OSCE parliamentarians to meet in Vienna for the 22nd Winter Meeting

OSCE flags flying at the Hofburg in Vienna

The OSCE PA's 22nd Winter Meeting will take place on 23 and 24 February in Vienna and will stream live at the PA's website and on its Facebook and YouTube channels. Opening on the morning of 23 February with speeches by President of the Austrian National Council Wolfgang Sobotka, President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly Margareta Cederfelt, and other OSCE officials, the meeting will include sessions of the three General Committees, a meeting of the Standing Committee, and a number of side events.

To begin preliminary work on the draft resolutions and reports being prepared by Committee Rapporteurs for this summer's Annual Session in Vancouver, the PA General Committees will be briefed by high-ranking OSCE officials and Committee Chairs. The First and Third Committees will hold debates on topics including "One Year of Russia's War Against Ukraine: Understand-

ing OSCE's Role, Functioning, and Contributions," and "Accountability for Human Rights Abuses During Times of Conflict." The Second Committee will hold a debate on "Affordable, Secure, Clean and Sustainable Energy in the OSCE Region: Prospects and Challenges."

The theme for the general debate on 24 February will be "One Year In: Russia's Continued Full-Scale War on Ukraine." The debate will include addresses by OSCE PA Special Representatives: on Eastern Europe Daniela De Ridder, on Parliamentary Dialogue on Ukraine Reinhold Lopatka, on Political Prisoners Steve Cohen; as well as Chair of the OSCE PA Ad Hoc Committee on Migration Mark Pritchard, and Special Rapporteur on War Crimes in Ukraine John Whittingdale.

Further information and the full programme for the Winter Meeting is available at www.oscepa.org.

2022 Election Observation Overview published online

The OSCE PA's 2022 Election Observation Overview has been published on the Assembly's website and distributed to OSCE PA Delegations. Featuring data and analysis on the composition of election observation missions to Bosnia and Herzegovina, Hungary, Serbia and the United States, the report is intended to highlight the dedication and commitment of OSCE parliamentarians who contribute their time to this essential endeavor. It is available to download here: http://bit.ly/3JNOoxJ

Featured tweets @oscepa

Margareta Cederfelt
@MCederfelt

An absolute tragedy in #Turkey today. I extend my deepest condolences to the families of the victims of the #TurkeyEarthquake and I hope that rescue efforts are successful in locating survivors. The #oscepa stands with you.

OSCE PA President Margareta Cederfelt (Sweden) tweeted earlier this week to express sympathies on behalf of the Assembly to the people and government of Türkiye for the staggering loss of life following the devastating earthquake on Monday. Calling it an "absolute tragedy," the President extended condolences to the families of the victims and expressed hope for the success of rescue efforts.

"The OSCE PA stands with you," she said.

IN MEMORIAM:

Ritt Bjerregaard, Founding Member and Vice-President of the OSCE PA

Ritt Bjerregaard died in Copenhagen on 21 January. A founding Member of the Assembly since the Madrid Conference of 1991, Bjerregaard headed the first Danish Delegation, and was elected Vice-President of the then CSCE PA at the Assembly's first Annual Session held in Budapest in July 1992. Deeply committed and engaged in the Assembly, she was primarily responsible for establishing the headquarters of the International Secretariat in Copenhagen at the start of 1993, precisely 30 years ago now.

First elected to the Danish Parliament in 1971, Ritt Bjerregaard's remarkable political career included numerous high-level positions in the Danish Government and Parliament and she also served for some years as the EU Commissioner for the Environment. From 2006 to 2009 she was the Lord Mayor of Copenhagen.

The Assembly and the International Secretariat are grateful to Ritt Bjerregaard and the Parliament of Denmark for their unconditional support all these years.