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Kastoria forum focuses on energy policy and regional co-operation

Some 20 parliamentarians gathered in Kastoria, Greece, on 27-30 March for the Third Inter-Parliamentary Forum, organized by the OSCE PA's Special Representative on South East Europe, Kyriakos Hadjiyianni (Cyprus). Hosted by Head of the OSCE PA's Greek Delegation Angelos Syrigos and member Maria Antoniou, with support from the Hellenic Parliament, the forum served as a platform for lawmakers from South East Europe and beyond to enhance collaboration on energy policy.

The event opened with remarks by Angelos Syrigos, Maria Antoniou, OSCE PA President Pia Kauma (Finland), OSCE PA Secretary General Roberto Montella, and Special Representative Hadjiyianni. Contributions to the forum were made by key Greek energy officials, with OSCE PA Delegations from Italy, Montenegro, Romania, North Macedonia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Luxembourg, Cyprus, and Greece actively participating in the forum.

In remarks, participants stressed that through interaction and the exchange of experiences and best practices, it is possible to develop strategies that enhance sustainability, social cohesion, and prosperity not only in the Western Balkans, but across

The Third Inter-Parliamentary Forum took place in Kastoria, Greece, on 27-30 March 2025

Europe. Special Representative Hadjiyianni stressed the global significance of energy policies, noting that parliamentarians must advocate for affordable energy prices, as well as environmental sustainability. In video messages, President Kauma and Secretary General Montella underscored the importance of political, economic, and security stability for the region's prosperity.

Participants also visited Unit V of the Ptolemais Power Plant, gaining first-hand insights into the transition from coal to modern renewable energy technologies, and a presentation was given on the actions taken by the Greek Government to achieve its energy transition targets by 2030. The forum concluded with participants agreeing on a joint declaration reaffirming their commitment to enhanced co-operation and friendly relations.

Special Representative Charalambides participates in OECD forum in Paris

OSCE PA Vice-President and Special Representative on Fighting Corruption Irene Charalambides (Cyprus) participated in the Global Anti-Corruption and Integrity Forum, which took place on 26-27 March at the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development's headquarters in Paris. The Global Forum included discussions on leveraging AI in anti-corruption compliance systems, whistleblower protection and empowerment, and strengthening political integrity against undue influence in public decision-making.

In her intervention, Charalambides raised the issue of the protection of journalists and whistleblowers, welcoming the adoption of relevant legislation in several countries but stressing that the cultivation of a culture of trust between employees and the competent authorities must remain a priority. Charalambides referred to the additional challenges faced by small states in terms of maintaining the anonymity of whistleblowers and guaranteeing their protection.

On the sidelines of the Global Forum, Charalambides had separate meetings with World Bank Governance Global Manager Roby Senderowitsch, as well as with members of non-governmental organizations active in the field of combating corruption, with whom they exchanged views on the issues under discussion and on possible future activities. While in Paris, Charalambides also had a working lunch hosted by the Head of the French Delegation to the OSCE PA and Special Representative for the Mediterranean, Senator Pascal Allizard.

Potůčková highlights strategies to combat child trafficking at OSCE conference in Vienna

Lucie Potůčková addresses OSCE trafficking conference on 1 April.

Speaking Tuesday at the 25th Alliance Conference Against Trafficking in Persons, a two-day conference held this week in Vienna under the theme "Protecting Childhoods, Shaping Futures: A Call to End Child Trafficking," OSCE PA Third Committee Chair Lucie Potůčková (Czech Republic) highlighted the Assembly's long-standing commitment to protecting children from trafficking and exploitation.

Potůčková spoke at a panel on the theme, "From vulnerability to innovation: addressing risks in child trafficking." She noted that traffickers exploit gaps in law enforcement co-operation and regulatory discrepancies between neighboring states, and advocated for a co-ordinated, multi-stakeholder approach to victim identification and protection. She noted that by streamlining responses, sharing intelligence, and implementing proven strategies, it is possible to dismantle trafficking networks. Awareness, she stressed, is key and therefore there must be greater focus on educating key stakeholders.

In this respect, she highlighted two best practices from Czechia, one being a nationwide prevention, monitoring, and information-sharing strategy, and the other a project addressing the growing threat of child exploitation in Europe.

Parliamentary Support Team for Ukraine leaders discuss upcoming activities

On 28 March, following discussions between PA President and PSTU Chair Pia Kauma and Vice-President and PSTU Co-Chair Mykyta Poturaiev, the three PSTU Special Rapporteurs met online to exchange views on optimizing the implementation of their mandates ahead of the Porto Annual Session. Among the initiatives discussed and agreed upon were two fact-finding visits to Ukraine.

The first visit, led by Special Rapporteur Mati Raidma, is scheduled to take place in early May. A second visit, involving Special Rapporteurs Carina Ödebrink and Lucie Potůčková, is under consideration for a suitable date in June.

This initiative falls within the PSTU's overarching efforts to assist Ukraine in strengthening its resilience and to best prepare for its recovery.

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