

33rd Annual Session spotlights international law and support for Ukraine



Plenary session in The Hague, 7 July 2026.

The OSCE Parliamentary Assembly concluded its 33rd Annual Session Wednesday by adopting The Hague Declaration, reaffirming the Helsinki Final Act principles and the OSCE's role in comprehensive security. The Declaration strongly condemns Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine as a gross violation of international law, demanding full withdrawal of forces, the release of detained OSCE officials Vadym Golda, Maksym Petrov, and Dmytro Shabanov, sustained support for Ukraine, and accountability for war crimes.

It expresses serious concern over democratic backsliding across the OSCE region, addresses Middle East instability, hybrid threats, AI risks, critical infrastructure protection, climate action, and economic resilience, while calling for stronger OSCE funding and political engagement. "The OSCE remains an indispensable instrument for dialogue," the Declaration states.

Over several days of meetings in general committees, plenaries and side events, parliamentarians at the 33rd Annual Session reinforced core Helsinki principles and expressed strong support for Ukraine during plenary sessions held from 4 to 8 July. The opening plenary featured speeches by Dutch Prime Minister

Rob Jetten, Senate President Mei Li Vos, House of Representatives President Thom van Campen, and Head of the Dutch Delegation Farah Karimi, who emphasized that security must rest on democracy, human rights, and the rules-based order rather than force.

PA President Pere Joan Pons (Spain) stressed the need to defend principles without hierarchy and maintain consistency to preserve the international order. Swiss Foreign Minister and OSCE Chairman-in-Office Ignazio Cassis highlighted parliamentarians' vital role in sustaining dialogue amid mistrust. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, in a video address, urged intensified pressure on Russia to end its invasion and greater use of OSCE tools for peace. In an address Wednesday, OSCE Secretary General Feridun Sinirlioğlu highlighted the "essential contribution" of the OSCE PA, while Secretary General Roberto Montella thanked the parliamentarians for remaining engaged.

In the 7 July plenary session focused on international justice, parliamentarians heard from Mariya Shabanova, wife of detained OSCE official Dmytro Shabanov, describing her husband's more than four-year incarceration as a violation of international humanitarian law. Following Shabanova's address, keynote speeches by President of the International Criminal Court Tomoko Akane and Boštjan Škrlec, Chair of Eurojust, introduced the general debate.

On 4 July, following a presentation by Treasurer Johan Büser, the Standing Committee approved the budget for the 2026-2027 Financial Year.

OSCE PA Vice-Presidents and Committee Officers elected for 2026-2027

At the close of the Annual Session, the Assembly elected three new Vice-Presidents: Maria Karapetyan (Armenia), Monika Zajkova (North Macedonia), and John Whittingdale (United Kingdom). Mykyta Poturaiev (Ukraine), who was first elected Vice-President at the 2023 Annual Session in Vancouver, was re-elected in The Hague.

The First Committee elected its 2026/27 leadership on Tuesday, with Joe Wilson (United States) elected Chair, Jevrosima

Pejović (Montenegro) re-elected Vice-Chair and Tobias Winkler (Germany) re-elected Rapporteur. In the Second Committee, Azay Guliyev (Azerbaijan) was re-elected Chair, Artur Gerashymov (Ukraine) was re-elected Vice-Chair and Paula Cardoso (Portugal) was re-elected Rapporteur. In the Third Committee, Sargis Khandanyan (Armenia) was re-elected Chair, Baroness Christine Blower (United Kingdom) re-elected Vice-Chair, and Mpanzu Bamenga (Netherlands) elected Rapporteur.

Ad Hoc Committees and side events cover human rights, Ukraine, and emerging challenges

Side events and meetings of the OSCE PA's Ad Hoc Committees during the 33rd Annual Session provided focused platforms to address migration, counter-terrorism, Ukraine, demographic shifts, nuclear risks, INTERPOL reform, economic connectivity, and other pressing issues.

The Ad Hoc Committee on Migration, chaired by Farah Karimi (Netherlands), visited the migration-themed Fenix Museum in Rotterdam, while the Ad Hoc Committee on Countering Terrorism, chaired by Kamil Aydın (Türkiye), discussed evolving threats, followed by presentations from Dutch and international experts. The Parliamentary Support Team for Ukraine, chaired by Nancy Faeser (Germany), discussed war crimes committed by the Russian Federation.

Ukraine-related side events drew attention to the cases of detained OSCE officials Dmytro Shabanov, Maksym Petrov, and Vadym Golda, as well as the forcible deportation and transfer of Ukrainian children by Russia since 2022. Special Envoy Carina Ödebrink (Sweden) presented her 2026 report on child deportations, calling for enhanced co-operation, accountability, and trauma-informed reintegration. Another event, sponsored by Ukrainian and French delegations, focused on crimes against



High-level side event on the abductions, forcible transfers and deportations of Ukrainian children, The Hague, 6 July 2026

media professionals in Ukraine and mechanisms for justice.

Demographic challenges took center stage in a side event sponsored by Gudrun Kugler (Austria), which framed population decline as a strategic issue for societal resilience and offered policy responses for intergenerational solidarity. A Central Asia-focused event, sponsored by Tajikistan's delegation with Special Representative Angelos Syrigos (Greece), emphasized the region's role in dialogue and security. A Dutch-sponsored event focused on international law.

On 7 July, side events explored the human dimension of Ukraine ceasefire talks, institutional mechanisms for the Youth, Peace and Security (YPS) agenda, and the impact of artificial intelligence on media freedom.