

Session opens with addresses by OSCE and host officials, gender representative



OSCE Chair-in-Office Eamon Gilmore addresses the opening plenary.

More than 270 parliamentarians from 54 participating States opened the 21st Annual Session of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly Thursday.

Prime Minister Michel Roger of Monaco addressed the opening plenary session. “The Principality of Monaco is very proud to welcome the Annual Session of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly whose debates will shape the future of populations from Vancouver to Vladivostok,” the minister said.

The OSCE Chairman-in-Office, Irish Deputy Prime Minister Eamon Gilmore, said that just past its half-way mark, the aim of the Irish Chairmanship has been “to elaborate a set of priorities that would ensure balance and coherence of approach across all three dimensions.” Gilmore emphasised the “readiness of the Irish Chairmanship to work closely with the Parliamentary Assembly in order to further our common objectives.”

“The Parliamentary Assembly has always helped the OSCE expand its parliamentary diplomacy,” said Jean-François Robillon, Speaker of the National Council of Monaco. “By

coming to Monaco we have again shown that regardless the size of a country, all participating States have a valued voice in the OSCE.”

The five-day meeting will also include a Mediterranean Forum on Friday with participation from OSCE partners Algeria, Israel and Morocco as well as guests from Libya and the Palestinian National Council, invited by host officials.

In his speech, OSCE Secretary General Lamberto Zannier highlighted the vision for the Organization set out at the Astana OSCE Summit: “The 40th anniversary of the Helsinki Final Act in 2015 is an excellent opportunity to provide impetus to move the Organization forward. The OSCE will benefit from the continuity provided by the next three Chairs in order to consolidate progress on creating a Security Community.” He also discussed the OSCE’s role in facilitating the vote in Kosovo during Serbia’s recent elections.

Following the Secretary General’s remarks, he took questions from the parliamentarians, addressing, in particular how the PA can help to raise the profile of the Organization.

OSCE PA Special Representative on Gender Issues Hedy Fry presented her report on “Women as National, Ethnic, Linguistic, Racial and Religious Minorities.” Focusing on the status of minority women across the OSCE area, the report also provides an overview of the gender balance situation within the OSCE Secretariat, Institutions and field operations.

Dr. Fry had particular praise for the delegations of Kyrgyzstan and Turkey for their efforts to promote women representation in the OSCE PA.

22 Supplementary Items referred to General Committees; four to be debated in Plenary



Jean-Charles Gardetto recognizes a speaker during the Standing Committee meeting.

At Thursday’s meeting of the Assembly’s Standing Committee, 26 supplementary items were approved for general debate. Twelve were referred to the First Committee, four to the Second Committee and six to the Third Committee. Another four resolutions were sent to the plenary.

The Standing Committee meeting, chaired by Head of the Monegasque Delegation and PA Vice-President Jean-Charles Gardetto, included reports by Secretary General Spencer Oliver and OSCE PA Treasurer Roberto Battelli (Slovenia). Reporting on the financial health of the Assembly, Battelli noted that the PA had received a positive audit and has continued a high level of activities despite operating under a frozen budget for the past four years. The budget for the

2012-2013 Fiscal Year was frozen and approved unanimously.

Standing Committee delegates also heard reports from Special Representatives, Ad Hoc Committees, and recent election observation missions. Speaker of the Albanian Parliament Jozefina Topalli reported on the preparations for the upcoming Fall Meetings, to be held in Tirana.

Programme ~ Friday, 6 July

09.00 – 11.00	First Committee <i>Prince Pierre</i>
09.00 – 11.00	Third Committee <i>Camille Blanc</i>
11.15 – 13.15	Second Committee <i>Camille Blanc</i>
13:45 – 16:30	Mediterranean Forum <i>Prince Pierre</i>
17.30 – 22.00	Cultural Programme