

Third Committee leaders visit Warsaw to discuss human dimension priorities



Third Committee leaders meet with colleagues at the Polish Parliament, 1 February 2022.

In meetings this week with representatives of the OSCE's Polish Chairmanship and ODIHR, the Polish Parliament, and civil society, the three leaders of the PA's Third Committee exchanged views and explored common approaches on priorities in the field of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the OSCE area.

Sereine Mauborgne (MP, France); Michael Georg Link (MP, Germany); and Johan Büser (MP, Sweden) – the Chair, Vice-Chair, and Rapporteur, respectively, of the Third Committee – met with Paweł Kotowski, Plenipotentiary of the Minister of Foreign Affairs for Poland's 2022 OSCE Chairmanship and Head of the Task Force; Paweł Radomski, Director of the UN and Human Rights Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; leaders of the Polish Parliament's OSCE PA Delegation and human rights committee; senior officials of the OSCE/ODIHR, and several others.

In a meeting with Kotowski, representing the OSCE Chairmanship, the sides discussed hopes and expectations for the coming year, particularly highlighting the importance of enhancing efforts to organize the OSCE Human Dimension Implementation Meeting. The PA Members jointly praised the readiness of Poland

to assume the OSCE Chairmanship in challenging times, yet stressed that holding the OSCE Chairmanship also means that Poland should lead by example.

Meeting with leaders at the OSCE/ODIHR, the PA Members expressed support for their work and encouraged a robust approach to human rights monitoring, as well as strengthening PA-ODIHR co-operation on election observation and developing standards for gender-sensitive parliaments. The PA Members also stressed the importance of civil society participation in the OSCE. Topics of discussion with civil society groups in Warsaw included gender and LGBT+ rights, independent judiciary, judicial reforms, migration, rule of law and freedom of entrepreneurship.

Committee Rapporteur Büser welcomed in particular the opportunity to meet with Polish non-governmental organizations and stressed the vital input of civil society in his work. Büser is currently developing preliminary ideas for his report and draft resolution he will present in Vienna at the OSCE PA's Winter Meeting on 24-25 February.

The parliamentarians reiterated concerns related to the treatment and humanitarian needs of irregular migrants crossing into Poland from Belarus. They noted that the migrants in question are victims in a political game, and stressed that they must be cared for and granted rights to request asylum regardless of the method of entry. The Members informed officials of their willingness to visit the border region and help assess the situation.

The Warsaw visit of the human rights committee leaders also included discussions with members of the Polish Delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly, led by Barbara Bartus. Talks with the Polish parliamentarians focused on the role of Poland in the OSCE, particularly as host of ODIHR, and the strong support offered by the Polish Parliament to the PA's work.

This Friday: Parliamentary Web Dialogue on the Clean Energy Revolution

With some 120 participants registered so far, the OSCE PA will hold a webinar on "The Clean Energy Revolution and its Implications for the OSCE Region" on 4 February, from 14:30 to 17:00 CET.

This online policy debate is intended to assess current energy trends and explore potential socio-economic and environmental implications of the energy transition with leading experts. Participants will include OSCE parliamentarians, representatives of OSCE participating States, and members of the scientific community. They'll discuss the current state of energy affairs, the latest technological developments, and expected geopolitical, socio-economic and environmental implications of the energy transition. In particular focus will be the tools and policies needed to promote a decarbonized, resilient and secure energy sector, as well as the opportunities and challenges of such energy transition, and the role of national parliaments and interparliamentary fora in this regard.

Expert contributions are expected from:

- Angela Wilkinson, CEO and Secretary-General, World Energy Council
- Mary Burce Warlick, Deputy Executive Director, International Energy Agency
- Miguel Gil Terte, Head of Unit, Economic Analysis & Foresight, Directorate-General for Energy, European Commission
- Enrico Falck, Executive Chairman, Falck Renewables S.p.a.
- Kirsten Westphal, Executive Director, Research & Analysis, H2Global Stiftung
- Katja Yafimava, Senior Research Fellow, The Oxford Institute for Energy Studies

OSCE PA President Margareta Cederfelt and Pere Joan Pons Sampietro, Chair of the Second Committee, will deliver opening remarks. Closing the debate will be Second Committee Rapporteur Gudrun Kugler.

The webinar will stream live at www.oscepa.org.

SG Montella holds consultations in Vienna ahead of 21st Winter Meeting

OSCE PA Secretary General Roberto Montella was in Vienna earlier this week preparing for the Assembly's 21st Winter Meeting, which will take place in a hybrid format on 24-25 February. He met with staff members of the PA's Vienna Office, as well as with Austrian authorities, to discuss the logistics of the meeting, including necessary measures to ensure the access of all invited PA members. (Due to the epidemiological situation, in-person attendance at the Winter Meeting will be restricted to Standing Committee members, Special Representatives and

Chairs of Ad Hoc Committees.)

While in Vienna, SG Montella also met with a number of ambassadors to the OSCE, and on Tuesday, held a video call with Belarusian opposition leader Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya. In the discussion with Tsikhanouskaya, topics included the upcoming referendum in Belarus on constitutional amendments, the planned joint Russian-Belarusian military exercises planned for next week and Tikhonovskaya's upcoming visits to various countries.