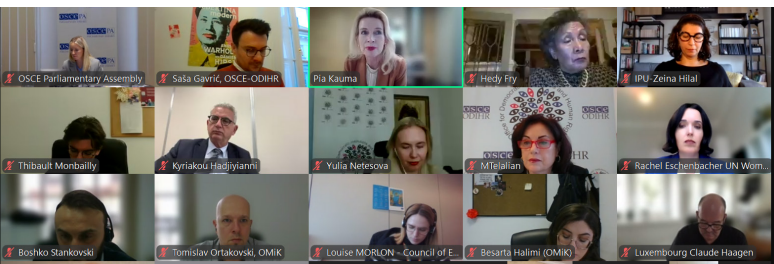


PA-ODIHR webinar participants urge action on Beijing Platform's gender goals



On 16 January, the OSCE PA and ODIHR held an online seminar commemorating the 30th anniversary of the Beijing Platform for Action, a milestone framework for advancing women's rights and promoting gender equality worldwide. Some 65 parliamentarians, OSCE officials and experts participated in the webinar, with keynote speakers including Rachel Weston Eschenbacher, Regional Policy Specialist UN Women Europe and Central Asia Regional Office, and Zeina Hilal, Manager Gender and Youth Programmes, IPU Secretariat.

Participants noted that the anniversary is not only an opportunity to reflect on progress but also a call to renew commit-

ments and strengthen efforts to achieve full gender equality. OSCE PA President Pia Kauma (Finland) said that "it's a moment to reaffirm our commitment to the Beijing Platform for Action and to recognize that gender equality isn't just a goal—it's an urgent necessity for the health and progress of our societies."

"In 1995, in Beijing, nations agreed that women's rights are human rights," noted Special Representative on Gender Issues Hedy Fry (Canada). "Yet, 30 years later, the rights of women continue to be threatened across the globe, and in some areas, have regressed. As we set our goals for the year ahead, I ask parliamentarians to take action: to include a gender perspective in all aspects of work in parliaments."

During the open discussion, Members stressed that marginalized groups are important to keep in mind, and that with the current drift to political extremes in the OSCE area, there is a corresponding risk of losing female members. OSCE parliamentarians also shared strategies of their national parliaments to increase women's representation and legislation to prevent and punish domestic violence.

Online resources recently published

On 20 December 2024, the OSCE/ODIHR, with the support of International Secretariat of the OSCE PA, published the report, "GENDER-RESPONSIVE GOVERNANCE TOOLKIT TOOL 3: Parliamentary bodies for gender equality — Overview and recommendations," which is available here: <https://bit.ly/40GhVS1>

Marking the beginning of the new year, the OSCE PA published a video recapping the highlights of 2024. To watch the video, please click here: <https://bit.ly/40H14B8> Also recently published was the video of the joint OSCE PA-ODIHR event, "30 years of the Beijing Platform for Action: The role of parliaments," available here: <https://bit.ly/4h5Umla>

OSCE Secretary General Sinirlioglu meets with Finland's PA Delegation

During his visit to Helsinki last week, following a meeting with Finnish Foreign Minister and OSCE Chair-in-Office Elina Valtonen, the new OSCE Secretary General, Feridun Sinirlioglu, met with the Finnish OSCE PA Delegation. OSCE PA President Pia Kauma, Johannes Koskinen, Inka Hopsu, Vilhelm Junnila, and Ville Kaunisto participated in the meeting, which focused on priority issues for the coming year. Amb. Jouni Laaksonen, Head of the Finnish OSCE 2025 Chairpersonship Task Force at the



Feridun Sinirlioglu with Finnish parliamentarians, Helsinki, 16 Jan.

Ministry for Foreign Affairs, and Vesa Häkkinen, Ambassador of Finland to the OSCE, also participated in the meeting.

OSCE PA Secretary General Montella holds meetings in Vienna

OSCE PA Secretary General Roberto Montella is in Vienna this week to participate in the opening of the Finnish OSCE Chairpersonship and to hold a series of meetings with OSCE officials. Accompanied by Amb. Special Representative Miodrag Pančeski, Secretary General Montella has met with Permanent Representatives from several participating States, as well as the Director of ODIHR, Maria Telalian, and the Representative on Freedom of the Media, Amb. Jan Braathu.



Meeting with the US delegation to the OSCE in Vienna, 22 Jan.

More meetings are expected on Thursday.

PA Conference Team visits Porto in preparation for 32nd Annual Session



OSCE PA conference team with Portuguese Parliament staff

In preparation for the 32nd Annual Session, to be hosted by the Portuguese Parliament in the Alfindega Congress Center from 29 June to 3 July 2025, several members of the OSCE PA International Secretariat were on an assessment visit last week in Porto. Gustavo Pallares, Odile Lelarge, Stephen Paul, Dimitrije Todoric and Anzhelika Ivanishcheva have visited the premises of the Session and met with staff members of the Portuguese Parliament to discuss logistical, technical and security aspects of the meeting.

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