

## Parliamentary Assembly holds successful Autumn Meeting in Skopje



Trajko Veljanoski delivers speech during the Autumn Meeting's opening session, 30 September 2016.

Some 170 parliamentarians from across the OSCE's 57 participating States gathered in Skopje from 30 September to 2 October for the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly's 15th Autumn Meeting. Consisting of a Mediterranean Forum, Parliamentary Conference, and a meeting of the Standing Committee, the Autumn Meeting provided an opportunity for parliamentarians from across the OSCE region to discuss the theme of "Strengthening Confidence-Building Measures and Good Governance in the OSCE Region," and the role of parliamentarians in fostering co-operation to address ongoing and emerging crises in the OSCE area.

In her speech to the opening session on 30 September, OSCE PA President Christine Muttonen (MP, Austria) stressed the need for confidence-building in order to "engage with each other and search for common ground."

"We must widen our perspective and see the world not only from our national point of view but also through the eyes of our neighbors, partners and even opponents," she said. "This is how we build confidence and ultimately replace the threat of conflict with long-term stability."

Speakers from the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia included:

- Trajko Veljanoski, President of Parliament
- Renata Deskoska, Vice-President and Head of OSCE PA Delegation
- Antonijo Miloshoski, Vice-President of the Parliament and Chair of the Foreign Policy Committee

- Oliver Spasovski, Minister of Internal Affairs
- Other speakers during the three-day meeting included:
- Lamberto Zannier, OSCE Secretary General
  - Halil Yurdakul Yigitguden, OSCE Economic and Environmental Coordinator
  - Filippo Lombardi, Chair of the OSCE PA's Ad Hoc Committee on Migration

The Mediterranean Forum was opened by OSCE PA Special Representative on Mediterranean Affairs Michel Voisin (MP, France) on 30 September. Addressing the promotion of security and co-operation in the Mediterranean, the meeting included presentations by Amb. Clemens Koja, the Chairman of the OSCE Contact Group with the Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation, and Malin Larsson-Grave from the European Asylum Support Office.

Session one of the Parliamentary Conference was held under the theme "Good Governance as a Basis for Fostering Economic Development in the OSCE Region." In opening the session, OSCE PA Vice-President Azay Guliyev noted that promoting economic growth should be seen as part of the overall response to challenges such as migration, noting the importance of good governance in this regard.

Session two featured a roundtable event with heads of OSCE field operations in South East Europe, who discussed issues related to the theme "Developing Democratic Institutions and Human Rights in South East Europe: The Role of the OSCE." In opening the session, OSCE PA Vice-President Roberto Battelli (MP, Slovenia), the Special Representative on South East Europe, offered comments on the progress achieved by the region over the past two decades.

The final session of the Autumn Meeting was held under the theme of "Improving Human Rights-Based Governance of International Migration," with participation of dozens of parliamentarians engaging in a wide-ranging debate and exchanging ideas on political responses to the migrant and refugee crisis.

## OSCE Gender Adviser meets with PA Secretary General in Copenhagen

The OSCE's Senior Adviser on Gender Issues, Amb. Miroslava Beham, visited the OSCE PA's International Secretariat on Tuesday, meeting with Secretary General Roberto Montella and staff for discussions on the OSCE's work on gender mainstreaming. Amb. Beham expressed appreciation for the Parliamentary Assembly's leadership on the issue and particularly the efforts of OSCE PA Special Representative on Gender Issues Hedy Fry (MP, Canada).

Discussions focused on how the Parliamentary Assembly can continue contributing to the OSCE's gender-related work. Amb. Beham noted that she looked forward to meeting with OSCE PA President Christine Muttonen (MP, Austria)



Roberto Montella and Miroslava Beham at the International Secretariat in Copenhagen, 4 October 2016.

in Vienna in the near future to continue consultations on furthering co-operation.