

## High-level OSCE PA delegation underlines trust-based dialogue with Turkey



OSCE PA delegation and Speaker Mustafa Şentop in Ankara, 9 November 2021

A high-level delegation from the OSCE PA led by President Margareta Cederfelt (Sweden) and comprising Vice-President Azay Guliyev (Azerbaijan) and Vice-President Reinhold Lopatka (Austria) completed on 13 November an official visit to Turkey.

In Ankara the PA delegation met with President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, Speaker Mustafa Şentop, Interior Minister Süleyman Soylu, Justice Minister Abdülhamit Gül, Deputy Foreign Minister Yavuz Selim Kiran, and the Delegation of Turkey to the OSCE PA led by Selami Altınok. Discussions with major political parties represented in the Grand National Assembly offered an opportunity to assess their role in Turkey's new system of government, and to raise concerns over the criminalization of political speech and limits to parliamentary immunity.

Discussions focused on the crucial role played by Turkey in addressing major OSCE challenges, and included calls for greater international co-operation and solidarity to manage refugee flows, effectively prevent terrorism and violent extremism, and advance comprehensive security. Conversations with Turkish interlocutors also touched on concerns over racism and intolerance in the OSCE region, which were addressed in a resolution adopted during the OSCE PA's 2021 Remote Session.

"Considering its challenging geographic environment, including its proximity to conflict zones and to migration routes, Turkey is an essential partner to preserve stability in the OSCE region," said President Cederfelt.

Meetings with UNHCR Representative Philippe Leclerc and Turkish Red Crescent President Kerem Kınık further highlighted the extent of Turkey's support to the largest refugee community in the world. In the context of the 2021 UN Climate Change Conference (COP26), the PA delegation also noted the entry into effect of the Paris Climate Agreement in Turkey on 10 November.

In Istanbul, the delegation had the opportunity to exchange with civil society representatives on the state of democratic and media freedoms, as well as their ability to operate in Turkey. The PA leadership also met with the Secretary-General of PABSEC, Asaf Hajiye, to explore avenues of co-operation between the two organizations.

## Op-ed published on Glasgow COP26 outcomes

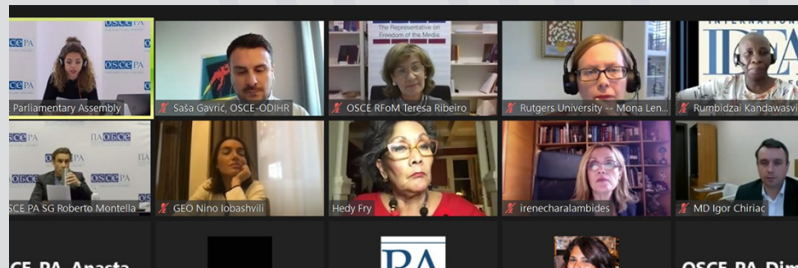
Pere Joan Pons (Spain), Chair of the OSCE PA's Second Committee, published an op-ed at Medium.com on Tuesday entitled "It's up to all of us to ensure that Glasgow climate promises are not empty ones." The op-ed urges national leaders to put short-sighted interests aside and take decisive action to mitigate and adapt to the climate crisis. To read it, please click here: <https://bit.ly/3wXCetB>

## MPs and experts focus on violence against women journalists and politicians

On 10 November, dozens of participants discussed effective policies and challenges in addressing gender-based violence at the Parliamentary Web Dialogue on "Violence Against Women Journalists and Politicians: A Growing Crisis." Opening the event, OSCE PA Special Representative on Gender Issues Hedy Fry (Canada) highlighted the surging rates of violence despite growing awareness of the problem of gender-based violence in journalism and politics.

Calling on parliamentarians to update legislative frameworks to tackle gender-based violence, PA President Margareta Cederfelt in her video address stressed that failing to protect safety of journalists and politicians threatens democratic safeguards. Noting that gender equality has always been high on OSCE PA's agenda, Secretary General Roberto Montella underlined the PA's proactive role in advancing inclusive approaches and women's meaningful participation in all fields.

At the panel discussion OSCE RoFM Teresa Ribeiro outlined the paramount role of parliamentarians, noting that when



women journalists are attacked, it severely weakens women's overall participation in the public sphere. Also contributing to the discussion were Prof. Mona Lena Krook from Rutgers University and Rumbidzai Kandawasvika-Nhundu from the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance. During the debate participants exchanged views on concrete ways parliaments and inter-parliamentary fora can protect women politicians and journalists in their respective fields.

## Special Reps on Gender and Civil Society participate in OSCE Human Dimension Seminar

OSCE PA Special Representative on Gender Issues Hedy Fry (Canada) gave a presentation Tuesday at the 2021 Human Dimension Seminar on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Girls, focusing her remarks on the impact of gender-based violence in political and public life. Special Representative on Civil Society Engagement Kyriakos Hadjiyianni (Cyprus) intervened during the discussion. Both Fry and Hadjiyianni underlined the responsibility and the role

of parliamentarians in preventing and combatting this type of violence that affects women's participation in the civic and political space. They reiterated that dealing with this negative phenomenon is key for comprehensive security, societal cohesion and democracy in general. Fry also highlighted the work of the OSCE PA in this regard, mentioning her 2021 Annual Report and last week's Parliamentary Web Dialogue on "Violence Against Women Journalists and Politicians: A Growing Crisis."