

Special Representative Eidsheim addresses International Conference of Arctic Parliamentarians



Torill Eidsheim

OSCE PA Special Representative on Arctic Issues Torill Eidsheim (Norway) spoke Wednesday at the Conference of Arctic Parliamentarians, taking place 13-14 April. As an official observer, Special Representative Eidsheim spoke at the panel on the Arctic and climate change, noting that the OSCE PA has a keen interest in Arctic issues and that parliamentarians have an important role to play by exercising their legislative and oversight capacities in addressing common challenges such as climate change.

“The climate crisis and its many different implications have a direct impact on the security of society,” Eidsheim

said in her remarks. She stressed that parliamentarians have a responsibility to the people they represent. “Right now, it is paramount that we are all pulling in the same direction,” she said. “I look forward to following the leadership of the Arctic countries in the run-up to COP26.”

Eidsheim told participants that the debates of this conference will be instrumental to informing her work in the coming months. She noted that one of her priorities is to incorporate Arctic issues in the wider work of the Assembly, including by raising awareness of the challenges faced by Arctic indigenous communities and youth, stressing that the OSCE PA is a strong partner in this regard.

Hosted by the Norwegian Parliament (*Stortinget*), the biennial Conference of Arctic Parliamentarians presents an opportunity for parliamentarians of the eight Arctic countries and the European Parliament to engage in the work of the Arctic Council and explore topics such as shipping, education and research, human development and climate change.

New report issued on combating human trafficking along migration routes in BiH

A report has just been published on the OSCE PA's and the OSCE Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings' joint online visit to Bosnia and Herzegovina on 22-25 March. The report features highlights of discussions with BiH officials, international organizations and NGOs. Among the key recommendations are improving the identification of victims of trafficking and better addressing the vulnerabilities of the migrant population by developing a more balanced spread of reception locations. Read the report here: <https://bit.ly/2QnEZ66>

OSCE PA-European Parliament informal meeting on migration co-operation

On Tuesday, OSCE PA Ad Hoc Committee on Migration Chair Margareta Cederfelt, Secretary General Roberto Montella and Senior Programme Officer Farimah Daftary met with former OSCE parliamentarians who now serve in the European Parliament to explore possible collaboration between the PA and the EP on migration. The focus was on how the two bodies could support each other's work in promoting comprehensive solutions to the current situation of refugees and migrants in Europe.

Isabel Santos, the EP's Rapporteur on Albania, and Nacho Sánchez Amor, the EP's Rapporteur on Turkey, talked about their previous experiences and gave their point of view about how Europe is dealing with migration issues, in particular in Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Spain and Turkey. They also highlighted the need for independent human rights monitoring at the external borders of the EU and agreed that the political mood in Europe is currently frozen, with migration still viewed as a problem



of security, while the political focus should be centered on humanitarian aspects too. They also shared their thoughts about the new EU Migration Pact, and its potential for promoting better burden sharing and new policies, calling for a stronger focus on integration and enhanced legal pathways for migration, also for unqualified labor.

Cederfelt informed her colleagues in the EP that she would be reporting on these discussions at the meeting of the OSCE PA Ad Hoc Committee on Migration taking place Wednesday.

Featured tweets @oscepa

Tributes are being offered to former OSCE PA President Alcee Hastings (United States), who passed away last week at the age of 84. Former President George Tsereteli (Georgia) tweeted: “#AlceeHastings was an extraordinary person, leader, man of dignity, of values and principles. It was privilege to be his colleague and friend.. We have great examples of his leadership, wisdom and personal support. He will be remembered with deep respect and love always!” Colleagues Richard Hudson and Ben Cardin from the United States called Hastings a “beloved & effective ambassador for human rights, freedom and American values” and stressed “his commitment to democracy and human rights.”

 **George Tsereteli** @GTsereteli · Apr 7
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