

The Secretary General

To:
Members of the OSCE PA Standing Committee

CC:
Members of the OSCE PA Bureau

Copenhagen, 28 April 2020

Dear Members of the Standing Committee,

I hope you and your families are well in these difficult and uncertain times as the COVID-19 pandemic continues to spread in our countries. I am writing to update you about the main points discussed yesterday by our Bureau during its official online meeting.

As you all know, our Annual Session scheduled for July in Vancouver had to be unfortunately cancelled. Moreover, following an official communication from authorities just a few days ago, also the Autumn Meeting in San Marino has to be called off. As for other activities, including election observation missions, conferences and visits, we will continue to monitor the evolving situation and update you promptly on when and how they will be able to resume.

The Cancellation of the Annual Session brings along a series of implications:

1. Elected PA Officers will remain in office until the 2021 Annual Session, thereby freezing the current composition of the Bureau for one more year. This stems from our Rules of Procedure, which clearly state that elections take place during annual sessions.
2. In the absence of an official meeting of the Standing Committee, consensus (minus one) on the OSCE PA 2020/21 Budget, as required in Rule 35. 6, will be established by means of a written silence procedure. You will receive a separate communication on this matter in the coming weeks. Please be informed that the Bureau, upon proposal of the Treasurer, is recommending a zero-nominal increase of the current budget and the use of savings as discount for States' contributions, as a sign of solidarity and responsibility in this hardship period.
3. Acknowledging the need to keep the political debate alive among all Members, the Secretariat has launched a cycle of *Parliamentary Web Dialogues* on matters of topical importance for our work. Please see attached a document with a short concept and a list of upcoming events.
4. The next statutory meetings will be the Bureau Meeting in Tirana in December on the margins of the OSCE Ministerial Council and the Winter Meeting in Vienna, in February 2021.
5. Consultations are currently being undertaken by the International Secretariat with the Annual Sessions planned hosts for 2020 and 2021 regarding the venue for the next Annual Session.

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Attached to this letter, you can also find the *OSCE PA – COVID Compact*, my Report on *readapting the Assembly to challenges in the time of the COVID Pandemic*, which summarizes all our efforts, projects and the relevance of the PA in this particular time.

Please note that we are planning to hold an online meeting for Secretaries of Delegation on 12 May, and then possibly also an informal Standing Committee meeting before the beginning of the summer. You will receive detailed information in due course.

I take the opportunity to inform you that both OSCE PA Offices in Copenhagen and Vienna will remain temporarily closed at least until 10 May and Staff will continue to regularly telecommute from home.

Finally, I wish to renew you my strongest gratitude for your continuous engagement and precious support to our work.

Yours sincerely,



Roberto Montella
Secretary General