

News from Copenhagen

OSCE PA Minsk Declaration adopted, officers elected



The OSCE Parliamentary Assembly met on 5-9 July 2017 in Minsk for its 26th Annual Session. With some 260 parliamentarians from North America, Europe and Asia participating, the theme of the Session was “Enhancing mutual trust and co-operation for peace and prosperity in the OSCE region.”

The Session ended on 9 July with the adoption of the Minsk Declaration, which contains recommendations to help shape OSCE and national policies in the fields of political-military affairs, economics and environment, and human rights. Parliamentarians adopted the Declaration by a vote of 91-15, with three abstentions.

The document includes resolutions dealing with terrorism, conflict resolution, climate change, migration, human rights, the crisis in and around Ukraine, the death penalty, new voting technologies, energy and water security, religious discrimination, legislative responses to new psychoactive substances, preventing child sexual exploitation, promoting gender-inclusive conflict mediation, and more. (The Declaration can be downloaded at www.oscepa.org.)

At the close of the Session, Christine Muttonen (Austria) was elected to a second term as President of the Assembly. Doris Barnett (Germany) was re-elected Treasurer by acclamation. The Assembly elected Italian parliamentarian Marietta Tidei, United States Senator Roger Wicker, Swedish parliamentarian Margareta Cederfelt, and re-elected Romanian parliamentarian Victor Dobro as Vice-Presidents.

In the Committee on Political Affairs and Security, Filippo Lombardi (Switzerland) was elected Chair; Guglielmo Picchi (Italy) Vice-Chair; and Kristian Vigenin (Bulgaria) Rapporteur. The Committee on Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and Environment elected Nilza Sena (Portugal) as Chair; Artur Gerasymov (Ukraine) Vice-Chair; and Sofio Katsarava (Georgia) Rapporteur. Ignacio Sanchez Amor (Spain) was elected Chair of the Committee on Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions, with Ivana Dobesova (Czech Republic) elected Vice-Chair, and Kyriakos Hadjiyianni (Cyprus) Rapporteur.

Side events were held in Minsk on issues including human rights in Belarus, migration, human trafficking, nuclear weapons, and promoting women’s leadership in politics.

Following the Annual Session, President Muttonen made a number of key appointments. For the Assembly’s newly established Ad Hoc Committee on Countering Terrorism, President Muttonen appointed Makis Voridis (Greece) as Chair, and Stephane Crusniere (Belgium), Richard Hudson (United States), Sofio Katsarava (Georgia) and Nikolay Kovalev (Russian Federation) as Vice-Chairs.

President Muttonen also appointed Laurynas Kasciunas, Deputy Head of the Delegation of Lithuania to the OSCE PA, as Vice-Chair of the OSCE PA’s Ad Hoc Committee on Migration. She appointed Deputy Head of the French Delegation Pascal Allizard as the Assembly’s Special Representative on Mediterranean Affairs.

PA President Muttonen addresses OSCE Foreign Ministers in Mauerbach

OSCE PA President Christine Muttonen (Austria) addressed the OSCE Informal Ministerial Meeting in Mauerbach, Austria, on Tuesday, stressing concerns about the state of the European security architecture and the OSCE. Noting that the OSCE PA’s 26th Annual Session had concluded just two days earlier in Minsk, she highlighted the recommendations adopted by the Assembly over several days of meetings, and emphasized the value of the PA as a forum for open, in-depth dialogue.

The President urged action to strengthen the OSCE and, after a political agreement had been found regarding the vacant top four leadership positions in the OSCE on the sidelines

of the meeting, stressed the need to quickly take the necessary decisions. She added that only a quick resolution of such disagreements will ensure that the OSCE can continue to function and serve the OSCE’s people.

Muttonen also participated in a roundtable discussion at the Informal Ministerial on “Preventing violent extremism and radicalization leading to terrorism.”

