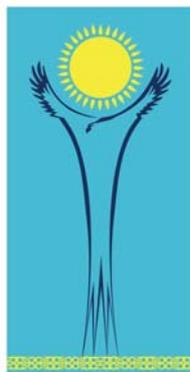


REPORT

Seventeenth Annual Session

Astana, Kazakhstan

Transparency in the OSCE



17th Annual Session
ASTANA, 29 June - 03 July 2008

OSCE PA

Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY

REPORT ON THE 17TH ANNUAL SESSION OF THE OSCE PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY

CONTENTS

SUMMARY	1
ASTANA DECLARATION	2
INAUGURAL PLENARY SESSION	3
STANDING COMMITTEE	8
COMMITTEE MEETINGS	
First General Committee on Political Affairs	12
Second General Committee on Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and the Environment	14
Third General Committee on Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions	16
CLOSING PLENARY SESSION	18
Election of Assembly Officers	19
SIDE MEETINGS	21
Belarus & Guantanamo	21
Gender Lunch	22
Central Asia & NGO Meetings	23
BUREAU MEMBERS	24
Officers of the Assembly	24
General Committee Officers	27
PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY OVERVIEW	30
ANNUAL SESSIONS AND DECLARATIONS	32
PROGRAMME OF THE 2008 ANNUAL SESSION	38

Summary



The OSCE Parliamentary Assembly held its 17th Annual Session in Astana, the capital city of Kazakhstan, from 29 June to 3 July 2008. It was the first time that the Assembly met for its yearly inter-parliamentary conference in Central Asia.

Hosted by the Kazakh Parliament, and under the theme of *Transparency in the OSCE*, the Session brought together 227 parliamentarians from 49 countries.

After five days of deliberation, the parliamentarians adopted the Astana Declaration and additional Resolutions. The Declaration represents the collective voice of the OSCE parliamentarians and calls on the OSCE to carry on further reform to reduce democratic deficit and strengthen transparency and accountability throughout the OSCE.

The parliamentarians unanimously elected a new President of the Assembly, Joao Soares, a member of the Portuguese Parliament. New Vice-Presidents and other Officers were also elected.

The Assembly met in two separate plenary sessions, which were addressed by many senior officials, including the Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev, the Speakers of the Kazakh Senate and Mazhilis, Kassym-Jomart Tokayev

and Aslan Mussin, as well as high-ranking OSCE officials.

The Assembly's three General Committees met over several days to discuss current issues within their respective areas of responsibilities and to consider and amend draft resolutions, dealing with issues such as cyber security, the need to regulate the activities of private military contractors, the security environment in Georgia, and the importance of the OSCE's engagement in Afghanistan. Other issues included the linkage between environmental security and climate change, trade, water management, migration, combating sexual exploitation of children, and the importance of granting greater access to the historical archives of OSCE participating States. The Astana Declaration includes recommendations on these and other issues.

The Assembly's Standing Committee of Heads of Delegations met on the opening day to consider and approve next year's budget and to hear and discuss reports on recent work by the Assembly, particularly with regard to election observation. The Standing Committee also planned upcoming work by the Assembly, including conferences and meetings in Canada, Ireland, Lithuania and Greece.

Astana Declaration



At the close of each Annual Session, the Assembly adopts a Declaration consisting of the Resolutions of the three General Committees as well as supplementary items that have been considered. The Declaration, with recommendations in the fields of political affairs, security, and economic, environmental and human rights issues, represents the collective voice of the OSCE parliamentarians.

The OSCE Parliamentary Assembly concluded the 17th Annual Session on 3 July by adopting the Astana Declaration, as well as additional resolutions. The culmination of five days of deliberation by 227 Members of Parliament, the Declaration calls on participating States to increase transparency both in the OSCE and in the national governments of OSCE participating States.

The OSCE PA adopted a Resolution calling on the governments of the 56 participating States to “fully commit themselves, at the highest political levels, to the full implementation of all of their OSCE commitments and to future strengthening of the Organization.” To do so, governments should make use of the Assembly as “a key element in the Organization’s efforts to be credible in promoting democracy.” The Resolution “requests the Permanent Council to regularly discuss and take into consideration the initiatives taken by the Parliamentary Assembly.” It also cites the need for the OSCE to “carry on further reform aiming at reducing the democratic deficit (and) strengthening transparency and accountability.”

The Declaration calls for more transparency in the organization of, and access to, political and historical archives. It also urges participating States to increase transparency in the use of private military contractors and to ensure that these contractors operate under international law.

The OSCE PA implored all States to sign and ratify the Kyoto Protocol and take concrete steps to address the threat of global climate change. The Declaration, however, recognizes that the environmental threat is not confined to global warming, and hence calls on participating States to undertake better waste management, draw up plans for co-ordination in the event of nuclear accident, and set up early warning networks for natural disasters.

The Declaration and additional resolutions are available at www.oscepa.org.



Inaugural Plenary Session



OSCE PA President Goran Lenmarker opened the 17th Annual Session by thanking the Kazakh government for hosting the event and underlining the importance of holding it in Kazakhstan, which in 2010 will assume the Chairmanship of the OSCE. He introduced the theme of the Session, *Transparency in the OSCE*, pointing to challenges posed to both the Organization and its participating States.

President Lenmarker also stressed the need for the OSCE and its participating States to bear in mind their interdependence with the rest of the world, calling in particular for strengthened links with Central Asia. Mr. Lenmarker shared his view that there is a “golden opportunity” to resolve so-called “frozen conflicts,” while stressing their political, economic and human costs. To enhance the Mediterranean Partnership for Co-operation, he suggested the inclusion of Palestine and the preparation of a side meeting with Mediterranean Partners at the Toronto Fall Meetings. Finally, the President welcomed the plenary speakers: Kazakh President Nazarbayev, Chairman of the Kazakh Senate Tokayev, Chairman of the Kazakh Mazhilis Mussin, and wished all participants a fruitful meeting and constructive debates.

