

South East Europe, Mediterranean and conflict resolution discussed in Dubrovnik



More than 200 parliamentarians from across the 56-country OSCE region met in Dubrovnik on 7-10 October to discuss progress in South East Europe, co-operation in the Mediterranean region, and conflict resolution efforts of the OSCE Minsk Group. The OSCE PA's 2011 Fall Meetings also included a meeting of the Standing Committee of Heads of Delegations on 9 October.

Speakers at the Fall Meetings included OSCE PA President Petros Efthymiou, Head of Croatia's Delegation to the OSCE PA Tonino Picula, Croatian President Ivo Josipovic, Prime Minister Jadranka Kosor, and Speaker of the Croatian Parliament Luka Bebic. OSCE Secretary General Lamberto Zannier spoke at the Mediterranean Forum and briefed the Standing Committee on the proposed OSCE budget for 2012, which he expects to be adopted in a timely fashion.

Chaired by OSCE PA Special Representative on South-East Europe Roberto Battelli, the session entitled "Challenges and Concerns for South-East Europe: the Role of the OSCE" was addressed by the seven regional heads of OSCE field presences. It was the first time all seven heads appeared together to provide a joint briefing to the Assembly.

At the Mediterranean Forum on 9 October with representatives present from Algeria, Israel, Jordan, Morocco, and Tunisia, participants discussed the need for parliaments and governments to speak out on human rights issues, expressed support for the role of women in North African politics, and urged prompt progress toward a two-state solution between Israelis and Palestinians.

The special presentation on "The Role of the OSCE in Con-

flikt Resolution: Nagorno-Karabakh" was moderated by the OSCE PA's Special Representative on the South Caucasus, Assembly President Emeritus Joao Soares. Keynote speakers for the discussion included the Co-Chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group and the Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office on the conflict dealt with by the OSCE Minsk Conference, marking the first appearance before the Assembly by the Ambassadors from Russia, France and the United States.

In his capacity as OSCE PA Treasurer, Roberto Battelli reported to the Standing Committee that the Assembly is in good financial health and operating under budget. OSCE PA Secretary General Spencer Oliver informed the Standing Committee of the work of the International Secretariat planning for future OSCE PA activities, and that outside independent professional auditors have given a preliminary positive assessment for this fiscal year. Standing Committee delegates also heard from Assembly Special Representatives and Ad Hoc Committees about their ongoing activities.

With dozens of registered election observers present, the Fall Meetings provided an opportunity for Members to discuss the upcoming election observation missions to Tunisia and Kyrgyzstan. The heads of these election observation missions, OSCE PA Vice-Presidents Riccardo Migliori and Walburga Habsburg Douglas, briefed Members on their recent pre-election visits to Tunisia and Kyrgyzstan, respectively.

On the margins of the meeting, the Secretariat's organizational team met with delegations from Georgia, Turkey and Monaco regarding arrangements for future PA meetings.

Efthymiou speaks at OSCE Mediterranean Conference in Budva, Montenegro

OSCE PA President Petros Efthymiou addressed the 2011 OSCE Mediterranean Conference, held from 10 to 11 October, in Budva, Montenegro, under the theme "Democratic Transformation: Challenges and Opportunities in the Mediterranean Region."

Referring to the discussions that had taken place a day earlier during the PA Fall Meetings in Dubrovnik, Efthymiou urged the OSCE participating States to show more proactive

courage and inspiration in their relationship with Partner countries, especially in the light of the democratic transition taking place in North Africa. During the conference, Efthymiou also met with the Foreign Minister of Montenegro, Milan Rocen, and spoke with senior OSCE officials.

The President was accompanied by Amb. Andreas Nothelle from the PA's Vienna Liaison Office and Delegation Secretary Hara Papazoudi from the Hellenic Parliament.