PA President and SG meet with Danish Foreign Minister for discussions on Belarus and the OSCE

The OSCE Parliamentary Assembly’s webinar today, entitled “From the Arctic to Global: The Political Role in addressing Climate Change,” featured the participation of some 50 parliamentarians and experts for a discussion on the effects of climate change on the Arctic and beyond. The PA’s Special Representative on Arctic Issues Torill Eidsheim (Norway) opened the event, followed by keynote addresses by the Arctic Council’s Adalheidur Thorsteinsdottír, the UN’s Daniele Violette, and Prof. Tore Furevik, Director of the Bjerknes Centre for Climate Research.

“Climate change is a global issue, and, as such, it requires decisive — and urgent — global answers,” said Eidsheim in her introductory remarks. “Alone, we are not able to solve it, not in the Arctic and not anywhere else. We need a spirit of co-operation, solidarity, and joint responsibility for the future of our planet.”

Second Committee Rapporteur Elona Gjebrea Hoxha (Albania) and Secretary General Roberto Montella also addressed the webinar, noting the central importance of the issue and parliamentarians’ role in enhancing commitments from governments.

Moderated by Guido Almerigogna from the OSCE PA International Secretariat, the webinar aimed to enhance the knowledge on climate change and its impact on people’s lives. Participants stressed the need to increase the sense of urgency among governments in mitigating this threat.

Chair Lopatka addresses OSCE counter-terrorism conference, meets with Chairmanship

Chair of the OSCE PA’s Ad Hoc Committee on Countering Terrorism (CCT) Reinhold Lopatka addressed the 2020 OSCE-wide Counter-Terrorism Conference in Vienna on Monday, stressing that parliamentarians play a crucial role in promoting international co-operation and championing a whole-of-society approach in preventing terrorism including during the pandemic.

“International co-operation in addressing terrorism is and must remain vital,” said Lopatka. “I am confident that there is simply no other way to effectively tackle this threat which, one way or another, affects all our countries.”

Lopatka addressed the event following a meeting on the margins with Amb. Igli Hasani, representing the Albanian OSCE Chairmanship. In the meeting, the sides reiterated the focus on strengthening effective partnerships against terrorism and exploring opportunities to further enhance co-operation.

PA leaders discuss Belarus situation with Belarusian Head of Delegation Savinykh

In an online forum on 10 September with Andrei Savinykh, Head of the Belarusian Delegation to the OSCE PA, President George Tsereteli (Georgia) and a number of Assembly leaders discussed the way forward for Belarus. President Tsereteli stressed that the situation regarding detained or exiled members of the Coordination Council is alarming. Savinykh summarized the situation, offered his views on the election results, and highlighted the need to update legislation.

Ditmir Bushati (Albania) commented on the protests in Belarus, stressing that the voices and opinions of demonstrators should be heard. Third Committee Chair Kyriakos Hadjiyianni (Cyprus) inquired about the situation with people in detention centers referring to the reports about torture and missing persons. Third Committee Rapporteur Kari Henriksen (Norway) highlighted reports about violations of freedom of the media and detention of journalists.

Savinykh said that Belarus would appreciate the support and advice of international organizations on legislative reforms. Secretary General Roberto Montella stressed that there are no double standards or hidden agendas in the OSCE PA.