

News from Copenhagen

Migliori urges greater co-operation in address to IPU

OSCE Parliamentary Assembly President Riccardo Migliori advocated strengthening regional inter-parliamentary co-operation, especially in relation to the Mediterranean region, in a speech Monday at the 127th Session of the Inter-Parliamentary Union in Quebec.

He proposed that all regional organizations connected to the Mediterranean meet once a year as a way to more effectively utilize time and financial resources. "Organizations could adopt a rotation to determine hosting responsibilities," he suggested. "In votes at our annual sessions in 2010 and 2011, our parliamentarians voted to employ just this co-operative approach."

Noting that the OSCE was created in the context of the Cold War at a time of great uncertainty, he emphasized that its founding purpose was "to create a world of stability, to forever proclaim that there can be no lasting security unless we have lasting respect for human rights; and that economic and environmental co-operation should hold as much weight in our international politics as military might."

The president lamented however that within the OSCE region, unresolved conflicts remain. "They are not the Syrias and Sudans that often capture global headlines but they are real, violent and costing thousands of people the right to live in their own homes in peace," said Migliori.

He underlined in particular Armenia and Azerbaijan's ongoing dispute over the territory of Nagorno-Karabakh. "The OSCE Parliamentary Assembly regularly works to promote dialogue and solutions to this and other conflicts, including the fallout from the 2008 war in Georgia and the frozen conflict in Moldova over Transnistria," he noted.

Highlighting the work of the OSCE Mission to Moldova,



he noted that the organization is a key player in the Transnistrian conflict settlement, work that is bolstered by the PA's Parliamentary Team on Moldova. The Assembly adds value to the conflict resolution process by promoting dialogue between political leaders in Chisinau and Tiraspol that is critical to peace and stability.

"In short, we keep the players in the room," he said.

Migliori also highlighted OSCE workshops on water security and desertification in the Mediterranean and the potential for even greater co-operation on these and other matters.

"From the Arctic to the Adriatic, everywhere I go I hear the same willingness to strengthen co-operation, but we must go beyond rhetorical promises and start making real plans," he said.

The president was accompanied at the IPU by OSCE PA Secretary General Spencer Oliver. Head of the PA's Belgian Delegation Francois-Xavier de Donnea also participated.

Following his participation in the IPU Assembly, Migliori met with the ambassador of Mongolia to Italy in Rome on Wednesday. The meeting was held in view of a possible presidential visit to Mongolia next year. An Asian Partner for Co-operation, Mongolia has applied to become the 57th OSCE participating State.

Large PA observer delegations deploying to the U.S. and Ukraine

The OSCE PA is sending large parliamentary delegations to observe upcoming elections in Ukraine and the United States. Headed by OSCE PA Vice-President Walburga Habsburg Douglas (Sweden), the OSCE PA delegation to Ukraine consists of 110 members of parliament from 25 countries. More than 100 parliamentarians will also travel to the United States to observe the 6 November general elections. Led by former PA President Joao Soares, the U.S. election observation mission will also be joined by President Riccardo Migliori.

Habsburg Douglas and Soares have been appointed by the OSCE Chair-in-Office as Special Co-ordinators to lead the short-term OSCE observer missions, and will deliver the post-election statements on behalf of the OSCE in press conferences in Kyiv and Washington, respectively.

"I am excited to lead the short-term OSCE observer mission to Ukraine for Sunday's parliamentary elections," said Habsburg Douglas. "These elections are crucial for the future

of Ukraine, and the large number of OSCE observers on the ground testifies to the importance that OSCE participating States and parliaments attach to this process."

Habsburg Douglas has broad experience observing elections and led the election observation mission in Kyrgyzstan in 2011.

Also an experienced election observer, Soares led the OSCE PA election observation missions to the United States in 2008 and 2010. "We've been watching the debates and the competitive campaign up to this point, but look forward to observing the home stretch and election day activity next month," said Soares.

The PA observation mission to Ukraine is being organized by Deputy Secretary General Tina Schoen and the mission to the U.S. by Special Representative Andreas Nothelle. Both Schoen and Amb. Nothelle have led dozens of OSCE election observation missions throughout the OSCE area.