

News from Copenhagen

MPs call for enhanced co-operation on migration at Malta conference



Ad Hoc Committee member Alf Dubs, PAM SG Sergio Piazzi, PAM Pres. Pedro Roque, PA Special Rep. on Mediterranean Affairs Pascal Allizard, PAM VP Lhou Lmarbouh, Valletta, 16 Nov.

Members of the OSCE PA's Ad Hoc Committee on Migration were in Malta last week for a conference on promoting migration-related co-operation in the Mediterranean region. The conference, hosted by the Inter-Parliamentary Union, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean and the Parliament of Malta, was organized to provide parliamentary input to United Nations discussions on global compacts on refugees and migrants next year.

Ad Hoc Committee Vice-Chair and Special Representative on Mediterranean Affairs Pascal Allizard (France) on 16 November presented the committee's recent work, stressing the need for improved co-operation to have a real impact on current challenges.

Allizard took the opportunity to highlight a number of recommendations put forward by the OSCE PA including those related to improved responsibility sharing and resettling of persons in need of protection, as well as the allocation of financial and human resources needed to ensure the timely processing of asylum claims.

Committee member Alf Dubs (United Kingdom) spoke at a session dedicated to offering safe havens to refugees. A vocal advocate in his home country of the need for protection of child refugees, Dubs encouraged greater focus on this as a basis for international co-operation. He stressed that the plight of unaccompanied minors has been a particular tragedy in the migration crisis of recent years and urged improved co-operation to help the children caught up in migration flows.

The Malta conference brought together parliamentarians on 16-17 Nov. from across the Mediterranean region, Europe and Africa, as well as representatives of international organizations and NGOs, for discussions on responses to migration challenges and opportunities. Allizard and Dubs were supported by Programme Officer Farimah Daftary and Executive Assistant Anna Di Domenico from the International Secretariat.

PA holds third in a series of meetings with partners on election observation

OSCE PA Secretary General Roberto Montella led a team from the International Secretariat to Strasbourg last week, joining colleagues from the Parliamentary Assemblies of the Council of Europe and NATO, the European Parliament, and OSCE/ODIHR for the third in a series of informal brainstorming sessions focused on enhancing election observation co-operation. The meeting on 16-17 November was hosted by PACE Secretary General Wojciech Sawicki, and followed similar meetings held in Helsingør and Warsaw.

Participants exchanged views on their election observation experiences with a focus on the conduct and accountability of observers. It was noted that co-operation between institutions has improved in recent years, including on matters such as the pre-election joint parliamentary briefing and the drafting of the preliminary statement. There is room for improvement including on the follow-up of election observation reports,



Participants at PACE headquarters in Strasbourg, 17 Nov.

noted participants, as well as co-ordination of activities during election observation missions.

Participants included NATO PA Secretary General David Hobbs, OSCE/ODIHR Director Ingibjorg Solrun Gisladdottir, and Christina Castagnoli of the Directorate for Democracy Support, Democracy and Elections Actions of the European Parliament. The OSCE PA team included Chief of the Executive Office Andreas Baker, and Head of Administration for Election Observation Iryna Sabashuk.

Members of Moroccan OSCE PA Delegation visit International Secretariat for talks with SG

A delegation of Moroccan MPs visited the International Secretariat Wednesday for discussions with OSCE PA Secretary General Roberto Montella and staff. The delegation included Mohamed El Bakkouri, who serves as Head of the OSCE PA's Moroccan Delegation, and Abdelkrim El Hamss. Topics of discussion included the recent seminar hosted by Morocco on countering violent extremism, as well as OSCE engagement with Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation.



Moroccan MPs meet with SG Montella in Copenhagen, 22 Nov.