



Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY

Report

6th Annual OSCE PA Winter Meeting

Vienna

22-23 February 2007

Prepared by the OSCE PA International Secretariat,
Copenhagen, Denmark



The OSCE Parliamentary Assembly

**PROGRAMME OF THE SIXTH WINTER MEETING
OF THE OSCE PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY
*Vienna, 22-23 February 2007***

Thursday, 22 February

09.00-11.30	Standing Committee
11.45-13.00	Joint Session of the three General Committees: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Call to order;- Opening remarks by the President of the OSCE PA;- Welcoming address by the President of the Austrian Nationalrat, Ms. Barbara Prammer;- Address by the Special Envoy of the OSCE Chairman-in-Office, Josep Borrell;- Address by the OSCE Secretary General, Mr. Marc Perrin de Brichambaut followed by a question/answer session;
13.00-15.00	Lunch break
15.00-18.00	General Committee on Political Affairs and Security
15.00-18.00	General Committee on Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions
18.30	Reception offered by the Austrian Parliament

Friday, 23 February

09.00-10.30	General Committee on Economic Affairs, Science, technology and Environment
10.30-11.00	Coffee break
11.00-13.00	Special Debate: “Energy Security in the OSCE Area “
13.00-14.30	Lunch break
14.30-17.30	Special Debate (cont.); and Closing Joint Session of the three General Committees: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Call to order;- Report by the OSCE PA Special Representative on the gender issue Ms. Tone Tinsgaard followed by a debate;- Reports by the Chairs of the three General Committees;- Concluding statement by the OSCE PA President

Summary



The OSCE Parliamentary Assembly holds its annual Winter Meeting in the OSCE premises at the Hofburg Congress Centre, Vienna

(OSCE/Alex Nitzsche)

The OSCE Parliamentary Assembly held its sixth annual Winter Meeting, in Vienna, 22-23 February 2007. Attended by a record 250 parliamentarians from across the OSCE region and from partner States, the Winter Meeting provided an opportunity for Members to engage with officials from OSCE governmental institutions and to exchange views with parliamentary colleagues from other countries on current issues.

The Winter Meeting consisted of two joint sessions of the Assembly's three General Committees as well as separate meetings of the Committees, and a special debate.

OSCE PA President Göran Lennmarker opened the Winter Meeting at the first joint session, which was addressed by the President of the Austrian Parliament, Barbara Prammer, the Special Envoy of the OSCE Chairman-in-Office, Josep Borrell, and OSCE Secretary General Marc Perrin de Brichambaut.

After the first joint session, the three General Committees met individually to follow-up on previous work and to prepare for the Assembly's next Annual Session in Kyiv in July 2006. The Committees were addressed by OSCE officials with responsibilities related to the work of each of the three Committees and heard reports by the Rapporteurs of each Committee, who informed Members about their ideas and intentions for their upcoming reports.

The Committee work was followed by a closing joint session, which was addressed by the Assembly's Special Representative on Gender Issues. Prior to the closing session, the Assembly met for a special debate on 'Energy Security in the OSCE Area.'

The Winter Meeting is the second-largest event on the Parliamentary Assembly's calendar and serves as an opportunity for Members of the Assembly to be briefed on current OSCE developments by senior OSCE officials, who also answer questions from the parliamentarians.

Standing Committee Meeting



Prior to the opening of the Winter Meeting, the Standing Committee of Heads of Delegations met under the chairmanship of OSCE PA President Göran Lennmarker. Mr. Lennmarker reminded the Members of his priorities, including strengthening the role of the Parliamentary Assembly as an OSCE Institution; providing assistance to the OSCE in helping to resolve remaining conflicts in the region; strengthening respect for human rights; and strengthening the OSCE's election observation work. The President also reported on his activities since the last meeting of the Standing Committee in November 2006. He

has presided over the Bureau meeting in December in Brussels and addressed the OSCE Ministerial Council meeting. The President has also paid visits to countries in South-Eastern Europe, and the Caucasus, as well as to Turkmenistan and to Ukraine, and has led the OSCE's election observation mission to Serbia. During its meeting in Brussels, the Bureau had recommended that the Assembly's 2008 Session be held in Almaty, Kazakhstan, which the Standing Committee subsequently approved. The President also announced that the theme for the upcoming Annual Session in Kyiv in July 2007, would be 'Implementation of OSCE Commitments.'