Welcoming Address by the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Nursultan Nazarbayev

H.E. Nursultan Nazarbayev, President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, warmly welcomed

participants to the 17th Annual Session in both Kazakh and Russian. Noting the significance of the event being held for the first time in Central Asia, he reminded the participants of the important role that the Parliamentary Assembly plays within the OSCE. As elected representatives, OSCE parliamentarians provide a direct link between the OSCE and the people of its participating States, and ensure that OSCE commitments and recommendations are relayed to participating States’ elected parliaments.

He went on to highlight the security challenges of a multipolar world and pointed to the imbalance of some military treaties as an issue that should be tackled by the OSCE. Regarding Kazakhstan, President Nazarbayev gave an overview of the progress that the country has made since its independence 17 years ago, focusing primarily on its external relations. In Kazakhstan’s efforts to be a responsible international player, Mr. Nazarbayev explained, the government has moved to halt nuclear tests and rid itself of its Soviet nuclear legacy. Further, he elaborated on the positive role that Kazakhstan can play in regional and global security structures.

Mr. Nazarbayev pointed to the significant role that Kazakhstan plays economically, being a major exporter of wheat and grain. While Kazakhstan has resources, he stressed, Western European countries have the necessary technologies for the development of agriculture and industry, which makes the two regions important to each other. Thus, there is both a need

Inaugural Plenary Session



and a possibility for further dialogue, exchange and co-operation. With substantial indicators of economic progress in his country over the past 15 years, Kazakhstan has become increasingly attractive to foreign investors, Mr. Nazarbayev noted. The investment is not just coming into Kazakhstan, however, but also going from Kazakhstan to its Central Asian neighbours. His country is becoming a major investor in the region, the President explained, with Kazakhstan's external investments estimated at 4.5 billion U.S. dollars.

In international relations Kazakhstan is implementing a multifocal foreign policy that stems from its unique geopolitical position in the centre of Eurasia. With Russia, China and the Arab world all within its proximity, Kazakhstan has much to offer as a mediator between these civilizations, and more broadly between East and West. Mr. Nazarbayev reiterated Kazakhstan's commitment to democracy and stressed the active role his country plays in regional economic and security organizations such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, the Eurasian Economic Community, and the Economic Union of Central Asian States.

Kazakhstan has also made forward strides in the human dimension, Mr. Nazarbayev reported. With more than 130 nationalities and 46 religious confessions calling Kazakhstan home, the country has made efforts to foster inter-ethnic peace, including the development of institutions and initiatives such as the Assembly of Peoples of Kazakhstan and the Eurasian Forum on Inter-Confessional Dialogue. Held in Astana in 2003, this initiative provided representatives of various confessions an opportunity to discuss issues



of mutual concern. Mr. Nazarbayev stressed that the OSCE has a great potential to continue these sorts of initiatives.

Finally, the President touched on the necessity to transform the activities of the OSCE in a way that would better reflect the perspectives of all its participating States, particularly in the areas of security, racism and xenophobia.

Address by the Speaker of the Kazakh Senate, Kassym-Jomart Tokayev

On behalf of the Kazakh Senate, Kassym-Jomart Tokayev welcomed the national delegations and expressed his gratitude to the OSCE PA and its President for choosing Astana as the venue of the first Annual Session to be held in Central Asia.

Speaker Tokayev emphasized his country's commitment to OSCE values while stressing the importance of parliamentary democracy and inter-parliamentary dialogue in developing processes of integration and harmonization. He recalled the participation of members of the Kazakh Parliament in several OSCE PA election monitoring missions in Serbia, Georgia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

Referring to Kazakhstan's efforts relevant to the OSCE's three dimensions, Speaker Tokayev mentioned his country's active involvement in regional confidence-building and security organizations, such as the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building in Asia, which is holding the first Congress of World and Traditional Religions in Astana. He also welcomed the decision to appoint Kazakhstan to the Chairmanship of the OSCE as "indisputable recogni-

Inaugural Plenary Session



tion” of the country’s progress in strengthening and developing democratic institutions, and expressed gratitude to the OSCE PA for its “constant support” of these efforts.

Address by the Speaker of the Mazhilis, Aslan Mussin

In welcoming participants of the Annual Session, Aslan Mussin, Speaker of the Majlis, mentioned the historic significance of the event for the new capital of Kazakhstan. Coinciding with the celebration of Astana’s tenth anniversary, the event underscores Kazakhstan’s commitment to openness and its eagerness to engage in international dialogue, Mr. Mussin said. He also emphasized that parliamentary co-operation is vital for the construction of civil society and mentioned the progress Kazakhstan has made in regards to freedom of expression, transparency in public administration and policy, and the fight against corruption. As for external parliamentary co-operation, Mr. Mussin pointed to the chambers of the Majlis devoted to co-operation with the OSCE and NATO. He also highlighted the role of the Kazakh parliament in promoting development and prosperity in the country.

Address by OSCE Secretary General Marc Perrin de Brichambaut

The OSCE Secretary General, Ambassador Marc Perrin de Brichambaut, expressed his pleasure in addressing the OSCE PA’s 17th Annual Session in Astana, which also marked the start of his second term as Secretary General of the Organization. He recalled the central role



of the OSCE as a forum for political engagement and as a framework for responding to current challenges, and stressed the responsibility of the OSCE PA participants in reminding their respective Governments of their commitments.

Mr. de Brichambaut mentioned a series of positive developments, starting with the encouraging results of the Quintet co-operation format which fosters “greater coherence of purpose and action.” At a formal meeting in Helsinki, the Quintet Ministers agreed on the principle of multi-year planning for a range of priority areas, such as OSCE engagement with Afghanistan, efforts to cope with small arms and light weapons, gender, combating trafficking in human beings and strengthening dialogue with the Partners for Co-operation.

Address by Tone Tingsgaard on Gender Issues

The Assembly’s Special Representative on Gender Issues, Vice-President Tone Tingsgaard, presented the 2008 Gender Report to the Assembly. Ms. Tingsgaard focused on violence against women, particularly domestic violence. Her presentation, which complemented a resolution on this topic that she sponsored, aimed to raise awareness on this widespread problem that affects all societies.

