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**REPORT OF THE TREASURER  
OF THE OSCE PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY  
TO THE STANDING COMMITTEE**

**Mr. Johan Büser**

**Istanbul, November 2025**

## **I. Introduction**

Since the OSCE PA Annual Session in Porto, the Assembly has continued to demonstrate its flexibility and relevance through a growing range of activities across all dimensions of the OSCE's work. Parliamentary engagement remains strong, with a high interest in the Assembly's activities and —what I have often called—the crown jewel of our activities: election observations.

These achievements are a clear reflection of our Members' commitment to dialogue and multilateral co-operation, even as the financial environment in which we operate remains increasingly constrained. During my recent visit to the International Secretariat, we reviewed the financial performance of the current fiscal year, discussed preparations for the 2025/2026 budget cycle, and took note of the ongoing external audit being conducted by Deloitte, which once again examines both our financial statements and performance in accordance with Article 21 of the Financial Regulations. In this regard, I wish to express my gratitude to the Secretary General and his team for the close co-operation.

As we are entering the 2025/2026 Financial Year, it is important to reflect on the budgetary realities surrounding our organization. The Assembly continues to face what can best be described as a financial trifecta:

- 1. Expanding activity levels**, as Members call for deeper engagement and greater visibility of the Parliamentary Assembly;
- 2. The absence of the Russian Federation's contribution**, which for four consecutive financial years has left a substantial gap in the Assembly's income; and
- 3. A zero-nominal-growth budget**, which, while reflecting our commitment to fiscal discipline, constitutes a challenge when taking into account inflation and rising operational costs.

This situation underscores the need for continued solidarity among participating States and for a collective recognition that effective parliamentary diplomacy cannot be sustained without adequate resources.

Against this backdrop, I would now like to provide an overview of the implementation of the current budget and of our overall financial position.

## **II. Budget Implementation for the 2025–2026 Financial Year**

The Budget for the 2025–2026 financial year was approved by the Standing Committee at the Annual Session in Porto and entered into force on 1 October 2025. It reflects the principle of zero nominal growth, meaning that total expenditure is maintained at the same level as the previous financial year.

As Treasurer, I wish to extend my sincere appreciation to the overwhelming majority of participating States that have already fulfilled their assessed contributions for the current financial year. Your punctuality and reliability in payments remain the foundation of the Assembly's financial stability.

Implementation of the 2025–2026 budget began in October under close monitoring by the Treasurer and the International Secretariat. In accordance with the demands expressed by the Standing Committee, priority has been given to safeguarding election monitoring, statutory meetings and supporting the Assembly's core political work.

It is important to note that concentrated and sustained efforts will be needed for the Assembly to meet its objectives within the zero-nominal-growth budgetary framework. During the coming financial year, I look forward to working closely together with President Pere Joan Pons Sampietro to find the appropriate measures for a way forward for the Assembly.

## **III. The Russian Federation's continued non-payment**

The Russian Federation has not made any payment since the 2021–2022 financial year, creating a cumulative shortfall that now exceeds €1 million. The Assembly's financial team continues to budget conservatively under the assumption that this contribution will not be received. This structural non-payment represents a persistent loss equivalent to roughly one quarter of the annual operating budget, and it continues to erode reserves and limit the secretariat's ability to deliver on its mandate.

The following table outlines unpaid contributions by the Russian Federation:

Financial Year	Amount Unpaid (€)
2022–2023	€ 245,657
2023–2024	€ 252,791
2024–2025	€ 262,380
2025–2026*	€ 262,380 (assumed)
Total (2022–2026)	€ 1,023,208

The Assembly has maintained operations without interruption despite this loss, thanks to careful management, cost-containment measures, and voluntary increases from a number of delegations. Nevertheless, the absence of this major contribution remains a structural funding gap that can only be addressed collectively by participating States.

#### **IV. External Audit for the 2024–2025 Financial Year**

The external audit for the 2024–2025 financial year is currently being conducted by Deloitte. The audit team visited the International Secretariat in October 2025 and is currently carrying out a comprehensive review of the Assembly’s financial statements, internal controls, and performance in accordance with Article 21 of the Financial Regulations. The audit also examines how the International Secretariat has implemented previous recommendations, such as holiday accruals, severance accounting, and cost allocation.

The final audit report will be presented to the Standing Committee at the Winter Meeting in Vienna in February 2026.

#### **V. Extra-Budgetary Contributions and Governance**

The Assembly continues to benefit from voluntary extra-budgetary contributions from participating States, which enable targeted regional and thematic activities that complement the budget. These resources are managed under strict financial controls and subject to oversight by the Treasurer in accordance with the Financial Regulations.

To further strengthen governance and accountability, the International Secretariat, in consultation with the Treasurer, has developed draft General Guidelines on Extra-Budgetary Contributions. These guidelines, now under discussion, codify the existing safeguards and clarify that extra-budgetary contributions may be accepted only from Parliaments of participating States that have fully met their assessed obligations and retain voting rights. They also define approval and reporting procedures for all extra-budgetary contributions.

