

Focus on Gender Issues - OSCE PA participates in 50th Session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women



In conjunction with the 50th Session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women, the OSCE PA organized a special panel discussion in New York on 27 February. The theme for discussion was: 'Women in Security Politics – Do Women Make a Difference'.

Vice-President and Special Representative on Gender Issues, Tone Tingsgaard gave an overview of the activities of the Assembly in promoting the status of women within the OSCE and expressed her regretted over the lack of progress in this respect. Mrs. Tingsgaard also gave an overview of her experiences as the Vice-Chair of the Defence Committee in the Swedish Parliament. Vice-President Barbara Haering presented her experiences as Chair of the Defence Committee in the Swiss Parliament, stressing the dilemma that while wars of today involve women more than ever, women are not represented in peace negotiations. She emphasized the need to establish national implementation plans for UN Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security to strengthen networks among women parliamentarians and to link such networks to civil society, as well as to foster research on the status of women, and not least to promote greater visibility

of successes obtained.

Mrs. Barbara Prammer, Deputy Speaker of the Austrian Parliament, stressed the importance of UN Resolution 1325 and called for effective implementation. Mrs. Prammer also highlighted that having more women involved in decisions does not necessarily lead to more gender equality since a number of women are 'gender blind'. Mrs. Arta Dade, Member of Parliament in Albania stressed the special circumstances facing women and their security in the Balkan region. She emphasized that security for women involves much more than military aspects and stressed that economic, social and cultural conditions such as job-security are also very important issues.

The meeting was chaired by Ms. Tina Schön, Deputy Secretary General of the OSCE PA. Following this side-event the OSCE PA women MPs participated in several of the other side events organized by NGOs as well as the IPU meeting on women and political participation.

The Assembly also presented two booklets on gender work in the Assembly, and on personal experience of women in politics.

Roberto Battelli appointed Special Representative on South East Europe



During the Winter Meeting in Vienna, OSCE PA President Alcee L. Hastings appointed the Head of the Slovenian Delegation to the OSCE PA, Roberto Battelli, as his Special Representative on South East Europe.

In making the appointment, President Hastings recalled past work by the Assembly in this region, and particularly the comprehensive resolution that the Assembly passed on the region during the 2002 Annual Session in Berlin.

Mr. Battelli has in particular been mandated to:

- Promote dialogue in all segments of society, in particular at the parliamentary level, in order to encourage reconciliation and rehabilitation in South East Europe, and in

particular in the Western Balkans, and to make a contribution to the transformation and building up of democratic institutions;

- Maintain close contact with and serve as a focal point for Assembly participation in the Parliamentary Troika of the Stability Pact;
- Report back to the President on the situation in the region, in particular the development of the status talks on Kosovo and the future of the Serbia and Montenegro State Union;
- Communicate with relevant actors within the OSCE who work on issues related to the region.

Mr. Battelli's efforts in this regard will complement the work being done by Mr. Wolfgang Grossruck, Rapporteur of the First Committee, and will be supported by the PA Staff in Vienna.