

PA Bureau members discuss current international political issues and Assembly work

In an online meeting on 10 September, the OSCE PA Bureau discussed ongoing PA activities and upcoming meetings. President Margareta Cederfelt (Sweden) reported on appointments she has made of Special Representatives and members of Ad Hoc Committees. Cederfelt also informed the Bureau on the PA's work in recent weeks on the crisis in Afghanistan, noting that discussions have been held with PA Delegations and OSCE Missions in neighboring countries in the region.

OSCE PA Secretary General Roberto Montella reported to the Bureau on work of the International Secretariat, including a number of staffing changes and new office premises in Vienna. On election observation, he highlighted ongoing preparation for missions to Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan, and proposed modalities for the upcoming Autumn Meeting. The Bureau agreed to the Secretary General's proposal to hold a virtual Autumn Meeting,



International Secretariat in Copenhagen, 10 Sept.

with dates to be announced in due time.

Vice-President Kristian Vigenin (Bulgaria), the recently appointed Chair of the Ad Hoc Committee on Migration, reported on upcoming activities of the committee, including possible field visits. Special Representatives also reported on their priorities for the coming weeks and months. Other topics of discussion related to the Assembly's Rules of Procedure.

OSCE PA Helsinki +50 event focuses on enhancing the role of women in peace and security

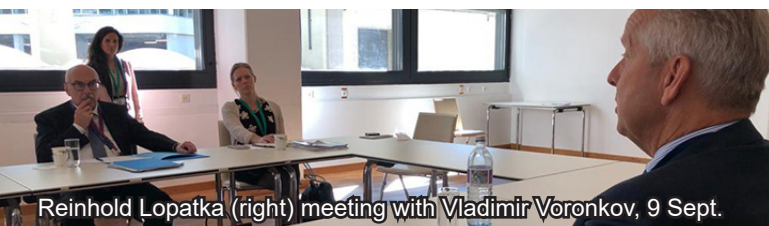
The OSCE PA held an event last week as part of its Call for Action – Helsinki +50 initiative to focus attention on how political leaders and parliamentarians across the OSCE region can further the Women, Peace and Security agenda. With a particular focus on promoting implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325, the 8 September event featured welcoming remarks from PA President Margareta Cederfelt (Sweden) and Secretary General Roberto Montella, as well as panelists OSCE PA Special Representative on Gender Issues Hedy Fry (Canada); Special Representative on the South Caucasus Kari Henriksen (Norway); Amb. Neil Bush, Chair of the OSCE MenEngage Network; Amb. Tuula Yrjölä, Director of the OSCE Conflict Prevention Centre; and concluding remarks by Amb. Lamberto Zannier, OSCE PA High-Level Expert.

Several OSCE PA members participated in the discussion,

including Vice-President Irene Charalambides (Cyprus), who serves as Special Representative on Fighting Corruption, and Vice-President Askar Shakirov (Kazakhstan), who is Special Representative on Sustainable Development Goals. OSCE parliamentarians shared experiences from their countries and offered observations on the state of gender relations and the role of women in security and peacebuilding. Summarizing the debate, Amb. Zannier underscored the importance of following best practices in promoting the Women, Peace and Security agenda. He also noted the importance of fostering more political attention to ensure implementation of UNSCR 1325, and including parliamentarians in related initiatives of the OSCE.

SG Montella also addressed the meeting, noting that by embracing gender issues, we not only strengthen the prospects of conflict resolution, but also strengthen the OSCE as a whole.

CCT Chair meets with UNOCT Under-Secretary-General to strengthen PA contribution to counter-terrorism



Reinhold Lopatka (right) meeting with Vladimir Voronkov, 9 Sept.

Chair of the OSCE PA's Ad Hoc Committee on Countering Terrorism (CCT) Reinhold Lopatka (Austria) met 9 September with Vladimir Voronkov, Under-Secretary-General of the UN Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT), to reinforce co-operation between the two institutions following their signing last year of a Memorandum of Understanding.

Lopatka and Voronkov discussed the development of a co-

ordination mechanism between interparliamentary fora and the UNOCT, noting that this would be an important tool in ensuring a coherent and complementary approach in fighting terrorism with the involvement of parliamentarians.

The CCT, Lopatka told Voronkov, has focused its priorities in recent months on issues such as promoting prosecution, rehabilitation and reintegration of foreign terrorist fighters, and supporting victims of terrorism and strengthening the role of victims' associations. Lopatka also reported on ongoing OSCE PA efforts to organize regional policy dialogues on critical items on the counter-terrorism agenda.

Voronkov pledged to support future PA efforts on issues related to border security, victims of terrorism, prevention of radicalization online and possible threats stemming from the latest developments in Afghanistan.

OSCE PA Special Representative Karimi meets with OSCE HCNM for discussions on minority issues

On Monday, Head of the OSCE PA's Dutch Delegation and Special Representative on Youth Engagement Farah Karimi met OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities Kairat Abdrakhmanov of Kazakhstan in The Hague. The discussion focused on the activities the HCNM and its recommendations to participating States in the field of education and languages. They also exchanged views on the role of the OSCE PA as a forum for dialogue and parliamentarians' role in promoting the rights of minorities and easing ethnic tensions.



Kairat Abdrakhmanov and Farah Karimi