for the European Union to initiate a process of dialogue between the EU and the Arab world through the Arab League, he said.

Mehmet Dulger, Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Turkish Parliament

Mr. Dulger noted that for at least a century the Middle East has been characterized by turbulence and instability, but the current crisis broke out against the backdrop of the post-September 11 2001 environment. As such, the problems are ideologically viewed as a confrontation between the forces of moderation and those of extremism. From a regional perspective, he said, these developments are seen as a growing divide between Islam and the West.





Mr. Dulger emphasized the importance of dialogue in finding a solution, but stressed that Hamas is a major impediment to the peace process. The OSCE, he concluded, can provide a very important contribution to this process.

Colette Avital, Deputy Speaker of the Israeli Parliament

Mrs. Avital stressed the common background of people in the Middle East. Jews and Arabs, Israelis, Palestinians, Egyptians and Syrians have lived and died in the same area, around the same Mediterranean Sea. They have created and shared many common ancestral traditions, but have been divided at times by conflicting concepts, ideologies and rivalries. “We are divided by our love of the same land,” said Mrs. Avital. She stressed that the OSCE has been a model because it brought peace and stability to a continent that suffered and was divided. It is one of



the fora towards which Israel, as a Mediterranean Partner for Co-operation, is turning to solve some of its problems.

Mrs. Avital stressed that the two-state solution of Israel and Palestine is the only acceptable end result, but finding the way to get there is the core issue in the Middle East.

Before concluding, Mrs. Avital also expresses her concerns about the potential of Iran developing nuclear-weapon capability.

Ambassador Ahmed Khattab, Director for Parliamentary Affairs in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Egypt

Ambassador Khattab stressed that peace cannot be reached without a Palestinian state. Both sides to the conflict must do their utmost on the political, security, economic and social fronts to return to the path of talks without laying down prior conditions, he said.



Mediterranean Forum Session 2: Debate on the Situation in the Middle East



Introductory statement by Senator Jerry Grafstein, Treasurer of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly

The second session of the debate on the Middle East began with an introductory account of the economic dimension of the situation by Senator Jerry Grafstein, from Canada.

In a presentation entitled “Joining the Knowledge Economy - A ‘Free Trade’ Track to Peace in the Middle East”, Senator Grafstein stressed the importance of free trade to peace and to the founding principles of the OSCE. The Senator put particular emphasis on the financial losses the Middle East has suffered since the events of September 11 2001. Mr. Grafstein outlined that while there are numerous institutions in the region that offer the possibility of greater economic co-operation, real progress is lacking. He noted that tariff barriers inhibit economic growth in the region, that there is uneven distribution of foreign investment, and that

there is a real deficiency in the knowledge-economy and education. He explained that this last problem was somewhat countered by a recent development programme in Jordan, in which 40 000 new jobs were created as a result of expanding information technology to education institutions across the country.

Debate

The debate resumed with contributions from many representatives. Participants particularly focused on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the recent war between Israel and Lebanon, and Iran’s stance as a regional power in the Middle East.

Other general issues of concern in the region were also raised, including the need for economic and cultural exchanges, the need to learn from past mistakes, and the importance of drawing a distinction between memories of the Holocaust and current politics. Members also stressed the need for greater efforts in international diplomacy to achieve a negotiated outcome, the importance of separating religion from the state, and the need to adhere to international resolutions on the situation.

There was widespread support for a negotiated two-state solution. Examples were also given of past experiences where peace accords had succeeded. Emphasis was also placed on the need to take into account the high differences in economic potential between the two parties, and to tackle the root-cause of the problem. On several occasions, Members mentioned the importance of co-operation between the OSCE and the European Union, as well as the potential role of the OSCE PA in assisting the peace process.







The OSCE Parliamentary Assembly

The OSCE PA 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.



*Secretary General
Spencer Oliver*

The International Secretariat

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 15.



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