Ms. Tingsgaard also gave updates on the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1352 on Women, Peace and Security as well as on the situation of gender equality within the OSCE in general and the Parliamentary Assembly in particular. Considering the most recent facts and figures, she worried that the

Inaugural Plenary Session



issue of women's representation is fading from the agenda of the OSCE governmental side. She also noted that even if gender balance overall in the distribution of posts within OSCE Institutions appears to have improved slightly, women still remain under-represented at the management level. Most notably, no Heads of OSCE Institutions are women and of 19 field missions, only two are headed by women. Women hold only 19 percent of the management positions within the Institutions and 22 percent within the Field Operations.

She also noted that in the OSCE PA only 23 out of 44 delegations included women members. In this regard, Vice-President Tingsgaard announced that she had begun work to amend the Assembly's Rules of Procedure in order to make full voting rights in the Assembly dependent upon both genders being represented on each delegation.

Address by OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities, Knut Vollebaek

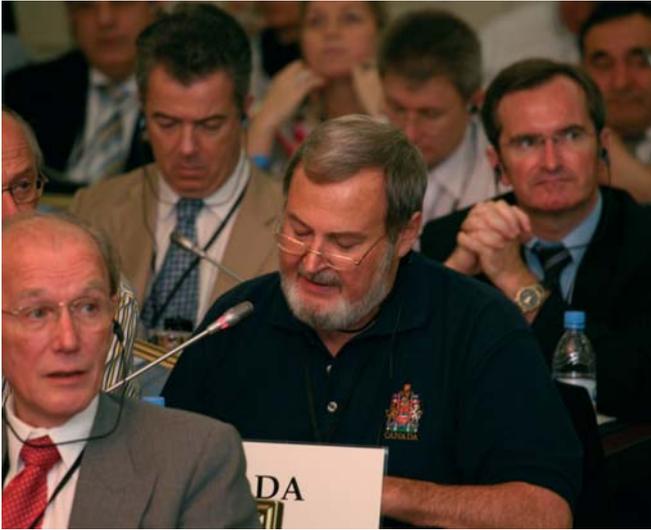
The High Commissioner opened his address by stressing the continued importance of minority issues in an era of globalization. He valued the role of minority communities in enhanced dialogue and mutual understanding between States. He also recalled the responsibility of governments to protect the rights of national minorities living under their jurisdiction and to respect the principles of territorial integrity and sovereignty when supporting national minorities living under the jurisdiction of other States.

Mr. Vollebaek presented his Recommendations on National Minorities in Inter-State



Relations and informed the Assembly that a launching conference followed by regional consultations will be held in order to discuss their implementation by participating States.

The High Commissioner then gave an overview of the visits he paid to several participating States in South-Eastern Europe, Central Asia, the Caucasus, the Baltic region, and Central and Eastern Europe. In the field, Mr. Vollebaek met with high-ranking officials and civil society representatives to assess inter-ethnic relations and to discuss both achievements and shortcomings. He stressed the need for translating public commitments and legislative frameworks into actual deeds in order to enhance dialogue and build trust in multi-ethnic societies. The High Commissioner also placed emphasis on education as a means to promote further integration of national minorities. Moreover, he addressed issues specific to various participating States and expressed his willingness to assist lawmakers in drafting appropriate policies for the protection and promotion of minority rights.



Standing Committee



The Standing Committee consists of the 56 Heads of National Delegations and Members of the Bureau. Meeting three times a year -- at the Winter Meeting, the Fall Meetings and the Annual Session -- the Standing Committee guides the work of the Assembly, approves its budget, and appoints the Secretary General.

On 29 June, President Goran Lenmarker opened the meeting of the Standing Committee and proposed the agenda, which was adopted without objection.

He informed the Committee of the Presidential visits he made during his mandate: to Canada, Iceland, Cyprus, Morocco, Tunisia, and Afghanistan. In explaining the significance of his trip to Afghanistan, Mr. Lenmarker underlined the importance of the Mediterranean dialogue and the crucial role of Afghanistan for stability in both Central Asia and the OSCE region as a whole. He also reported on the recent St. Petersburg meeting with the CIS Inter-Parliamentary Assembly, at which election monitoring was discussed, and informed of his participation in the Strasbourg meeting of parliamentary Speakers. He also welcomed the Finnish CiO initiative of the Quintet, bringing together the expired Spanish CiO, the current Finnish CiO and the future Greek, Kazakh and Lithuanian Chairmanships of the OSCE.

He then thanked the Senate of Kazakhstan for hosting the Annual Session and gave the floor to the Mr. Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, Chairman of the Senate of Kazakhstan, who remarked on the historical significance of holding the Annual Session in Central Asia for the first time. Following Mr. Tokayev, Mr. Hans Raidel (Germany), Treasurer of the OSCE PA, offered his report on the financial state of the Parliamentary Assembly. He informed the Committee that the PA continues to remain within budget and is in good financial health.

Moving on to the OSCE PA's election observation activities, Mr. Lenmarker gave the floor to the Special Co-ordinators of the three election observation missions that have taken

place since the last meeting of the Standing Committee in February. Mr. Roberto Battelli (Slovenia) reported on the IEOM in Serbia, Mr. Joao Soares (Portugal) on the IEOM in Georgia, and Ms. Pia Christmas-Moeller (Denmark) on the IEOM in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

Regarding election observation, the President emphasized the importance of extending the pool of MPs participating in election monitoring and to enhance gender balance in the election observation exercises. He noted that the representation of women has increased to one-third in recent election observation missions, which is still rather low, but clearly a step in the right direction.

President Emeritus Alcee Hastings (USA) and OSCE PA Secretary General Spencer Oliver both briefed the Committee on the recent St. Petersburg meeting with the CIS Inter-Parliamentary Assembly, the purpose of which was to clear the way for co-operation in election observation and to possibly give some recommendation to the respective assemblies. However, Mr. Oliver reported, no agreement was reached. He added that the CiO had been continuously informed of the process.