Senator Jerry Grafstein (Canada), the Assembly's Treasurer reported that the OSCE PA continues to function well within budget and had again received high marks for its financial management. The Treasurer announced that the Assembly has now reached its goal of having a reserve equal to the annual budget. Senator Grafstein also highlighted the Assembly's website as an effective source of information and encouraged Members to provide links from their own websites.

The Secretary General of the Assembly, Spencer Oliver, reported on recent activities conducted by the International Secretariat. He particularly mentioned the work of the Secretariat in supporting the Assembly's election observation work. The Secretary General highlighted the Secretariat's bulletin, *News from Copenhagen*, as an effective tool



for keeping all those interested in the PA informed about Assembly activities.

The Heads of Delegations then heard a report by President Lennmarker on his leadership of the recent OSCE election observation mission to Serbia. He indicated that he had reported to the OSCE Chairman-in-Office that the elections had been well administered, but that there had been internal difficulties in reaching this conclusion. He stressed that he had placed an emphasis on delivering a clear and concise message on the elections. Members voiced their support for parliamentary leadership of observation missions, which brings unmatched credibility to OSCE work in this field. Standing Committee Members supported President Lennmarker's proposal to arrange a meeting with the OSCE Chairman-in-Office as soon as possible to overcome remaining difficulties. The President announced that he had appointed Vice-President Tone Tingsgaard to lead the OSCE PA election observation mission for the 12 May parliamentary elections in Armenia.

The Chair of the Assembly's ad hoc Working Group on Belarus, Uta Zapf (Germany), reported on the Working Group's activities, including plans for a joint seminar on the European Neighbourhood Policy, to be held in Minsk on 15 March with the Belarussian Delegation.

Members were also briefed on preparations for upcoming Assembly meetings in Andorra and Kyiv. Before concluding, the Standing Committee agreed that the Assembly would hold a special debate focused on 'Energy Security in the OSCE Area' the next day, 23 February.



First Joint Session of the General Committees



Opening Remarks by Göran Lennmarker, President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly

President Lennmarker welcomed participants to the largest ever OSCE Parliamentary Assembly Winter Meeting and reminded participants of the original purpose behind these meetings: to interact with the governmental dimension of the OSCE, to follow-up on Assembly work, and to promote further dialogue.

The President noted the increasing role of parliamentary diplomacy on the international scene and raised a number of areas in which parliamentarians can have a strong impact. He particularly mentioned election monitoring as being of particular interest to the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly as well as the importance of facilitating conflict resolution and complementing official government negotiations in this field.

Address by Barbara Prammer, President of the Austrian Parliament

During her welcoming remarks to the parliamentarians, Ms. Prammer took the opportunity to stress the importance of recent structural improvements within the OSCE. She noted the importance of implementing the decisions from the 2005 Ljubljana Ministerial Council in order to improve the Organization's working processes. Nonetheless,



President Prammer stressed that the organisation should not forget its core values, particularly the independence of its institutions, field missions and election observation missions.

Ms. Prammer praised the long-term focus of the OSCE in its democratisation programmes and their aim to empower citizens to influence government, and she emphasised the role of parliamentarians in this respect. She stressed the importance of parliamentarians' oversight role and expressed her wish to see closer co-operation between parliamentarians and the International Organization of Supreme Audit Institutions and the International Ombudsman Institute. She expressed the conviction that a closer relationship between the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and these two organizations would positively influence the development of a strong civil society in the OSCE area.

President Prammer also addressed the issue of gender equality and stated that the role of women in decision-making should be strengthened through co-operation, capacity-building, and the promotion of women in leadership roles. She referred to the 2004 OSCE Action Plan and thanked the PA Special Representative on Gender Issues, Vice-President Tone Tingsgaard for her work. Ms. Prammer stressed that trafficking in human beings represents a serious national and international challenge, involving sexual exploitation, forced labour, and forced marriages. She called on the OSCE to pioneer measures against human trafficking, which she called "a modern form

of slavery”. The OSCE Action Plan represents an important step in this direction, she said. Finally, Ms. Prammer praised the OSCE’s comprehensive concept of security and asserted that international co-operation is increasingly indispensable in facing today’s problems.

