

OSCE parliamentarians share national experiences on autonomy at high-level forum

An online forum hosted by the Office of the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities on Tuesday was addressed by PA President George Tsereteli (Georgia), Treasurer Peter Juel-Jensen (Denmark), and a number of other parliamentarians. The event, entitled “Functioning Autonomy as a Strategy for Inclusive Governance: International Practice and Moldovan Experience,” was co-hosted by the OSCE PA and the Moldovan Parliament.

Emphasizing the importance of well-equipped local institutions, President Tsereteli said in his opening remarks that decentralization in itself is not the solution to build more resilient regions. He underlined the need to use all available tools to prevent, mediate, and peacefully resolve conflicts, highlighting in particular the role of the HCNM.

Juel-Jensen provided an overview of the relationship between Greenland and Denmark, noting that questions of autonomy are always complicated and that to be successful, autonomy must be based on mutual respect and understanding.

Also offering a parliamentary perspective at the event were Mats Lofström, who represents the autonomous Aaland Islands in the Finnish Parliament, and several Moldovan MPs including Speaker Zinaida Greceanii and Deputy Speaker Vlad Batrîn-



President Tsereteli addresses HCNM event, 29 Sept. 2020.

cea, as well as members of the Moldovan PA delegation.

Former OSCE HCNM and current OSCE PA High-Level Expert Lamberto Zannier addressed the opening session and moderated session two, focused on creating political conditions for functioning Gagauz autonomy in Moldova. Other speakers included Gianni Buquicchio, President of the Venice Commission, Council of Europe; and Claus Neukirch, Head of the OSCE Mission to Moldova.

The event was moderated by Christophe Kamp, Director and Officer-in-Charge, Office of the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities.

OSCE PA CCT Chair Lopatka meets with Amb. Zannier and OSCE experts in Vienna



Lamberto Zannier and Reinhold Lopatka meet on 30 Sept. 2020.

Chair of the OSCE PA's Ad Hoc Committee on Countering Terrorism (CCT) and Deputy Head of Austrian Delegation

Reinhold Lopatka visited the Vienna Liaison Office Wednesday and held talks with OSCE PA High-Level Expert Lamberto Zannier and staff. Topics of discussion included Amb. Zannier's work pursuing a parliamentary contribution to resolve the ongoing OSCE crisis, future joint events with the PA and the OSCE's governmental side, as well as upcoming CCT activities.

On Sept. 24, Lopatka met with a number of counter-terrorism experts from the OSCE's executive structures in Vienna and presented the CCT's plans. The meetings last week were aimed at consolidating the PA's strategic partnerships against violent extremism in times of pandemic.

Georgia EOM deadline reminder

Delegations are kindly reminded that those wishing to participate in the election observation mission to Georgia's parliamentary elections on 31 October are asked to complete and return registration documents to the International Secretariat by Friday 2 October 2020 (23:59 CET) at eom@oscepa.dk.

OSCE PA leadership pursues parliamentary diplomacy to de-escalate Nagorno-Karabakh confrontation

OSCE PA President George Tsereteli has been active this week pursuing dialogue and de-escalation between Armenia and Azerbaijan following armed clashes along the Line of Contact in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict zone. Issuing a press statement on Sunday calling on both sides to cease hostilities and recommit to negotiations under the auspices of the OSCE Minsk Group, Tsereteli stressed that he is “deeply concerned by this most recent escalation, particularly by reports of civilian deaths and the threat that it poses to regional security.” He stressed that “there is no alternative to a political solution.”

The President followed up on this statement by holding phone conversations with the Speaker of Parliament of Azerbaijan, Sahiba Gafarova, and the Head of Armenia's

Delegation to the OSCE PA, Hayk Konjoryan. In talks, President Tsereteli stressed that effective negotiations must be pursued for a concrete outcome based on norms of international law and principles of the Helsinki Final Act, including refraining from use of force, inviolability of frontiers, territorial integrity of states, peaceful settlement of disputes, non-intervention in internal affairs, respect for human rights, self-determination of peoples, and fulfillment of obligations under international law.

Efforts to continue dialogue on the parliamentary level are ongoing and OSCE PA Secretary General Roberto Montella has said that while the Minsk Group is the OSCE platform where this dispute ultimately needs to be settled the PA will continue to offer a forum for dialogue.