The meeting was concluded with an address by Mr. Consiglio Di Nino (Canada), who briefed the audience about the venue of the upcoming Fall Meetings in Toronto.

Anne-Marie Lizin (Belgium) proposed to hold a meeting in Egypt at the Alexandria Library as a way to enhance the Mediterranean dialogue dimension.

The Irish Delegation presented an invitation for a meeting on economic affairs to be held in Dublin in 2009, and the Greek Delegation extended Greece's invitation to hold the Fall Meetings in Athens in October 2009.







General Committee on Political Affairs and Security



Under the Chairmanship of Jean-Charles Gardetto (Monaco), the General Committee on Political Affairs and Security discussed a wide range of topics included in the Rapporteur's draft resolution, which focused on Parliamentary Oversight of the Security Sector. In addition, the First General Committee debated supplementary items dealing with cluster munitions, cyber security, and the security environments in Georgia and Afghanistan.

Report and Resolution

In his report and draft resolution, the Committee Rapporteur, Wolfgang Grossruck (Austria), highlighted the need to regulate the activities of Private Military Companies (PMCs) and Private Security Companies (PSCs), which are increasingly used to reinforce the regular military forces of participating States in the implementation of defense, development and security agendas. He referred to the OSCE Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security (CoC) adopted at the Budapest Summit of 1994, which progressively set a framework for information-sharing between the participating States with regard to democratic control of armed forces.

The report also addressed the challenges to parliamentary oversight at the European Union level, reviewing the role of national parliaments and the European Parliament in the European Security and Defense Policy and the Common Foreign and Security Policy.

Finally, Mr. Grossruck stressed that the CoC does not cover the activities of private contractors and drew attention to the joint initiative from the Swiss government and the International Committee of the Red Cross for restating

the existing obligations of States under international law in this matter. To address this topic in the OSCE, he suggested that the PA vote on a resolution that would offer guidance for participating States to perform parliamentary oversight over PMCs and PSCs.

After having debated and voted on the amendments, the Committee adopted the Resolution. The final version calls on participating States to clarify their existing obligations under international law and encourages the development of binding rules and procedures on the use of PMCs and PSCs in armed conflicts and post-conflict missions. It also requests the OSCE Secretary General to initiate a study for the next Winter Meeting of the PA reviewing current use of PMCs and PSCs and best practices in the democratic supervision of their activities.

Supplementary Items

Four supplementary items were debated and voted on in the First General Committee.

The supplementary item on the Ban of Cluster Munitions in Participating States of the OSCE Area, sponsored by Michel Voisin (France), stresses that the humanitarian and economic consequences of cluster munitions are unacceptable. Highlighting the impact of these weapons on civilian populations, the item welcomes the adoption of the Convention on Cluster Munitions at the Dublin Diplomatic Conference of May 2008 and recommends that participating States sign the document. It also encourages participating States to ensure the destruction of all cluster munitions under their jurisdiction and take measures to forbid the use, the production, the transfer or the stockpile of cluster munitions

General Committee on Political Affairs and Security



on their territory. The item was amended and subsequently adopted by the Committee.

The supplementary item on cyber security, sponsored by Paul-Eerik Rummo (Estonia), underlines the great challenge posed by cyber attacks to governments and the growing concerns expressed in international fora such as the Council of Europe, the European Union, NATO and the UN General Assembly. It urges OSCE participating States and all other members of the international community to consider joining the Council of Europe Convention on Cybercrime and encourages the relevant state legislatures to improve co-operation in the field of cyber security. Finally, it suggests that the OSCE functions as a regional mechanism supporting, coordinating and reviewing national activities in this field.

The supplementary item on the Security Environment in Georgia, sponsored by Alcee Hastings (USA), was adopted following the debate on the proposed amendments. It expresses concern over the growing tensions in the conflict zones of Georgia and the possible consequences for the broader European security environment. It calls for renewed dialogue in the resolution of the current situation.

The supplementary item on Afghanistan, sponsored by Consiglio Di Nino (Canada), highlights the OSCE's engagement in Afghanistan as crucial for the security of the OSCE region. One of Mr. Di Nino's primary concerns was regarding the possibility of greater OSCE PA engagement with Afghan MPs, and in particular whether they should be invited to the Toronto Fall Meetings. In addition, he mentioned that economic sustainability is crucial for Afghanistan's development. He noted that there have been positive developments in the society,

such as increased adult literacy, teacher training, and the development of a professional army and police force. He also emphasized Canada's contribution to Afghanistan peace-building and reconciliation and implored the international community to continue its efforts in finding solutions to Afghanistan's urgent problems.

The debate stressed the need to balance security and development efforts while empowering Afghan authorities. The Resolution welcomes steps taken by the Government of Afghanistan in fulfilling its commitments to democracy, security, good governance and economic and social development, while expressing concerns with the enduring challenges of terrorism and the illicit drug trade. It also pays tribute to the efforts and sacrifices made by the Afghan people, ISAF contributing countries and numerous NGOs involved in Afghanistan. Further, the Resolution welcomes the Madrid Ministerial Decision on OSCE Engagement with Afghanistan, recommends greater co-operation and co-ordination with the United Nations, and encourages individual participating States to pursue supplementary bilateral and multilateral efforts. Finally, it suggests that the OSCE provide election support to Afghanistan in its upcoming presidential and parliamentary elections.

Election of Officers

Chair:	Jean-Charles Gardetto (Monaco)
Vice-Chair:	Consiglio Di Nino (Canada)
Rapporteur:	Riccardo Migliori (Italy)

General Committee on Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and the Environment



The Vice-Chair of the General Committee on Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and the Environment, Petros Efthymiou (Greece), opened the meeting on 30 June by introducing the draft agenda, which was adopted without objection. In the absence of Mr. Roland Blum (France), his colleague Mr. Stéphane Demilly (France) presented the report to the Committee.