Address by Josep Borrell, Special Envoy of the OSCE Chairman-in-Office

Mr. Borrell began by stressing the value of parliamentary involvement at the supranational level and noted the role of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly as an initiator of debate. He particularly mentioned the Brussels Declaration as a source of inspiration and he expressed his backing for the parts of the Declaration that called for support to field missions and increased co-operation with other international organizations.

As Co-Chair of the European Parliament’s Election Co-ordination Group he was able to confirm the EU’s support for the election work of the OSCE. He underlined the importance of the 1997 Co-operation Agreement between the OSCE Chairman-in-Office and the OSCE PA President as the basis for positive synergy between the ODIHR and the PA during election observation missions. A multi-dimensional approach to election observation, including looking at civil society, the media, and other aspects, has contributed to successful democratization processes in some areas, he said.

Mr. Borrell discussed the important work of promoting stable, democratic societies in the Balkan region, particularly in Kosovo. The OSCE should

support efforts in Kosovo aiming to build a multi-ethnic and tolerant society with respect for human rights, he said. At the same time, he noted that it is important to continue working towards a solution to frozen conflicts in the OSCE area and to prevent their armed escalation through confidence-building measures. He expressed satisfaction that democratic transition was continuing apace in several participating States and reminded delegates that the building of institutions and democratic culture is a long process that requires patience and perseverance on all sides.

Address by Marc Perrin de Brichambaut, Secretary General of the OSCE

The OSCE Secretary General stated that 2006 was a year of consolidation for the OSCE, after a difficult 2005. He noted that reform continued to be an important issue in 2006 and mentioned the continuing preparations for performance-based programme budgeting and the adoption of a new three committee structure. He reviewed the many decisions that were adopted by the Ministerial Council in Brussels in December 2006 and stated that the 2007 priorities for the OSCE will include anti-trafficking and combating organized crime.

Ambassador de Brichambaut informed the parliamentarians that the ODIHR had completed a report, tasked during the 2005 Ministerial Council, on the subject of shared responsibilities, common commitments, and implementation of commitments in the human dimension. He noted that one of the



report's proposals was to ensure the full application of the OSCE-OSCE PA Co-operation Agreement from 1997 on election observation.

The Secretary General stated that despite the challenge of reform, most of the OSCE's challenges for 2007 were external to the Organisation. For example, he noted that some of the so-called 'frozen conflicts' in the area were showing signs of thawing. The uncertainty that surrounds the future of Kosovo threatens to undermine the achievements of the international community in South Eastern Europe as a whole, he warned. He noted that the OSCE is still confronted with the challenge of providing long-term assistance for democratic transition throughout the OSCE area. The OSCE field offices are working to bring about proper conditions for continued democratic transition in co-operation with their host countries, but the Secretary General reminded delegates that the consolidation of democratic institutions is a demanding task for all participating States.

Ambassador de Brichambaut noted that the OSCE also faces the challenge of continuing doubt from certain participating States regarding the nature of the Organization and its activities. He said that the OSCE is a fragile Organization, because in many ways it acts as a mirror, reflecting the great range of tensions that continue to exist throughout the OSCE area. The search for security through the affirmation of common values presents a shared objective, and the Organization is a unique forum where answers can be found in a way that limits violence and confrontation, he said.



Discussion

Following the addresses by the speakers, co-operation between the OSCE PA and the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights on election observation was discussed at length. Concern was expressed that discrepancies between the two bodies during election observation missions could negatively affect missions' legitimacy. Delegates agreed that the difficulties ought to be addressed as soon as possible. There was also consideration of Kosovo and its future status. Delegates further discussed a number of frozen conflicts within the OSCE area. The topic of deployment of missiles in Poland and the Czech Republic was also raised by parliamentarians.





First General Committee on Political Affairs and Security

The Chair of the General Committee on Political Affairs and Security, Jean Charles Gardetto (Monaco), opened the session by welcoming delegates and introducing the Vice-Chair of the Committee, Hans Raidel (Germany), the Rapporteur of the Committee, Kristian Pihl Lorentzen (Denmark), and the two guest speakers: Ambassador Rolf Ekeus, the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities and Ambassador Werner Wnendt, Head of the OSCE Mission in Kosovo.

