

OSCE PA Network of Young Parliamentarians visits Albania



Young Parliamentarians with Foreign Minister Igli Hasani, Tirana, 27 Oct. 2023



Network of Young Parliamentarians meeting with Albania's Delegation to the OSCE PA, Tirana, 27 Oct. 2023

The OSCE PA Network of Young Parliamentarians concluded a two-day visit to Albania on 28 October, during which young OSCE PA members engaged in a series of meetings with parliamentarians, government officials, youth-led civil society organizations, and students. The visit was hosted by Albania's OSCE PA Delegation and focused on a wide range of topics, including youth participation in politics, Albania's EU accession prospects, emerging security challenges, and the role of the OSCE in the region.

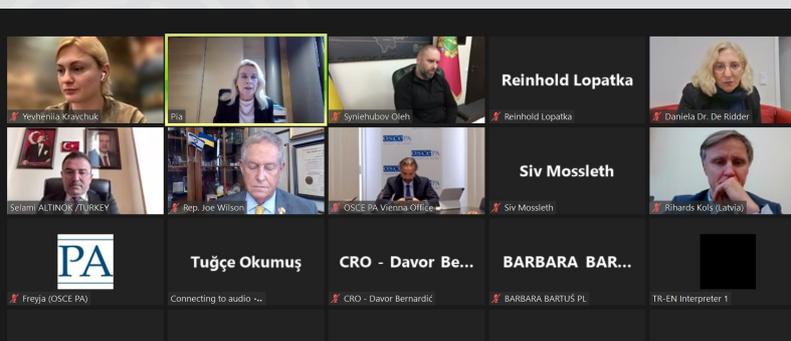
Accompanied by OSCE PA Secretary General Roberto Montella, a group of ten young parliamentarians from Austria, Armenia, Belgium, Cyprus, Estonia, France, Iceland, Italy, Ireland, and Norway held a series of high-level meetings, including with Igli Hasani, the Minister of Europe and Foreign Affairs; Bora Muzhaqi, the Minister of State for Youth and Children of Albania; and Keti Luarasi, the Vice Mayor of Tirana. The Network also had the opportunity to meet with leaders of five traditional religious communities in Albania and to learn about the work of the Inter-

religious Council of Albania.

David Stogmuller (Austria), Chair of the Network, highlighted the role that young people can play in Albania's process of European integration, while Vice-Chair Aleksander Stokkebo (Norway) welcomed the role of youth in building a sustainable future in the country and the region. Vice-Chair Lilja Rannveig Sigurgeirsdóttir (Iceland) praised the recent establishment of the Young Parliamentarians Group in the Parliament of Albania.

While in Albania, the group also visited the European University of Tirana, where they met with a group of political science students and, along with OSCE PA Secretary General Montella, conducted an open lecture entitled "Engaging the Future: OSCE Parliamentarians and the Next Generation of Youth Leaders." The Young Parliamentarians also met with Regional Youth Cooperation Office Secretary General Albert Hani and visited the OSCE Presence in Albania. Secretary General Montella welcomed the opportunity for the PA's youngest members to learn about the work carried out by the OSCE Presence.

OSCE PA's Parliamentary Support Team for Ukraine holds its first meeting



upcoming activities, as well as a briefing by Kharkiv authorities on the Russian Federation's recent attack that killed dozens in the village of Groza. Also on the agenda of the meeting was the appointment of three rapporteurs related to the OSCE's three dimensions of security: Rihards Kols (Latvia), for the first dimension; Mark Demesmaeker (Belgium), for the second dimension; and Margareta Cederfelt (Sweden), for the third dimension.

President Pia Kauma (Finland) provided information about her participation in the Second Parliamentary Summit of the International Crimea Platform in Prague on 24 October, where she highlighted the establishment of the PSTU. She also mentioned her meeting with the Chairman of Ukraine's parliament, Ruslan Stefanchuk, during the European Conference of Presidents of Parliament in Dublin, who expressed support for the PA's Vancouver Declaration and the establishment of the PSTU.

The OSCE PA's Parliamentary Support Team for Ukraine held its inaugural meeting on 25 October, bringing together 19 of the committee's 21 members for a discussion on objectives and

PA's Charalambides addresses ODIHR event on parliamentary oversight

OSCE PA Vice-President and Special Representative on Fighting Corruption Irene Charalambides (Cyprus) addressed the OSCE/ODIHR-Transparency International High-Level Panel 'Parliamentary Oversight in Times of Democratic Stagnation' on Tuesday, stressing the need for intensified legislative efforts to curb corruption. "To effectively fight corruption," she said, "we need to promote reforms. Not just legislative reforms, but also a reform of attitudes on how parliamentary oversight is exercised."

Charalambides added that parliamentarians often face significant political costs when they take on corruption, but it is essen-

tial that they continue to do so. "We still have to keep trying for the sake of the people who trusted us and voted for us," she said.

The event that Charalambides participated in is a joint endeavor of ODIHR and Transparency International called the Political Integrity Bootcamp on Civil Society Interventions to Enhance Parliamentary Oversight. Taking place 31 October to 8 November, the event brings together experts, parliamentarians and civil society representatives, aiming to promote political integrity in enhancing parliamentary oversight.