Report and Resolution

In his introductory remarks, Mr. Demilly linked the question of environmental security to the issue of climate change, which was therefore on the top of the Second Committee's agenda. He reminded the Committee of the 2007 climate conference that was held in Bali and evoked the Madrid conference at which OSCE participating States adopted a document on environment and security acknowledging that this topic represents a significant challenge. He informed the committee that France, having recently assumed the presidency of the EU, has set the question of climate change as a high priority for Europe.

The acting Rapporteur then listed the main causes of climate change and global warming, which are all linked to human activity: agriculture, phytosanitary products, urbanization, deforestation, and industrialization and its related industrial accidents.

Environmental questions do not necessarily lead to direct conflict, Mr. Demilly noted, but to a general weakening of international security which in some cases may lead to conflict. Flood, drought, food crises, lack of access to clean water, and high levels of disease are all environmental problems that contribute to migratory flows and weaken the security environment.

The solution, Mr. Demilly emphasized, is sustainable development and the realization of a new system of agriculture and industry. Also important is the need for countries to anticipate and prevent catastrophes, as the Netherlands is doing with its water level warning system.

To reduce greenhouse gases, questions of energy, transport and habitat must be addressed, Mr. Demilly argued. These efforts need to combine a more efficient use of energy and the utilization of alternative sources of energy. Under the current system, Mr. Demilly observed, one percent economic growth translates to 500,000 barrels of oil per day. There is great hope, however, with the second generation of bio-fuel being developed. There is also positive development with a more global approach being taken to address these issues that includes the participation of developing nations. International financial institutions are working hard to help improve the situation, Mr. Demilly noted.

After debating and voting on 30 amendments, the Resolution was adopted on 1 July.

Supplementary Items

The Second Committee debated, amended and adopted seven supplementary items, dealing with Mediterranean trade, European-North American trade, water management in the OSCE area, transparency in the extractive industries, small arms and light weapons, Chernobyl, and culture funds.

The supplementary item on a Mediterranean Free Trade Area, sponsored by Jerahmiel Grafstein (Canada), recommends the creation of a Mediterranean Economic Commission and a Mediterranean Agricultural Marketing Board to

General Committee on Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and the Environment



reduce trade barriers, facilitate the transition to a knowledge-based economy in the region, and create jobs in the agriculture sector, particularly for young people. After being amended twice, the supplementary item was agreed to by the Committee.

The supplementary item on Expanding Trade between North America and Europe was also sponsored by Mr. Grafstein. Calling on OSCE participating States to support multilateral, inter-institutional and bilateral initiatives to promote European-North American trade, the supplementary item was amended twice and adopted by the Committee.

The supplementary item dealing with Water Management in the OSCE Area was sponsored again by Mr. Grafstein. This item highlights “the severity of water management issues and scarcity of water resources faced by many states in the OSCE region,” and calls on participating States to undertake sound water management to support sustainable environmental policies. After being amended three times, the supplementary item was agreed to by the Committee.

The supplementary item on transparency in the extractive industries, sponsored by Mr. Di Nino, stresses the need to establish a legal framework for extractive industries, especially in poor countries. Improving transparency in this area would help to secure a stable and predictable business environment. The resolution was adopted.

The supplementary item on small arms and light weapons calls for the embargo on these types of weapons through greater control of aerial transport and traffic. Sponsored by Mr. Francois-Xavier De Donnea (Belgium), the item also encourages the fight against the exportation

of weapons, to complement the work undertaken by the UN. The supplementary item was amended twice and adopted by the Committee.

The supplementary item on Chernobyl, sponsored by Ms. Natalia Andreichik of the Belarusian Delegation, dealt with the remaining health, environmental and economic issues resulting from the Chernobyl disaster of 1986, particularly for Belarus, Russia and Ukraine. It calls for greater efforts from the OSCE countries in the form of bilateral or multilateral cooperation in order to address the situation. The supplementary item was adopted.

The last supplementary item considered by the Committee dealt with vulture funds. Sponsored by Ms. Gwen Moore (USA), this resolution raises awareness on the extra pressure put on poor countries when their debts are sold by countries to funds, endangering the possibilities for the country to restore a healthy economy. The supplementary item was adopted.



Ivor Callely and
Petros Efthymiou

Election of Officers

Chair:	<i>Petros Efthymiou</i> <i>(Greece)</i>
Vice-Chair:	<i>Roland Blum</i> <i>(France)</i>
Rapporteur:	<i>Ivor Callely</i> <i>(Ireland)</i>

General Committee on Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions



The acting Chair of the Third General Committee on Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions, Ms. Hilda Solis (USA), presided over the four meetings of the Committee. Over the course of the meetings the Committee considered the report and draft resolution as well as seven supplementary items on Combating the Sexual Exploitation of Children; Violence against Women; Recognizing the Economic, Cultural, Political and Social Contributions of Migrants; Combating Anti-Semitism, Especially its Manifestations in the Media and in Academia; the Holodomor of 1932-1933 in Ukraine; Strengthening Efforts to Combat All Forms of Trafficking in Human Beings and Addressing the Special Needs of Child Victims; and on Observation Missions.

Report and Resolution

The Rapporteur of the Committee, Ms. Walburga Habsburg-Douglas (Sweden) introduced her report and resolution, which focused on the importance of transparency in promoting democracy and human rights. Ms. Habsburg-Douglas underscored that historical processes that took place in the world with the end of the Cold War were drastic and rapid, thus denying many people the opportunity to reconcile with the past. It is therefore now important to allow people easier access to political and historical archives to facilitate historical inquiry and

democratization. The report states that one of the key factors in opening up archives is cooperation between States. The Rapporteur noted that transparency is important for democratic elections and good administration, as well as the work of parliaments.

The general debate on the report and resolution touched upon all the main issues covered in the report, with a particular focus on access to political and historical archives. Members expressed their support for the attention to transparency in this particular field of work. Delegates also noted the need to protect against misuse of information gained from such political and historical archives. Following consideration of a number of amendments, the resolution was adopted by the Committee.

Supplementary Items

The Third Committee considered, amended and approved seven supplementary items.