Presentation by Hans Raidel, Vice-Chair of the First Committee

The Vice-Chair of the Committee presented his report on follow-up to the Committee's recommendations which the Assembly adopted during the 2006 Brussels Annual Session. Mr. Raidel stressed the important role of national parliaments in conducting oversight of Governments, particularly with regard to civilian control of armed forces. He also gave an overview of developments in the fields of anti-terrorism, anti-trafficking and arms control. In addition, the Vice-Chair highlighted the continuing relevance of the OSCE as an important international organization but noted that there is a need to look at whether the administrative set-up of the Organization is still suitable for its purposes or requires modernization. Mr. Raidel also called for increased transparency and accountability in the Organization, including formal acceptance of access by the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly to OSCE meetings.



Presentation by Kristian Pihl Lorentzen, Rapporteur of the First Committee

The Committee's Rapporteur, Mr. Lorentzen, presented his ideas for the report and draft resolution to be presented at the 2007 Annual Session in Kyiv. Mr. Lorentzen stated that within the theme, 'Implementation of OSCE Commitments,' he had decided to focus on two issues in particular. Firstly, he would address energy security in the OSCE region, which he stressed is insufficiently secure and requires consumers and suppliers to work together across borders. Secondly, Mr. Lorentzen announced his plans to consider the situation in Belarus, noting that he had recently been invited to join the Parliamentary Assembly's Ad Hoc Working Group on Belarus. In addition, the Rapporteur said that he would be closely following the situation in Kosovo and would consider any new developments that need to be addressed.



Address by Rolf Ekeus, OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities

Ambassador Ekeus, the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities (HCNM), provided an overview of the work that is being carried out by his office in promoting integration combined with respect for minority cultures and languages as well as the security related aspects of national minority policies. He noted that conflict prevention is a fundamental objective of the OSCE and stressed the importance of an instrument like the HCNM for addressing difficulties between states but also within states. In this respect, he noted that legislation and education play a very important role. He further stressed the importance of ensuring adequate participation by minority groups in society along with media coverage of minority issues in a way that is accessible to minority groups.

Ambassador Ekeus also mentioned his 2006 Report on 'Policies on Integration and Diversity,' which was requested by the OSCE PA. The Report concluded that OSCE participating States take the issue of integrating new minorities seriously but that the processes are very complex. The High Commissioner stressed the role of the OSCE PA in promoting issues within the OSCE and called on the Assembly to continue its work on the issue of minorities.

Address by Werner Wnendt, Head of the OSCE Mission in Kosovo

Ambassador Werner Wnendt provided a briefing on the process concerning the status of Kosovo following the report by Martti Ahtisaari, UN Special Envoy on Kosovo. Mr. Wnendt stressed that the OSCE Mission in Kosovo will have an important role to play after the conclusion of discussions about the status of Kosovo, particularly if there is no agreement. He reminded all Members that confidence building is at the core of the OSCE work and noted that the OSCE offers extensive capacity building to all communities, helping to build greater respect for human rights in the ministries of the provisional institutions and supporting reform of the universities. The Mission also supports independent institutions through the anti-corruption agency and works with the municipalities through regional field missions. He pointed out that after the future UN resolution of the Kosovo status, the OSCE Mission in Kosovo is ready to continue its



important work in promoting democratization, human rights and supporting the rule of law. He highlighted that the OSCE mission will become a free-standing mission that can help to expand capacity building as well as to monitor the implementation of the final status proposal.

Discussion

The ensuing debate focused on the need to enhance the efficiency of the OSCE and to co-operate with other Parliamentary Assemblies. Members raised a number of issues, including the removal of military monuments in some countries. The Rapporteur's work on Belarus was welcomed.

The Committee also debated the specific situation of Russian minorities in Estonia and Latvia. Parliamentarians discussed the status of Kosovo and Members emphasized the need for participating States to give the OSCE Mission the necessary resources to carry out new tasks in Kosovo.



