

OSCE PA's 33rd Annual Session opens in The Hague



Opening plenary session in The Hague, 4 July 2026

Hundreds of lawmakers from the OSCE area have gathered in The Hague for the OSCE PA's 33rd Annual Session, being held from 4 to 8 July under the theme "International Law and Shared Principles: Foundations for Security and Co-operation in the OSCE Area."

The opening plenary session included speeches by Dutch Prime Minister Rob Jetten, Senate President Mei Li Vos, House of Representatives President Thom van Campen, Head of the Dutch OSCE PA Delegation Farah Karimi, OSCE PA President Pere Joan Pons (Spain), and OSCE Chairman-in-Office Swiss Foreign Minister Ignazio Cassis. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy delivered a video address, urging the Assembly to intensify pressure on Russia to end its full-scale invasion of Ukraine. He called for stronger support for Ukraine's defence and greater use

of OSCE tools to achieve peace.

Speakers emphasized the significance of convening in The Hague, a hub for preventing conflict, resolving disputes, and ensuring accountability. Prime Minister Jetten noted that the OSCE was founded on the principle that security should rest on democracy, human rights, and a rules-based international order rather than force. Dutch parliamentary leaders highlighted that upholding international law is essential for peace and that democratic debate can prevent conflicts.

President Pons (Spain) stressed the need to defend core principles. He argued there must be no hierarchy of principles and that consistency is vital to preserve the rules-based order. Cassis underlined parliamentarians' crucial role in maintaining dialogue across political divides and rebuilding trust amid growing institutional mistrust.

Following the opening session, parliamentarians considered the supplementary item "Crimes against Humanity and War Crimes Committed by the Russian Federation: The Need to Release Prisoners of War and Civilian Detainees and Ensure the Return of Ukrainian Children," principally sponsored by Mykyta Poturaiev (Ukraine). It was adopted with one amendment.

Standing Committee approves budget, allocates supplementary items



The Assembly's Standing Committee meeting on 4 July

Meeting on Saturday, the OSCE PA's Standing Committee heard reports from President Pere Joan Pons (Spain), Treasurer Johan Büser (Sweden), and OSCE PA Secretary General Roberto Montella. In his remarks, the Treasurer presented the proposed budget which includes critical investments in key PA activities such as election observation. Following his presentation, the Standing Committee approved the budget for the 2026-2027 Financial Year.

Delegates also approved 14 supplementary items for debate in the general committees and plenary sessions.

Two SIs were allocated to the plenary, three to the First Committee, four to the Second Committee, and five to the Third Committee. SI #14 was not included on the agenda of the Annual Session.

President Pons thanked the Netherlands on behalf of the Parliamentary Assembly for hosting Annual Session and expressed his desire to continue growing the influence of the OSCE PA during his presidency and seize opportunities to increase its comparative advantage.

The Standing Committee also included a report on the Rules of Procedure as well as a discussion on increasing transparency and improving decision-making procedures.

In his report, Secretary General Montella reviewed the Assembly's priorities and programmatic activities, noting that it has maintained a strong emphasis on Ukraine and highlighting in particular the work the Parliamentary Support Team for Ukraine, as well as the activities of the Special Representatives working on various regions.

Side meetings tackle nuclear security, INTERPOL reform and regional co-operation

A number of side events and bilateral meetings took place Saturday, with parliamentarians tackling issues including nuclear weapons and the weaponization of INTERPOL. Sponsored by Mauro Del Barba, the side event "Countering Transnational Financial Repression: the Weaponisation of INTERPOL, AML/CFT and Cybersecurity Frameworks" featured discussions on the misuse of anti-money-laundering and counter-terrorism-financing frameworks by certain states to silence, surveil and economically coerce people beyond their borders.

The meeting of the Silk Road Group, chaired by Azay

Guliyev (Azerbaijan), focused on economic connectivity, while a meeting of OSCE PA Special Representative on Central Asia Angelos Syrigos (Greece) with delegations of Central Asian countries focused on how the PA can support regional co-operation.

The side event "Let's Start Worrying Again: What Can Parliamentarians Do to Reduce Nuclear Risks?," co-hosted by Canada, Sweden, Mongolia and the Open Nuclear Network, featured a lively discussion on reducing nuclear risks and the important role of parliamentarians in strengthening arms control.