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PA Bureau meets on eve of OSCE Ministerial Council in Hamburg



Roberto Montella, Christine Muttonen, Gustavo Pallares, Doris Barnett, and Gernot Erler, Hamburg, 7 Dec. 2016

OSCE PA President Christine Muttonen (MP, Austria) convened on Wednesday the Assembly's annual Bureau meeting held in conjunction with the OSCE Ministerial Council taking place 8-9 December in Hamburg, Germany.

Gernot Erler, Germany's Special Representative for the OSCE Chairmanship, addressed the Bureau meeting, noting that the Chairmanship is working for a well-balanced package of Ministerial Council decisions and declarations in all three dimensions of security. He discussed some of the priority issues being addressed and expressed Germany's eagerness to continue co-operation with the incoming Austrian OSCE Chairmanship in 2017.

In her opening remarks, President Muttonen noted that the Parliamentary Assembly is one of the comparative advantages of the OSCE, pointing out that the PA has been exceptionally active this autumn and thanking Bureau members for representing the Assembly at various conferences and seminars, as well as leading election observation missions.

The President provided an update on her activities, including recent addresses to the OSCE Permanent Council in Vienna and the NATO PA's Annual Session in Istanbul, and the election observation mission to the United States that she led in November. She reported on her working visit to the UN headquarters in New York to meet Under-Secretary-General Jeffrey Feltman and Under-Secretary-General and Executive

Director of UN Women Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, as well as a recent visit she paid to Moscow for bilateral meetings with Russian Federation Council Chairperson Valentina Matvienko and State Duma Deputy Chair Petr Tolstoy.

The Bureau meeting included a report by OSCE PA Treasurer Doris Barnett (MP, Germany), who noted that the Assembly remains within the approved budget and stressed that the International Secretariat has worked to ensure that the PA's financial management complies with efforts in national parliaments to minimize expenses. Deputy Secretary General Gustavo Pallares also presented a report on proposals to amend the PA's scales of national contributions.

President Emeritus and Special Representative on Mediation Ilkka Kanerva (MP, Finland) reported on his work, focusing in particular on the need for enhancing co-operation between the OSCE's governmental side and the PA. The Assembly's work on mediation, he said, relies on effective co-ordination with relevant partners, including OSCE field operations.

OSCE PA Secretary General Roberto Montella also presented a report. Montella focused on internal reforms he has introduced since assuming his post earlier this year, including the formalization of financial rules and regulations. The OSCE PA's Special Representative in Vienna, Amb. Andreas Nothelle, provided an overview of the Ministerial Council preparations and internal OSCE relations, including between the PA and the governmental side.

Bureau members also heard a report presented by Deputy Secretary General Semyon Dzakhaev on behalf of Lord Peter Bowness, Chair of the PA's Sub-Committee on the Rules of Procedure and Working Practices, which outlined a number of proposals to streamline the Assembly's working methods.

The Bureau meeting also included reports on recent election observation missions, as well as updates on upcoming events and meetings.

Neri visits Secretariat for talks on financial reforms, migration matters



Gustavo Pallares, Fabrice Hugot, Alain Neri, Roberto Montella

On Monday, the International Secretariat hosted Senator Alain Neri from the French delegation to the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly for discussions on financial and budgetary reforms of the PA and the work of the Ad Hoc Committee on Migration. In a meeting with Secretary General Roberto Montella and staff, talks focused on

financial transparency, parliamentary oversight of budgetary contributions and other possible changes of the PA's fiscal management.

Neri, who serves as Vice-Chair of the OSCE PA's Ad Hoc Committee on Migration, also met with Programme Officer Farimah Daftary, whose portfolio includes migration issues. Discussions focused on the aftermath of the dismantling of the Calais camp, upcoming Assembly work on the refugee and migrant crisis, and the contributions of the Parliamentary Assembly to the debate on how to effectively address the migration crisis.

Neri was accompanied by advisor Fabrice Hugot from the French parliament.