

News from Copenhagen

PA's Tsereteli and Montella wrap up U.S. visit with meetings in Washington



OSCE PA President George Tsereteli and Vice-President Roger Wicker in Washington, DC, 8 February 2018.

OSCE PA President George Tsereteli (Georgia) and Secretary General Roberto Montella were in Washington from 5 to 9 February, meeting with Members of Congress, officials from the U.S. National Security Council and the State Department, and representatives of NGOs. In discussions, Tsereteli and Montella noted the essential role of the OSCE as a forum for dialogue and stressed the importance of continued U.S. engagement in the Organization.

A meeting with OSCE PA Vice-President Sen. Roger

Wicker on 8 February focused on topics such as human rights, election integrity and the crisis in and around Ukraine. Ukraine was also in focus during a meeting Tsereteli held with representatives of the State Department and White House.

Tsereteli and Montella met with former OSCE PA President Rep. Alcee Hastings, OSCE PA Special Representative on Human Trafficking Issues Chris Smith, and OSCE PA Special Representative on Anti-Semitism, Racism and Intolerance Sen. Ben Cardin hosted Tsereteli and Montella for meetings that touched on various issues on the international agenda and the importance of robust U.S. participation in the PA.

Meetings were also held with OSCE PA Ad Hoc Committee on Countering Terrorism Vice-Chair Rep. Richard Hudson; U.S. Helsinki Commissioners Rep. Randy Hultgren and Sen. John Boozman; former OSCE PA Vice-President Robert Aderholt; and Rep. Ted Poe. The PA officials also participated in a forum on geopolitics in South East Europe on 6 Feb. The Washington leg of the U.S. visit followed a visit to UN headquarters in New York the previous week.

Counter-terrorism efforts focus of Ad Hoc Committee's visit to Belgium

A delegation of seven members of the OSCE PA Ad Hoc Committee on Countering Terrorism (CCT) led by Makis Voridis (Greece) was in Brussels last week to learn from the Belgian experience in countering terrorism. The visit, which took place 8-9 February, offered the opportunity to discuss the most pressing challenges stemming from terrorism and violent extremism, as well as to highlight the important contributions of the OSCE in this complex area.

On the first day of the visit CCT members held meetings with Minister of Justice Koen Geens, Deputy Head of the General Intelligence and Security Service Frank Claeys, Belgian Federal Prosecutor Frédéric Van Leeuw, Director of the Belgian Coordination Unit Paul Van Tighelst, Director of Analysis at the Belgian State Security Service Peter Lanssens, President of the Parliamentary Committee for the Investigation of the Terrorist Attacks of 22nd March 2016 Patrick Dewael, and Principal Adviser of the EU Counter-Terrorism Coordinator Christiane Hoehn. The second day



Committee Chair Makis Voridis and Liaison Officer and Advisor Marco Bonabello in Brussels, 8 February 2018.

included meetings with the Mayor of Vilvoorde Hans Bonte, and the Office of the Wallonia-Brussels Federation.

In meetings, Chair Voridis highlighted that parliamentarians must remain united against terrorism and strive to add value in this domain. The visit also enabled parliamentarians to learn more about Belgium's response to the terrorist attacks of 22 March 2016. The next meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee on Countering Terrorism will take place in Vienna, Austria, on 22 February 2018 on the margins of the Winter Meeting.

OSCE PA 17th Winter Meeting set to begin next week in Vienna

The OSCE PA will hold its 17th Winter Meeting at the Hofburg Congress Centre in Vienna on 22-23 February, featuring debates on "fake news," climate change, arms control, and more. The opening session will include speeches by OSCE PA President George Tsereteli, Italy's Undersecretary of State of Foreign Affairs and International Co-operation, Vincenzo Amendola, representing the Italian Chairmanship-in-Office of the OSCE, and OSCE Secretary General Thomas

Greminger.

The three general committees will meet to hear from government representatives of OSCE countries and debate issues related to political and security affairs, economics and the environment, and human rights. The Winter Meeting will conclude with a joint session of the three committees with reports on gender issues, migration, and terrorism, followed by debates. More information is available at www.oscepa.org.