Second General Committee on Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and the Environment



The Chairman of the Second General Committee on Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and the Environment, Leonid Ivanchenko (Russian Federation), welcomed all Members and stressed the importance of the economic and environmental dimensions of the OSCE. Mr. Ivanchenko informed Members about his participation on behalf of the OSCE PA at the first half of the 2007 OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum, which focused on 'Key challenges to ensure environmental security and sustainable development in the OSCE area: Land degradation, soil contamination and water management.' Mr. Ivanchenko underlined the destabilising potential of pollution, climatic changes, desertification, soil erosion, increasing energy demand, and ecological catastrophes. "Joint efforts are needed," he stated, "to cope with these menaces." In this context, he stressed that the participation and input of parliamentarians in events like the OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum is essential to translating theoretical outcomes of research and debate into law.

Presentation by Petros Efthymiou, Vice-Chair of the Second Committee

Petros Efthymiou, Vice-Chairman of the Committee, briefed the Committee on the Follow-up Report to the Brussels Declaration adopted by the Assembly in July 2006. He outlined the two sections of the report: the first section presents an overview of the implementation status of recommendations con-



tained in Chapter II of the Brussels Declaration; the second section highlights the main recommendations made by the Parliamentary Assembly in Chapter II of the Brussels Declaration and examines in greater detail the actions taken in response by the OSCE and its Institutions in the months following the OSCE PA Annual Session in Brussels. Mr. Efthymiou also highlighted some relevant points regarding energy security, the resolution on illicit air transport of small arms and light weapons and their ammunition, and the resolution on monitoring of social development in the OSCE region.

Presentation by Roland Blum, Rapporteur of the Second Committee

The Rapporteur of the Second Committee made a comprehensive presentation on the subjects to be



considered in his report and draft resolution at the July 2007 Annual Session in Kyiv. Mr. Blum underlined his intention to focus primarily on the economic effects of migration. He noted that all states are affected by the issue of migration, mainly because they are either countries of origin, of destination or transit countries. In his report for the Annual Session, he particularly intends to address the issue of migration from economic and social points of view.

Address by Bernard Snoy, Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities

Bernard Snoy thanked the Committee Members for the opportunity to address the Assembly and briefed the Committee on the work of the OSCE within the field of economic and environmental affairs. He particularly highlighted events to take place in 2007 under the Spanish Chairmanship of the OSCE. Mr. Snoy also informed Members that the issue of environmental security is expected to be addressed during the OSCE Ministerial Council in Madrid, 29-30 November 2007.



In the field of transport facilitation, the Co-ordinator explained a number of initiatives that are under consideration by his office, including ones focused particularly on landlocked and transit countries. Mr. Snoy also briefed Members on his office's efforts to promote increased dialogue on energy security issues. He noted that the second part of the 15th OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum would be held in Prague from 21 to 23 May 2007.

Discussion

In the general debate there was general agreement that delegates should share experience from their own countries and be of mutual assistance to each other. Several speakers expressed deep concern not only about the problem of drinking water, but water in general, including the oceans. The issue of water security should be addressed by the OSCE, it was suggested.

Delegates also noted that not only energy security, but food security, quality of life, and bio-energy should be topics of future discussions.

The work of the World Trade Organization was raised by a number of Members. Delegates considered whether the OSCE could help to unlock negotiations in the WTO and stressed the need for increased dialogue in this area.

The problem of rapid change of economies as well as land degradation problems and sustainable development in farming were highlighted. Issues related to migration were also raised by many delegates. The Committee welcomed the initiative by the leadership of the Assembly to hold a special debate on energy security.





Third General Committee on Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions



The Chair of the Third General Committee on Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions, the President of the Belgian, Ms. Anne-Marie Lizin, welcomed participants to their first meeting since the Annual Session in Brussels. She reminded participants that their meeting would provide an opportunity to follow-up on previous work, to prepare for the coming Annual Session in Kyiv in July 2007, and to hear about the work of OSCE Institutions in helping to implement OSCE human rights-related commitments.

Presentation by Cecilia Wigström, Vice-Chair of the Third Committee

Ms. Wigström presented the report on follow-up to the OSCE PA's Brussels Declaration, underlining in particular the positive steps made in the implementation of the Assembly's recommendations in combating anti-Semitism and intolerance. She offered to act as a focal point for collecting national reports on this subject in order to present them during the Annual Session in Kyiv. The Vice-Chair also addressed the issue of OSCE election observation, reminding Members that the Brussels Declaration called for continued political leadership of OSCE observation missions, and called for the full implementation of the 1997 Co-operation Agreement. Ms. Wigström also gave an overview of implementation with regard to gender balance within the OSCE and highlighted a recent brochure that had been produced. The Vice-Chair noted positive



responses to the PA's recommendations regarding combating the exploitation of children and trafficking in human beings. She suggested inviting Eva Biaudet, OSCE Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings, to the 2007 Annual Session.

