

News from Copenhagen

OSCE PA adopts Berlin Declaration



OSCE PA Members vote for the Berlin Declaration in the plenary hall of the Bundestag.

Under the theme “Implementing OSCE Commitments: The Role of Parliaments,” the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly met in Berlin for its 27th Annual Session on 7-11 July 2018. The meeting included the participation of some 300 parliamentarians from North America, Europe and Asia.

The Annual Session culminated in the adoption of the Berlin Declaration with recommendations to national governments, parliaments and the international community in the fields of political affairs, security, economics, environment and human rights.

The Declaration, adopted following an amendment process carried out over several days of committee meetings, calls essential the “commitment to the fundamental principles of international law, human rights and the rule of law enshrined in the UN Charter and the Helsinki Final Act.” It urges renewed efforts to resolve conflicts, with a particular focus on Ukraine, Georgia, Moldova, and the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

In the Declaration, OSCE parliamentarians called for greater commitment from governments to the OSCE’s principles of dialogue and détente, including through the strengthening of arms control regimes, security sector reform, the development of confidence- and security-building measures, and the good-faith implementation of agreements.

The Declaration further calls on governments to ensure that human rights are respected by all security and intelligence services, both public and private, and urges parliaments to establish bodies for scrutinizing these services’ activities. Parliaments should also support the OSCE’s “structured dialogue” process, the Declaration says.

In the economic and environmental dimension, the Declaration stresses the unique role of parliaments in promoting reforms to implement OSCE commitments, in particular by fighting corruption, cracking down on organized crime, money laundering and the financing of terrorism. The Declaration also calls on parliaments “to promote universal ratification of the Paris Agreement.”

International humanitarian and human rights law must be upheld during armed conflicts and the right of safe return of refugees and internally displaced persons must be respected, the Declaration says. It further calls for investigations into the serious human rights violations of people in conflict zones and occupied territories, including in the South Caucasus, Ukraine, and Cyprus. All OSCE countries should “protect the rights of migrants and refugees, especially their freedom from arbitrary detention, and to actively work on the integration of refugees and protect their right to family reunification, with particular consideration for unaccompanied minors.”

In addition to the three main resolutions, 16 supplementary items were adopted by the Assembly dealing with topics including counter-terrorism, building communities free of human trafficking, counteracting propaganda, building an effective protection framework for migrant children, security sector governance and reform, and combating gender-based violence.

A range of events were organized by delegations on the sidelines of the Session, including on topics related to election observation, corruption, and the environmental impact of armed conflict.

New Bureau elected in Berlin

George Tsereteli was elected OSCE PA President until the end of the 2019 Annual Session, while Peter Bowness (United Kingdom), Kari Henriksen, Kristian Vigenin (Bulgaria), and Pascal Allizard (France) were elected Vice-Presidents. Elections to the OSCE PA’s general committees were held on Tuesday 10 July. In the political and security committee, Filippo Lombardi (Switzerland) was elected Chair, Sofio Katsarava (Georgia) Vice-Chair, and Alan Farrell (Ireland) Rapporteur. In the economic and environmental committee, Nilza de Sena (Portugal) was elected Chair, Artur Gerasymov (Ukraine) Vice-Chair, and Elona Hoxha Gjebrea (Albania) Rapporteur. In the human rights committee, Margareta Kiener

Nellen (Switzerland) was elected Chair, Michael Georg Link (Germany) Vice-Chair, and Kyriakos Kyriakou-Hadjjiyianni (Cyprus) Rapporteur.



Members of the Bureau of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly elected in Berlin.