

Parliamentarians Discuss Oversight of Armed Forces



More than 60 parliamentarians from 30 OSCE participating States and partners for cooperation met in Vienna on 24-25 May for the “Conference on Parliamentary Oversight of Armed Forces, and Police and Security Forces”. The Conference, which was organized jointly by the OSCE PA and the OSCE Conflict Prevention Centre, was also attended by representatives of several Governments of the OSCE participating states, academics and other experts.

In his keynote presentation Bruce George, President of the OSCE PA and Chair of the Defence Committee of the British House of Commons, discussed the “Roles and Responsibilities of Parliaments

and Governments to Ensure Effective State Military, and Police and Security Structures”. He also considered how the new security challenges affect national legislation and the role of parliamentarians. (Text on the OSCE PA website)

Other introductory speakers included Tone Tingsgård (Sweden), Vice-President of the OSCE PA, Hugo Coveliers (Belgium) Head of the Belgian Delegation to the OSCE PA, Karganbek Samakov (Kyrgyzstan), Chairman of the Armed Forces Committee of Parliament, Adrian Severin (Romania), President Emeritus of the OSCE PA, Afif Demirkiran (Turkey), Member of Parliament, Alcee Hastings (USA) Vice-President of the OSCE PA, Panayotis Kammenos (Greece), Head of the Greek Delegation to the OSCE PA and Velimir Jukic (Bosnia and Herzegovina), Deputy Speaker of the Parliament.

The Conference was co-chaired by Bruce George, Alcee Hastings and Ambassador Lamberto Zannier, Director of the OSCE Conflict Prevention Centre. Separate working sessions were chaired by Bjørn Hernæs, Head of the Norwegian Delegation to the OSCE PA, Roberto Battelli, Head of the Slovenian Delegation to the OSCE PA and Arta Dade, Head of the Albanian Delegation to the OSCE PA.



In his concluding remarks Alcee Hastings emphasized the need to further develop the way in which parliamentary oversight of armed forces is implemented at national levels. He pointed out that security is a broad concept and took note of the fact that in these issues there are several cultural and national differences amongst the participating States. Mr. Hastings also made a number of suggestions for parliaments and parliamentarians to consider. (The full text is available on www.oscepa.org)

