

Session opens with addresses by Foreign Ministers of Turkey and Ukraine



OSCE Chair-in-Office Leonid Kozhara addresses the opening plenary.

OSCE PA President Wolfgang Grossruck opened the 22nd Annual Session of the OSCE PA in Istanbul Saturday with a call for greater parliamentary commitment to the OSCE.

“As members of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, we must commit ourselves to greater involvement in the activities of the OSCE throughout the year,” he said. “The OSCE Parliamentary Assembly can only play a strong role in the international community if the parliamentarians actively participate in our work.”

Grossruck’s call was echoed by the OSCE Chairman-in-Office, Ukrainian Foreign Minister Leonid Kozhara, who spoke about the need for re-engagement in the OSCE as the 40th anniversary of the Helsinki Final Act approaches. “It is high time to revitalize the culture of engagement that inspired the Helsinki Final Act of 1975,” Kozhara said.

Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu also spoke about the upcoming anniversary of the Helsinki Accords and said, “We need such a Helsinki initiative in the Middle East and North Africa.”

Delivering a message on behalf of Prime Minister of Turkey Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, the Head of the Turkish OSCE PA Delegation, Emin Onen, stated that the Parliamentary Assembly should play a leading role in the OSCE.

Cemil Çiçek, Speaker of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey, spoke about the need to combat racism and xenophobia as an OSCE priority. He also spoke about cyber security and the ongoing humanitarian crisis in Syria.

OSCE Secretary General Lamberto Zannier discussed the importance of increasing interparliamentary and intergovernmental co-operation, as well as strengthening the OSCE’s co-ordination with other international organizations. He further addressed the Organization’s finances and discussed the important work being done by the field operations.

Special Representative on Gender Issues Hedy Fry spoke about the gender aspects of conflict cycles, calling for an OSCE-wide implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security.

Hosted by Turkey’s Grand National Assembly, the Annual Session is being held under the theme “Helsinki +40” and runs through 3 July.

19 Supplementary Items referred to General Committees; five to be debated in Plenary

The Standing Committee approved 24 items for debate during the Annual Session. Five supplementary items will be debated in plenary, seven in the First Committee, seven in the Second Committee and five in the Third Committee. Four items failed to receive the 2/3 majority needed to be included on the main agenda for the Annual Session, including resolutions related to the situation in Kazakhstan, Kurds in Turkey, human rights in Russia, and the Yogyakarta Principles on sexual orientation and human rights.

The Standing Committee heard reports from Treasurer Roberto Battelli (Slovenia), who informed the committee of the Assembly’s financial health, and the chairs of the Subcommittee on the Rules of Procedure and the Ad Hoc Committee on Transparency and Reform of the OSCE, Joao Soares (Portugal) and Francois-Xavier de Donnea (Belgium), respectively.

After reporting that the Assembly’s budget has been frozen for four years in a row, Battelli informed the delegates that in order to maintain current levels of activities, a modest increase would be needed for the next fiscal year, which was agreed to unanimously. The Standing Committee also agreed to proposed changes to the Rules of Procedure, specifically regarding the number of valid signatures required for

supplementary items.

Following de Donnea’s report, the Standing Committee unanimously agreed to continue to adhere to the 1997 Co-operation Agreement on election observation based on the condition that all parties involved, including the Parliamentary Assembly, the ODIHR and other partner assemblies participating in the election observation mission, will begin inclusive early drafting of the preliminary post-election statement.

It was also announced during the Standing Committee that Switzerland will host the 2014 Fall Meetings, which will be held 2-5 October in Geneva. Ranko Krivokapic, Head of Montenegro’s Delegation, encouraged strong participation in the 2013 Fall Meetings being held this October in Budva. Head of the Finnish Delegation Ilkka Kanerva announced that Finland will host the 24th Annual Session in conjunction with the 40th anniversary of the Helsinki Final Act in 2015.

Programme ~ Sunday, 30 June

09.00 – 11.00 First Committee ~ Anadolu Auditorium

09.00 – 11.00 Second Committee ~ Rumeli A1

11.30 – 13.30 Third Committee ~ Anadolu Auditorium

14.00 – 15.30 Side Event ~ Anadolu Auditorium