

PA President and SG participate in IPU Speakers Conference, hold meetings in Vienna



Roberto Montella, Margareta Cederfelt and Valentina Matviyenko in Vienna, 8 Sept.

OSCE PA President Margareta Cederfelt (Sweden) and Secretary General Roberto Montella have been in Vienna this week, participating in the Fifth World Conference of Speakers of Parliament and holding a series of bilateral meetings with counterparts. On the margins of the conference, President Cederfelt and SG Montella met today with Chairwoman of the Russian Federation Council Valentina Matviyenko, with discussions touching on the upcoming Russian parliamentary elections and other issues. President Cederfelt and SG Montella exchanged views with

Matviyenko on current developments in the OSCE region, and discussed the decision of the OSCE PA to not observe upcoming parliamentary elections in Russia, as well as Russia's role within the Parliamentary Assembly.

In a meeting Monday with Georgian Speaker Kakha Kuchava, former Head of the Georgian Delegation to the OSCE PA, Cederfelt and Montella discussed upcoming elections, implementation of election recommendations, judicial reform and engagement of the Georgian Delegation in the OSCE PA. Cederfelt also met this week with Tanzila Narbaeva, Chairperson of the Senate of Uzbekistan.

SG Montella held meetings in Vienna with OSCE Secretary General Helga Schmid and CIS Inter-Parliamentary Assembly Secretary General Dmitry Kobitsky to build synergies and identify areas of co-operation within the OSCE framework and with partners. The meeting with SG Kobitsky focused in particular on co-ordinating election observation activities.

LIVESTREAM: Enhancing the Implementation of UNSCR 1325 across the OSCE Region

From 14:30 – 17:00 CEST today, the PA is holding an online event as part of its Call for Action – Helsinki +50 initiative to discuss how political leaders and parliamentarians across the OSCE region can further the Women, Peace and Security agenda. It will livestream here: <https://bit.ly/3nebRwD>

OSCE PA's Fry and Cederfelt address Summit of Women Speakers of Parliament



Hedy Fry addressing the Summit of Women Speakers of Parliament by video link, 6 Sept.

OSCE PA President Margareta Cederfelt (Sweden) and Special Representative on Gender Issues Hedy Fry (Canada) addressed the 13th Summit of Women Speakers of Parliament on Monday.

Special Representative Fry opened Session One, pointing out that COVID has shown how women are essential in every way, noting that they have worked in often difficult and dangerous conditions throughout the pandemic. Fry gave particular recognition to women in the health care sector, as well as grocery workers and other essential professions with a high proportion of women, and noted that unpaid work

such as home care increased exponentially during the pandemic.

Fry pointed out that although they are clearly essential, women continue to be underrepresented at the upper levels of decision making. As parliamentarians and policymakers, it is important to incorporate the interests of women and to always remember principles of inclusiveness and intersectionality, Fry said.

Speaking on the topic of gender-based violence, President Cederfelt highlighted the Taliban's recent takeover of Afghanistan as an example of the sorts of threats women and girls continue to face. "The collapse of Afghanistan is a cold and painful reminder that in many parts of the world, women remain in a precarious situation," Cederfelt said. The challenge of violence against women is a threat to society as a whole, the President pointed out, and therefore it is necessary to address it head on through co-ordinated efforts.

The session that Cederfelt spoke at was moderated by former OSCE PA President Christine Muttonen.

Parliamentary contributions to conflict resolution highlighted at Annual Security Review Conference

OSCE PA High-Level Expert Lamberto Zannier represented the Assembly at the OSCE's Annual Security Review Conference last week, focusing his remarks on parliamentary contributions to early warning, conflict prevention, crisis management, conflict resolution and post-conflict rehabilitation.

Highlighting several examples of the added value of the OSCE PA's engagement in the conflict cycle, Ambassador Zannier stressed that the work of parliamentarians complements the role of the OSCE's executive structures by fostering direct engagement of participating States through

their parliamentary delegations. This complementarity, he emphasized, should be better recognized and should ideally lead in the future to even stronger co-ordination between the different components of the OSCE, in full respect of existing mandates.

Zannier addressed working session four, held on 2 September, along with speakers from the Ukrainian Women's Congress, the UN and the OSCE. It was moderated by Amb. Tuula Yrjölä, Director of the OSCE's Conflict Prevention Centre.