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OSCE Parliamentary Assembly**

OSCE PA Autumn Meeting's Parliamentary Conference

'Fifty Years After Helsinki: The Role of Parliaments in Reinforcing the  
OSCE's Comprehensive Model of Peace and Security'

Dublin | 2 October 2024

*Check against delivery.*

A Chairde, [Dear Friends]

A Chomhaltaí den Tionól Parlaiminteach, Members of the Parliamentary  
Assembly,

As the Head of the Irish delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the  
Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), I am  
delighted to be able to address you today during the inaugural session of  
this Parliamentary Conference.

Echoing the sentiments of our previous speakers, I want to further extend  
a warm welcome to all our delegates, including fellow parliamentarians  
from the OSCE region, members of the diplomatic corps, keynote  
speakers and distinguished guests. You are all very welcome to Dublin in  
what I hope will prove to be a worthwhile and productive Autumn Meeting  
of the Assembly.

The Irish are strong supporters of the OSCE. As a founding state, Ireland  
has been an active OSCE participating State since the Helsinki Summit,  
almost 50 years ago. The organisation's vision coincided back then, and  
continues to coincide, with what has been a long-standing focus of Irish

foreign policy: the promotion of peace and security through multilateral cooperation and respect for human rights and the rule of law.

This conference's theme, 'Fifty Years After Helsinki: The Role of Parliaments in Reinforcing the OSCE's Comprehensive Model of Peace and Security,' signifies an important opportunity to strengthen our responsibility, as Parliamentarians and elected members of National Parliaments, to continue to uphold OSCE's principles and commitments.

As a member of the Political Affairs and Security Committee of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, I further welcome the opportunity to use this platform to highlight the active role played by parliaments in reinforcing the OSCE's comprehensive mandate for peace and Security.

By means of illustration, in September of this year, I had the privilege of serving as Special Coordinator and leader of the short-term OSCE observer mission to Azerbaijan in the context of the country's early parliamentary elections, in what was a common endeavour involving the Assembly and the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR).

In the context of that endeavour, the Assembly and the ODIHR worked in cooperation to determine whether Azerbaijan's elections complied with OSCE commitments and other international standards for democratic elections. In doing so, we worked towards making an important contribution to consolidating democracy in the OSCE region.

While this is just an example, it demonstrates the role of parliamentary diplomacy in working towards building bridges and promoting cooperation and genuine dialogue.

Moreover, parliaments, as the direct representatives of citizens, have an active role to play in raising awareness of the mandate of the OSCE, as well as of the issues faced by the OSCE. As we navigate complex challenges and crises that seriously threaten global peace, security, and understanding, this is now more important than ever.

As we approach the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Helsinki Final Act, it is important therefore that we maintain the spirit of unity that shaped the mandate of the OSCE within the global parliamentary community, and that we reinvigorate this spirit.

To conclude, I reiterate my gratitude for the opportunity to join you today to briefly highlight the important role played by parliaments in this context. I wish you all a productive two days ahead and look forward to your discussions.

Go raibh míle maith agaibh

Thank you.