Presentation by Jesús López-Medel, Rapporteur of the Third Committee

In presenting his ideas for his coming report and draft resolution, Mr. López-Medel stressed the need to restate the fundamental principles that united the OSCE. In particular he highlighted the need for respect for individuals' rights, the rule of law, and gender equality. The Rapporteur noted that security is a pri-



ority issue for many States, particularly in regards to terrorism, but he stressed that public authorities must be subject to democratic values when combating terrorism and that all action must be ethically acceptable.

Noting the need for further political impetus, Mr. López-Medel expressed his intention to address issues of freedom of expression and association in his report as well as the right to participate in political activities. The Rapporteur also intends to address issues of freedom of belief and protection of national minorities. Finally, he recalled the importance of the Assembly's role in OSCE election observation missions and the need to fortify this role to ensure credibility.

Address by Miklós Haraszti, OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media

Mr. Haraszti gave an overview of the activities undertaken recently by his office, thanking the Belgian Chairmanship for focusing on media-related issues. He discussed his work conducted during assessment visits to participating States, legislative reviews and training sessions. The Representative in particular focused on the issue of accreditation of journalists, providing guidelines for further review.

The Representative also noted that 2006 had been a tragic year regarding pressure on media. It was particularly marked by violence against journalists as well as by the fall-out from the so-called 'cartoons issue' of early 2006. He expressed concern over the prosecution of journalists for breaching secrets, noting that journalists are not bound by state secrecy. Mr. Haraszti also noted that he had been active in encour-



aging the decriminalization of libel in OSCE States. Looking to the future, Mr. Haraszti reminded parliamentarians that the 'digital switch-over,' with more on-demand services being provided by the media, will require legislative work in national parliaments, and he warned against over-burdensome regulation in this area.

Address by Christian Strohal, Director of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights

Ambassador Strohal opened his address by giving an overview of the activities undertaken by the OSCE/ODIHR in fighting against terrorism and intolerance, of governance, transparency, and gender mainstreaming. He outlined the monitoring and legislative work carried out by his office. The Director commended the political support given by



the OSCE PA to the OSCE, noting that the Assembly has often raised issues in Annual Declarations that have led to an effective subsequent decision by the OSCE Council of Ministers.

With reference to OSCE election observation and to the problems that had been raised regarding co-operation between the OSCE/ODIHR and the OSCE PA, Ambassador Strohal stressed that by working together the two Institutions can succeed in accomplishing the common task. He outlined the long-term observation process undertaken by the OSCE/ODIHR and encouraged further dialogue to overcome the ongoing difficulties.

Discussion

In the debate that followed, Members particularly focused on election observation work and the need to overcome difficulties in co-operation. Parliamentarians urged quick action to find a solution based on adherence to the terms of the 1997 Co-operation agreement between the OSCE Chairman-in-Office and the OSCE PA President. The importance of geographic balance in OSCE observation work was also noted.

Parliamentarians also raised concerns regarding anti-Semitism and discrimination and stressed the need for further work in this field. In regards to media freedom, one Member urged greater logistical support to newspapers and printing presses in countries where this may be of use. The input and work by the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media was particularly applauded by Members.



Special Debate: Energy Security in the OSCE Area



Prior to closing the Winter Meeting, the Assembly held a special debate focused on 'Energy Security in the OSCE Area'. This extraordinary debate was called for by OSCE PA President Göran Lennmarker to further inter-parliamentary dialogue on this topical issue, which has become of primary concern in the region in recent years. Open dialogue among parliamentarians was seen as an important step in order to achieve an overview of the current opinions in the parliaments of the OSCE area. The debate offered an opportunity to air different ideas on how to deal with this critical issue.

During the debate, a wide spectrum of ideas were expressed by parliamentarians from across the OSCE area. Many emphasized the relationship between energy security and the different roles that producer, transit, and consumer-countries have in dealing with the issue. A number of parliamentarians also raised concerns about environmental issues, and particularly the difficulties of climate change.