The supplementary item on Combating the Sexual Exploitation of Children was presented by Vice-President Anne-Marie Lizin (Belgium). The resolution condemns all forms of child sexual exploitation and urges the participating States to undertake specific and concrete measures to fight these crimes against children.

The supplementary item on Violence against Women was presented by Vice-President Tone Tingsgaard (Sweden). The resolution reaffirms the importance of the 2004 OSCE Action Plan

General Committee on Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions



for Gender Issues and the 2005 Ministerial Council Decision on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women, and calls upon participating States to take concrete actions to fight violence against women, to protect women who are victims of domestic violence, and to increase economic opportunities for women. It also implores the OSCE and all participating States' governments and Parliaments to take positive action in promoting women for leadership positions in all important spheres.

The supplementary item on Recognizing the Economic, Cultural, Political and Social Contributions of Migrants was presented by Ms. Hilda Solis (USA). The resolution draws attention to the positive contributions of migrants, urging the States to recognize these benefits and to treat migrants accordingly.

The supplementary item on Combating Anti-Semitism, Especially its Manifestations in the Media and in Academia was proposed by Mr. Gert Weisskirchen (Germany). The resolution calls attention to incidents of anti-Semitism and urges the participating States to undertake specific steps in order to fight anti-Semitism, specifically in the media.

The supplementary item on the Holodomor of 1932-1933 in Ukraine, presented by Mr. Oleh Bilorus (Ukraine), pays tribute to the victims of the Holodomor and invites all the participating States to join in commemorating it.

The supplementary item on Strengthening



Efforts to Combat All Forms of Trafficking in Human Beings and Addressing the Special Needs of Child Victims was proposed by Mr. Christopher Smith (USA). It calls upon the participating States to undertake comprehensive measures to fight human trafficking through strengthened legislation.

The supplementary item on Observation Missions, presented by Mr. Christian Miesch (Switzerland), underscores the importance of election observation by the OSCE and stresses the leadership role that the Parliamentary Assembly plays in this regard.



Natalia Karpovich,
Rapporteur of the
Third Committee

Election of Officers

Chair:	<i>Hilda Solis</i> <i>(USA)</i>
Vice-Chair:	<i>Walburga Habsburg-Douglas</i> <i>(Sweden)</i>
Rapporteur:	<i>Natalia Karpovich</i> <i>(Russian Federation)</i>

Closing Plenary Session



On behalf of Finnish Chairmanship, Mr. Alexander Stubb thanked the Government of Kazakhstan, its President, and the Speakers of the Senate and Majlis for hosting the 17th Annual session in Astana. He remarked on what an important player Kazakhstan is becoming in the OSCE and stressed the importance of development and Kazakhstan's continued commitment to reform.

Mr. Stubb informed the Assembly of the main priorities of the Finnish Chairmanship, which include resolving the conflicts in the Caucasus, supporting the transition process in developing countries of the OSCE and bolstering cooperative security in Central Asia. Speaking of the OSCE's potential in conflict resolution he stressed that this is a unique organization stretching from North America to Europe and over to Central Asia. He emphasized that it is time to actually start resolving frozen conflicts rather than simply managing them, identifying two key areas of concern for the OSCE: the Transnistrian conflict, which he noted has had some positive developments, and the Caucasus, where there has been increasing tension in Abkhazia and South Ossetia.

Mr. Stubb stated that in order to help out the countries in transition it is necessary to focus on three key areas: respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, the promotion of democracy and rule of law, and security in Central Asia, particularly in Afghanistan.

Noting the progress made since the Helsinki Conference of the 1970s, the Chairman-in-Office pointed to the future Kazakh Chairman-

ship as indicative of how much the world has changed over the past 35 years. With the OSCE being chaired by a State that did not exist at the time of the Organization's founding, it is important to remember that the OSCE – like its participating States – is an organization in transition. It is therefore important, Mr. Stubb said, to address the challenges facing the Organization. Expressing his gratitude in this regard to the participants of the Quintet Meeting in Helsinki, he also gave credit to the OSCE PA for the special role it plays.

One of the fundamental tasks of the OSCE, Mr. Stubb went on to say, is election observation. He once again reiterated the importance of co-operation between the OSCE PA and the ODIHR in this sphere. He also expressed his hopes that the new President of the PA and new Director of the ODIHR would advance co-operation for the sake of democratization in the OSCE area. He encouraged participants to share their ideas and comments for the conversation to be more interactive.

Secretary General's Report

OSCE PA Secretary General Spencer Oliver thanked the Kazakh authorities for hosting the Annual Session and delivered a report on the activities of the OSCE PA over the past year. He informed the Assembly of the Fall Meetings, which were held in Portoroz in September 2007, and the OSCE PA's participation in the Ministerial Council which was held last December in Madrid. The Winter Meeting, held in Vienna

Closing Plenary Session

in February 2008, was a success, Mr. Oliver reported, and the traditional Bureau Meeting held each April in Copenhagen also went well. The Secretary General then went on to thank the various delegations that have hosted the Assembly in the past year, and in particular the Danish Folketing, which hosts and offers generous support to the International Secretariat.

Mr. Oliver briefed the Delegates on the PA's extensive programme of election observation over the past year, noting that more than 250 parliamentarians participated in election observation missions in Armenia, Kazakhstan, Ukraine, the Russian Federation, Georgia twice, Serbia, Kyrgyzstan, and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. In carrying out this work, Mr. Oliver noted, OSCE parliamentarians have truly made a great contribution to the development of democracy in the OSCE area.

Treasurer's Report

In the absence of OSCE PA Treasurer Hans Raidel, President Goran Lennmarker reported that the Standing Committee unanimously approved the budget for the next financial year, beginning on 1 October 2008.

Consideration of Resolutions and Adoption of Final Document

President Lennmaker then opened up the floor to the consideration of the draft Astana Declaration. The Chairs of the three General Committees, Jean-Charles Gardetto, Petros Efthymiou and Hilda Solis, presented the work of each Committee.

Following the presentations, the Astana Declaration, which consists of the final resolutions from each of the three General Committees and the supplementary items referred to the General Committees, was adopted by the Assembly. Prior to the closing of the Session, the election results of Assembly Officers were announced.

