

News from Copenhagen

Efthymiou and Battelli re-elected, Belgrade Declaration adopted



Petros Efthymiou



Roberto Battelli

The 20th Annual Session of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly concluded on 10 July with the elections of Assembly Officers and the adoption of the Belgrade Declaration, available in English, French and Russian.

Parliamentarians met from 6-10 July in Belgrade under the theme of "Strengthening the OSCE's Effectiveness and Efficiency -- A new start after the Astana Summit." The Belgrade Declaration, with recommendations for national parliaments and the OSCE on economic, security and human rights issues, will now be forwarded to the parliaments and foreign ministries of OSCE participating States.

The parliamentarians also adopted resolutions on issues including human rights in Belarus, cyber security, human trafficking, internet freedom, hunger, nuclear safety and organ trafficking.

In plenary session on Sunday, the Assembly adopted an item of urgency regarding the process for appointing the OSCE Secretary General. The resolution expresses concern

over the lack of transparency in the process and calls on the OSCE Permanent Council to review its procedures.

Parliamentarians re-elected President Petros Efthymiou to a one-year term and Treasurer Roberto Battelli (Slovenia) to a two-year term on the final day of the Session. Vice-Presidents elected to three-year terms were: Wolfgang Grossruck (Austria), Walburga Habsburg Douglas (Sweden) and Tonino Picula (Croatia).

In addition, Officers were elected to the three General Committees. The new Committee leadership is as follows:

General Committee on Political Affairs and Security

- Chair Karl-Georg Wellmann (Germany)
- Vice-Chair Susanne Bratli (Norway)
- Rapporteur Vilija Aleknaite Abramikiene (Lithuania)

General Committee on Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and Environment

- Chair Serhiy Shevchuk (Ukraine)
- Vice-Chair Bruce Hyer (Canada)
- Rapporteur Tony Lloyd (United Kingdom)

General Committee on Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions

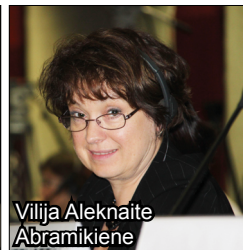
- Chair Matteo Mecacci (Italy)
- Vice-Chair Alain Neri (France)
- Rapporteur Coskun Coruz (Netherlands)



Karl-Georg Wellmann



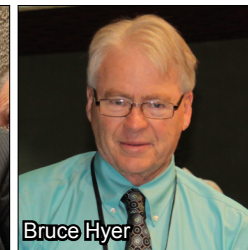
Susanne Bratli



Vilija Aleknaite Abramikiene



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Bruce Hyer



Tony Lloyd



Matteo Mecacci



Alain Neri



Coskun Coruz



Wolfgang Grossruck



Walburga Habsburg Douglas



Tonino Picula

Soares named Special Representative for the South Caucasus



Joao Soares

Joao Soares (Portugal) was named on 10 July Special Representative for the South Caucasus, including for the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

OSCE Parliamentary Assembly President Petros Efthymiou announced the appointment Sunday in the plenary of the 20th Annual Session after consulting with the delegations

of Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia.

"I am honoured to fill this role to help build stronger bridges between parliamentarians in the area, reinforce ongoing discussions throughout the Caucasus, and do what we can to support the OSCE Minsk Group process to bring about lasting peace in the region," Soares said.

Mr. Soares, a former President of the Assembly, has traveled extensively in the region, including to Georgia, Azerbaijan and Armenia, in the last eight years.