

Welcome to the OSCE PA's 29th Annual Session

Message to Delegations from the President of the Assembly



Signing ceremony for the 29th Annual Session, 8 March 2022. Left to right: Lord McFall of Alcluith, Head of UK Delegation to the PA; John Whittingdale, PA President; Margaret Cederfelt, PA Secretary General; Roberto Montella, House of Commons Speaker; Lindsay Hoyle. Photo: ©UK Parliament/Jessica Taylor

Dear Delegates,

It brings me great pleasure to welcome you to Birmingham for the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly's 29th Annual Session.

For the first time in three years, OSCE parliamentarians will gather in-person for the most important event on the Assembly's calendar. For several days in Birmingham – the United Kingdom's second city – we will debate the most pressing issues facing the OSCE area and the world, amending and adopting resolutions that will culminate in the Birmingham Declaration. Beyond that, we will forge friendships, foster networks, build bridges, pursue dialogue, and reaffirm our common commitment to OSCE values in these challenging times.

I can think of no better place to do so than the marvel-

ous city of Birmingham, widely considered to be the cultural and commercial centre of the UK's Midlands region, less than an hour's drive from the birthplace of the great English playwright William Shakespeare.

But of course, while we celebrate that we are finally able to meet for an Annual Session after two years of the pandemic, we must recognize the fact that we are meeting in one of the most difficult times to ever face the OSCE. Just as we had begun to emerge from COVID-19, the Russian invasion of Ukraine shattered a fragile peace in Europe and has caused unimaginable suffering for countless innocent Ukrainian civilians. As we gather in Birmingham, let us remember that our primary task as members of OSCE Parliamentary Assembly is to promote peace and security based on the commitments of the Helsinki Final Act and Paris Charter. We owe it to the citizens of Ukraine and to all our member countries to make this peace a reality with respect for Ukraine's territorial integrity.

As we debate Russia's war against Ukraine and other issues during this difficult time, let us remember the words of Shakespeare, who wrote that "it is not enough to speak, but to speak true." In other words, we must not engage in empty talk, but make our dialogue matter.

Thank you for the trust you have placed in me as President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and many thanks to the UK Parliament for hosting this important meeting. I look forward to seeing you all in Birmingham and engaging in fruitful, meaningful debates.

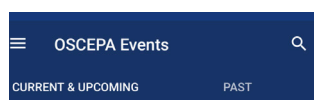
With warm regards,

Margareta Cederfelt, OSCE PA President

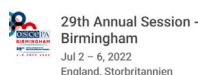


WiFi is available during the Annual Session on the network: OSCEPA_2022 Password: AS22BHX#.

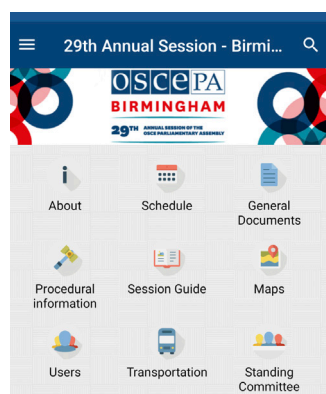
The Secretariat will be tweeting with the hashtag #OSCEPABirmingham22 and we encourage others to join the conversation. Look for us also on Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, LinkedIn and Flickr.



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The OSCE PA Events App will support delegates to the Birmingham Annual Session by providing easy access to timely information and relevant documentation. All draft resolutions, supplementary items, amendments, transportation schedules, and daily updates will be available on the app, and special announcements will be posted there to keep everyone informed about important developments.

The "OSCE PA Events" app can be downloaded on iTunes App Store or the Google App Store. (Event Password: asUK2022)