Election of Officers

<i>President:</i>	<i>Joao Soares (Portugal)</i>
<i>Treasurer:</i>	<i>Hans Raidel (Germany)</i>
<i>Vice-President:</i>	<i>Pia Christmas-Moeller (Denmark)</i>
<i>Vice-President:</i>	<i>Kassym-Jomart Tokayev (Kazakhstan)</i>
<i>Vice-President:</i>	<i>Oleh Bilorus (Ukraine)</i>
<i>Vice-President:</i>	<i>Wolfgang Grossruck (Austria)</i>



Joao Soares approaches the podium upon being elected President of the Assembly



Belarus & Guantanamo



The Belarusian Delegation to the OSCE PA, headed by Mr. Sergey Zabolotets, and the OSCE PA Working Group on Belarus, chaired by Ms. Uta Zapf, met on the margins of the Session to discuss further co-operation between the Group and the delegation. The need for continued co-operation was emphasized, with particular attention paid to the planned Seminar on Foreign Direct Investment and the upcoming visits of the Working Group to Belarus. Also discussed were the upcoming parliamentary elections to be held on 28 September 2008.

The Working Group on Belarus was appointed in October 1998 in order to assist in the development of democracy in Belarus and to facilitate national reconciliation. The main aim of the Working Group has been to facilitate dialogue between the Government and the opposition of Belarus in an effort to aid in the development of democracy.

The Group has visited Belarus on many occasions, meeting parliamentarians, government representatives, members of opposition groups, representatives of civil society and the media. In all of its meetings, the Group has stressed the importance of Belarusian participation in the OSCE process and the need to find peaceful and inclusive solutions to political issues in Belarus.

The OSCE PA's Special Representative on Guantanamo, Assembly Vice President Anne-Marie Lizin, presented on 30 June her third report on the detention facility in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. The presentation in the Third Committee was followed by a press conference.

In her remarks, Ms. Lizin discussed the status of individual prisoners at Guantanamo, and remarked that the prison and the military commissions set up to try terrorism suspects continue to elicit widespread criticism from international organizations, national governments and human rights groups. She also noted, however, that the U.S. policy regarding the



prison is likely to change following the upcoming U.S. election. Democratic presidential candidate Barack Obama is on record as favoring the closing of the facility, Ms. Lizin noted, and for his part, the Republican candidate John McCain has also suggested that the facility should be closed and that some of the detainees should be transferred to high-security prisons on US soil.

Ms. Lizin's report followed her third visit to the detention facility, on 28 March 2008. Over the past year, she has held numerous meetings with representatives from OSCE participating States regarding the possible relocation of some of the detainees.

Gender Lunch



In keeping with tradition, a side meeting on gender issues, in the form of a working lunch, was held on 1 July. Ms. Nurlygaim Joldasbayeva, Chairwoman of the Committee on Economic and Regional Policy in the Senate of Kazakhstan hosted the lunch, and Vice-President Tingsgaard led the discussions. The lunch provided an opportunity to discuss issues and challenges related to gender and to encourage women to take more active roles within the Assembly.

After welcoming participants to the lunch, Ms. Tingsgaard started by stating that more women are needed in leadership positions on the governmental side of the OSCE as well as within the Assembly. She reminded participants that changes should be initiated within national parliaments and also reaffirmed the importance of raising the visibility of gender work and gender-related issues in the OSCE.

Ms. Monica Gutierrez Arques, Gender Advisor at the OSCE Secretariat in Vienna, gave a presentation on the situation in the OSCE governmental side. She provided MPs with an overview of actions undertaken by the OSCE missions and institutions in order to help women to get involved in politics and to enhance their

economic possibilities. She also offered examples of some of the special training programmes provided to police units to change attitudes and help combat violence.

Several participants took the floor to express their views on some of the points raised. The rights of women at work were discussed, in particular with regard to the question of access to managerial positions, maternity leave and the possibilities for working mothers. In this regard, it was noted that gender equality is a strong asset for financial stability. The question of the role and impact of men on gender issues was also discussed, including the need for a change in mentalities. This was particularly relevant in

regards to a more equitable sharing of responsibilities in the education of children, it was noted. There was also discussion of how crimes against women are assessed by authorities. Members were particularly interested in learning more regarding the situation of women in Kazakhstan.

Vice-President Tingsgaard closed the meeting by encouraging active participation by women in the Parliamentary Assembly, and calling on women to run for leadership positions within the PA.

“Within the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, there is a maintained, stable and low participation of women. An increase in women’s involvement on a greater scale at all levels can only be achieved by increasing the participation of women within national parliaments of OSCE participating States.”

Vice-President Tone Tingsgaard

Central Asia & NGO Meetings



The Central Asia meeting, held on 2 July, was chaired by Kimmo Kiljunen, OSCE PA Vice-President and Special Representative for Central Asia, and by the President of the OSCE PA Goran Lennmarker. All of the Central Asian countries with the exception of Turkmenistan were present as well as the delegates from Turkey, representatives of the OSCE governmental side, OSCE PA Secretary General Spencer Oliver and OSCE PA Programme Officer Anna Chernova.

The primary issue discussed was regarding the necessity of closer co-operation within Central Asia and between the Central Asian countries and the OSCE. There was general agreement that the region of Central Asia plays a vital role in the Organization and that this role will only increase when Kazakhstan assumes the Chairmanship in 2010.

Mr. Kiljunen and Mr. Lennmarker called upon the Central Asian states to co-operate more closely with the OSCE in all of its endeavors. The delegates from the various countries agreed to the proposals of holding more events in the region in the future. Although some countries noted that they would not have the resources to organize the events on the level Kazakhstan did for the Annual Session, there still was a unanimous agreement that it is of great importance to hold various events in other countries of the region as well.

On 2 July President Lennmarker met with representatives of Kazakh non-governmental organizations in an informal briefing to hear their views on the overall political situation in the country.

