

## OSCE parliamentarians meet in Warsaw for discussions on Ukraine and OSCE

Some 170 parliamentarians from 46 OSCE participating States gathered on 24-25 November in Warsaw for debates held under the general theme of “The War in Ukraine: The Role of the OSCE and National Parliaments.” In focus were questions of how best to respond to the war in a way that brings it to a rapid and just conclusion, upholds OSCE commitments, safeguards fundamental freedoms and human rights, and protects economic and environmental security.

The opening session included speeches by Marshal of the Sejm Elzbieta Witek, Marshal of the Senate Tomasz Grodzki, OSCE Chairman-in-Office and Foreign Minister of Poland Zbigniew Rau, OSCE PA President Margareta Cederfelt, and a video address by Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskiy. In his remarks, Zelenskiy urged politicians to intensify pressure to stop the Russian invasion before it results in even more devastation for his country.

President Cederfelt stressed the role of parliamentarians in ensuring that Ukrainians are able to live in peace, highlighting the need to maintain strong solidarity and provide support to Ukraine’s security and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders, as well as providing assistance to those who have sought refuge in other countries. She reiterated, however, that the responsibility is on Russia to restore peace and insisted that Moscow must be held accountable for its actions.

Opening the first session of the Autumn Meeting’s Parliamentary Conference, devoted to a discussion on the impacts of the war on the OSCE itself, OSCE PA Vice-President Pascal Allizard (France) highlighted as a priority the need to increase preparedness on a variety of issues such as food security and energy. Panelists stressed that the war in Ukraine has led to multiple crises, including by impacting agriculture.

In the second session, chaired by OSCE PA Vice-President Irene Charalambides (Cyprus), parliamentarians focused on promoting economic and environmental security amid the current crisis. Charalambides highlighted the dire environmental impacts of the war, noting, in particular, the irresponsible sabotage of the Nord Stream pipelines and the repeated attacks on Ukrainian nuclear power plants. Panelists noted that the war has increased inflation, with low-income families most dramatically affected,



and that within Ukraine, there is an urgent need to strengthen the critical energy infrastructure.

Opening the third session on protecting fundamental rights in situations of armed conflict, OSCE PA Vice-President Reinhold Lopatka (Austria) said that the Russian attack against Ukraine has resulted in violations of human rights and freedoms on a massive scale. Panelists emphasized the need to keep the human costs of the war at the forefront of discussions, and in the debate, parliamentarians expressed support for establishing a mechanism for an international tribunal.

At the closing of the Parliamentary Conference, the lights were turned off in the Sejm to express solidarity with Ukrainians who have lost power due to attacks on energy infrastructure, and OSCE parliamentarians observed a moment of silence. OSCE PA Secretary General Roberto Montella, President Cederfelt and Head of the OSCE PA’s Polish Delegation Barbara Bartus recalled the urgency of the discussions in Warsaw and the need to maintain clarity in messaging. Secretary General Montella stressed that the PA has been consistent in its condemnations of Russian actions in Ukraine since 2014.

On the margins of the Autumn Meeting, the PA’s Ad Hoc Committees on Migration and Countering Terrorism met to discuss current events and upcoming activities. The Standing Committee met on 25 November and debated a proposed amendment to the Rules of Procedure that would establish a mechanism to suspend participation in the PA’s work of countries that commit gross violations of the Helsinki Final Act. With no consensus reached on the proposal, the amendment was sent back to the Subcommittee on Rules of Procedure for further consideration.

## High-level OSCE PA participation at OSCE Ministerial Council

An OSCE PA delegation led by President Margareta Cederfelt and Secretary General Roberto Montella is in Łódź, Poland, to attend the 29th OSCE Ministerial Council on 1-2 December. President Cederfelt will address the opening of the Ministerial Council Thursday morning with the livestream available here: <https://www.osce.org/live>

## Featured tweets @oscepa



The Polish Parliament, which hosted the OSCE PA’s 20th Autumn Meeting in Warsaw last week, tweeted at the close of the meeting with a brief video depicting the switching off of lights in the plenary hall and the Assembly’s moment of silence to show solidarity with Ukrainians. The lights were turned off in the Sejm to highlight the hardship of power being lost across Ukraine due to attacks on energy infrastructure.

As the tweet states, “The closing session of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly Autumn Meeting began in the dark, with lights switched off. In this way, delegates expressed their solidarity with the Ukrainian people. #OSCEPAWarsaw22 #StandWithUkraine @oscepa @PLinOSCE @UKRinPL @PLinUkraine.”

More tweets from the Autumn Meeting can be found using the hashtag #OSCEPAWarsaw22 or on the newsfeed of @PLParliament and @oscepa.