Participants noted that national level policies are insufficient. Energy security is a worldwide problem which requires a transparent, global approach, involving international organizations and parliaments as well as representatives from civil society and industry, it was stressed. It was noted that the relationship between increasing demand for energy and climate change should be acknowledged and should drive the political will to utilise new sources of energy such as biofuel, solar power, and wind power. Such alternative sources could also help to counteract energy vulnerability in the OSCE area. Finally, many delegates stated that the power over energy is connected to an enormous responsibility and that energy resources should not be allowed to be used as a diplomatic weapon.

Different ideas developed out of the special debate. The need for further work on topics concerning energy security was noted, and participants made an appeal to start a real dialogue on energy security within the OSCE.





Closing Joint Session of the Three General Committees



Report by Tone Tingsgaard, OSCE PA Special Representative on Gender Issues

Vice-President Tingsgaard invited all Members to participate more actively in raising the profile of gender issues in the Assembly and the OSCE. In particular, Ms. Tingsgaard called upon delegations to join the 'Group of Friends of the Special Representative' to improve networking among interested Members within the OSCE PA.

Ms. Tingsgaard pointed out that women's representation in Delegations in the Assembly remains low, at less than 25 per cent. She called upon all Members

to actively engage in improving this balance in the Organization through greater promotion of women in OSCE PA activities. In addition, she stressed the importance of mainstreaming gender in Assembly work and documents and ensuring that both genders participate and are visible in Assembly activities.

The Special Representative drew Members' attention to the gender gap in the OSCE; the Gender Balance Report shows that, statistically, the gender balance within the OSCE has not improved. While statistics show certain progress in the overall representation of women within the OSCE, women remain under-represented at senior levels, she said. Ms. Tingsgaard expressed her deep concern that the issue of 'gender equality' is no longer visible on the agenda of the OSCE's participating States, specifically in the Permanent Council in Vienna. She called for greater involvement by parliamentarians in specific projects, for example with OSCE field missions, to help raise awareness and promote equal representation in participating States.

Following the presentation by the Special Representative, the Chairs of the three General Committees reported on the work conducted during their meetings. Jean-Charles Gardetto, Leonid Ivanchenko, and Anne-Marie Lizin each briefed the Assembly on the outcomes of their Committee sessions. Finally, President Lennmarker thanked Members for their active participation during the meetings and congratulated the Assembly for a successful and constructive Winter Meeting.





The International Secretariat



*Secretary General
Spencer Oliver*

The OSCE PA International Secretariat provides administrative support for the Assembly in its various activities. The Secretariat organizes the meetings of the Assembly, and provides support for election observation projects, special missions and Presidential activities. Its work is carried out in co-operation with other OSCE Institutions and international parliamentary organizations. The Secretariat, which is hosted by the Danish Parliament, is headed by Secretary General Spencer Oliver, and has a permanent staff of 15.



*Deputy Secretary
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*Deputy Secretary
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The OSCE Parliamentary Assembly



The OSCE PA is the parliamentary dimension of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, whose 56 participating States span the geographical area from Vancouver to Vladivostok.

The primary task of the 320 member Assembly is to facilitate inter-parliamentary dialogue, an important aspect of the overall effort to meet the challenges of democracy throughout the OSCE area. Recognized as a regional arrangement under Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter, the OSCE is a primary instrument for early warning, conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict rehabilitation in its area. The Parliamentary Assembly, originally established by the 1990 Paris Summit to promote greater involvement in the OSCE by national parliaments, has grown into a very active and esteemed member of the OSCE family.

The basic objectives of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly are:

- To assess the implementation of OSCE objectives by participating States;
- To discuss subjects addressed during meetings of the Ministerial Council and the summits of Heads of State or Government;
- To develop and promote mechanisms for the prevention and resolution of conflicts;
- To support the strengthening and consolidation of democratic institutions in OSCE participating States;
- To contribute to the development of OSCE institutional structures and of relations between existing OSCE Institutions.

To pursue these objectives, the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly employs a variety of means:

- A Final Declaration and a number of resolutions and recommendations are adopted each year at the Annual Session in July;
- Committee work addresses important contemporary international issues;
- Programmes and Seminars designed to develop and strengthen democracy including an extensive election observation programme;
- Special parliamentary missions to areas of latent or active crisis.



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