In the current financial year, several delegations have voluntarily increased their annual contributions to €10,000, narrowing the gap between their assessed shares and the voluntary minimum level. This growing participation illustrates the Assembly's culture of solidarity and shared responsibility.

The Assembly also extends its sincere thanks to the Luxembourg Delegation for its significant earmarked extra-budgetary contribution in 2025, which enabled an extensive set of initiatives across South East Europe, including:

- Inter-Parliamentary Forums on South East Europe, held respectively in Greece (March 2025), and Rome (June 2025).
- Official country visits to Serbia and Moldova.
- The OSCE PA Visit to Bosnia and Herzegovina (5–8 November 2025).

The Assembly also expresses appreciation to the Swiss Delegation for its general extra-budgetary contribution, which provided flexible support to the Assembly's overall programme of work. Both contributions exemplify the shared commitment among participating States to ensure the effectiveness and sustainability of the Assembly's work.

## **VI. Election Observation Activities and Budgetary Impact**

Election observation remains the crown jewel of the Assembly's activities. During the recent financial period, the 2024–2025 financial year, the Assembly deployed a very high number of election observation missions, underlining its commitment to democratic oversight across the OSCE region. In total, 8 election observation missions were conducted in 6 countries during this period.

The scale and frequency of these missions have understandably put our budget under strain, as each observation entails costs for conference services, to host the parliamentary briefings ahead of election day, and deployment of supporting staff. Preliminary figures from the 2024–2025 financial year indicate that expenditures on election observation activities significantly exceeded the available budget and clearly demonstrates the financial resource-intensive nature of election observation missions.

The current 2025–2026 financial year commenced on 1 October 2025 under a zero nominal growth budget. As a result, the level of financial resources allocated for election observation has remained unchanged from the previous year, despite a continued rise in operational costs and anticipated demand. These are circumstances that will be considered in the implementation of the current budget and for the 2026-2027 budget proposal. Observation missions are currently being planned for Kyrgyzstan, Hungary and Armenia.

## **VII. Financial Integrity and Institutional Resilience**

In line with the Porto Declaration and the *Resolution on securing the stability of the parliamentary Assembly's financial situation*, efforts have been commenced to strengthen the financial integrity of the Assembly. The proposed measures would gradually increase the contribution requirements for minor contributors, clarify oversight mechanisms, formalize reporting requirements for extra-budgetary contributions, and ensure regular review of the reserve policy. In addition, an amendment to the Rules of Procedure will be considered that clarifies procedures regarding non-payments from member states.

The resolution also calls for modernizing the system of national contributions, drawing inspiration from the Helsinki 2015 Resolution. The objective remains to ensure a fairer and more sustainable distribution of financial responsibilities among participating States. In consultation with the President and the Sub-Committee on Rules of Procedure, preparatory work is underway to incorporate these provisions into future amendments of the Rules of Procedure.

## **VIII. Multilingualism and Modernizing the Contribution System**

The Porto declaration contains a resolution aimed at *Supporting Multilingualism within the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly*. To this end, an internal Multilingualism Working Group has been set up in the Secretariat which will explore ways to expand language coverage within available resources. The Secretariat has undertaken initiatives to enhance accessibility and inclusivity of Assembly documents, while also examining the cost implications of translation and interpretation services. These efforts reaffirm the Assembly's commitment to multilingualism, but their full implementation will require additional funding or extra-budgetary support.

## **IX. Forward Planning**

As we are in the start of the financial year, I wish to express sincere appreciation to all delegations that continue to demonstrate reliability, generosity, and commitment to the principles of the OSCE PA. I also wish to thank the Secretary General, the Deputy Secretary General for Finance, and the staff of the International Secretariat for their professionalism, discipline, and dedication.

The Assembly continues to operate with prudence and transparency, ensuring that every euro serves the purpose of strengthening the parliamentary dimension of the OSCE and advancing our shared values of dialogue, democracy, and security for all.

Looking ahead, preparations are already under way for the Assembly's 2026 statutory meetings, which will include:

- the Winter Meeting in Vienna (19–20 February 2026);
- the Bureau Meeting in Copenhagen (27 April 2026);
- the Annual Session in The Hague (4–8 July 2026), generously hosted by the States General of the Netherlands; and
- the Autumn Meeting in Andorra (7-9 October 2026), kindly hosted by the General Council of Andorra.

I wish to express my sincere appreciation to the Dutch Parliament and the General Council of Andorra for their generosity and commitment in hosting these upcoming statutory meetings. Their partnership ensures that the Assembly can

continue to deliver its work efficiently and maintain the high standard expected by participating States.

At the same time, the Assembly is seeking a host parliament for the 2027 Annual Session. Early confirmation of a host is essential for effective logistical and financial planning, as the support provided by host parliaments significantly offsets costs and enables the Assembly to operate within a zero-nominal-growth budget framework. As Treasurer, I warmly encourage interested parliaments to contact the International Secretariat to discuss potential hosting arrangements. Effective long-term planning of statutory meetings remains a cornerstone of the Assembly's financial predictability, visibility, and overall cost efficiency.