Civil society representatives provided feedback on the progress of reforms in Kazakhstan in connection to the upcoming 2010 Chairmanship of the OSCE. The need for legal reforms was touched upon, particularly in the fields of elections, media, and political parties. NGOs also called for greater openness and accountability in the work of the government. Much work remains to be done in the field of mass media in Kazakhstan, the NGOs emphasized. The executive retains a strong hold on this sector, with the ability to hinder the work of media outlets and unilaterally suspend their operations, the NGOs reported.

A few NGOs noted some worrying trends in the treatment of minority religions in Kazakhstan. Many religious groups are having difficulties registering their activities in the country. Some are encountering politically motivated obstacles to gathering their congregations in communities around the country.

In response, President Lennmarker emphasized that democratic values must always be considered. He reminded the NGOs that many countries with a long-standing democratic traditions continue to face challenges.

Officers of the Assembly

The Officers of the Assembly, also known as the Bureau, include the President, Vice-Presidents, the Treasurer, General Committee Officers and the President Emeritus. The Bureau is responsible for ensuring that the decisions of the Standing Committee are carried out, as well as for the efficient operation of the Assembly between meetings of the Standing Committee. The Bureau takes decisions by majority vote.



Joao Soares (Portugal)

was elected President of the Assembly in July 2008 during the Annual Session in Astana, after having served for two years as Vice-President. Mr. Soares has been particularly active in OSCE



PA election observation missions. Currently a Member of the Committee on National Defence, Mr. Soares was first elected to the Portuguese Parliament in 1987 and has also served as a Member of the European Parliament, including as a Member of the EP Bureau. From 1995 to 2002, Mr. Soares was Mayor of Lisbon, during which time he also served as a Member of the State Council.



Goran Lenmarker (Sweden)

currently serves as President Emeritus, after having served two terms as Assembly President and three terms as Chair of the Assembly's First General Committee. In addition to serving on numerous OSCE PA election observation mis-

sions, Mr. Lenmarker served as the Assembly's Special Representative on the Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict. Mr. Lenmarker has been a Member of the Swedish Parliament since 1992 and serves as Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee.

Tone Tingsgaard (Sweden)

was elected Vice-President of the Assembly at the 2003 Annual Session, and re-elected in 2006. She also serves as OSCE PA Special Representative on Gender Issues and as Chair of the OSCE PA Ad Hoc Committee on Abkhazia and has participated in many OSCE



PA election observation missions. She has been a Member of Parliament since 1994. Ms. Tingsgaard is also a Lecturer in Russian at the Institute of Modern Languages, Uppsala University.

Pia Christmas-Moeller (Denmark)

was elected Vice-President during the Annual Session in Washington in July 2005 and re-elected during the 2008



Officers of the Assembly

Annual Session. She has been a Member of the Danish Parliament since 1987, and was from 2001-2007 the Political Affairs spokesperson for the Conservative People's Party, with particular expertise in foreign affairs and human rights issues. Ms. Christmas-Moeller is now an independent Member of Parliament. She has a background in public policy, with extensive experience working with unemployment insurance.

Benjamin Cardin (USA)



was elected Vice-President of the Assembly at the Annual Session in Brussels in July 2006, after having served as Chair of the Second Committee. Senator Cardin was elected to the U.S. Senate in 2006, and is currently the Co-Chairman of the U.S. (Helsinki)

Commission on Security and Co-operation in Europe. As a Senator, he serves on the Foreign Relations Committee, Judiciary Committee, Environment and Public Works Committee, Budget Committee and Small Business Committee. Before his election to the Senate, Mr. Cardin served for 20 years in the U.S. House of Representatives.

Wolfgang Grossruck (Austria)

was re-elected Vice-President of the Assembly at the 2008 Annual Session in Astana. It is a post he has held since July 2006. He has also served as Rapporteur of the First General Committee. Mr. Grossruck was first elected to the Austrian Parliament in 1995 and has been a Member of the Austrian Delegation to the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly since 1996. He



is a frequent participant in election observation missions. With a background in insurance, Mr. Grossruck is also active in municipal politics and is the Mayor of Grieskirchen.

Jerry Grafstein (Canada)



has been re-elected as Assembly Vice-President three times, after serving two terms as Treasurer and two terms as Vice-Chair of the Second General Committee. He was appointed Senator in 1984, while continuing his law practice in corporate

and communications law. In 1966 he founded and edited the *Journal of Liberal Thought* and is a co-founder of a range of media companies in Canada, South America, Europe and elsewhere. He has written and edited numerous articles, papers and books on various topics within communications and politics.

Kassym-Jomart Tokayev (Kazakhstan)



was elected Vice-President in July 2008, in Astana. Head of the Kazakh Delegation to the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, he has been Chairman of the Senate of Kazakhstan's Parliament since January 2007. Mr.

Tokayev came to the Kazakh Parliament after a long career in diplomacy and politics. He has been Deputy Minister as well as Minister of Foreign Affairs and Prime Minister of the Republic of Kazakhstan. He is presently also a member of the CIS Inter-parliamentary Assembly Council and head of the Kazakh delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe. A Doctor of Political Science, Mr. Tokayev is

Officers of the Assembly

the author of a number of books and articles on international affairs.

Kimmo Kiljunen (Finland)



was elected Vice-President of the OSCE PA during the Annual Session in Kyiv in 2007 and re-elected in 2008. He also serves as the Assembly's Special Representative for Central Asia. Dr. Kiljunen, a Member of the

Finnish Parliament since 1995, has long been active in the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, including having served as Vice-Chair and Chair of the General Committee on Political Affairs and Security, and as Chair of the Parliamentary Team on Moldova. With a background in development issues, Dr. Kiljunen has published many books, both in England and Finland, on global development.

Hans Raidel (Germany)



was elected Treasurer of the Assembly in Kyiv in 2007 after having served as Vice-Chairman of the First General Committee. Mr. Raidel has been a Member of the German Parliament since 1990, where he serves as a Member of the Defence Com-

mittee, and as Deputy-Member of the Foreign Affairs Committee. He is the Vice Chair to the Committee of Disarmament and Arms Control in the German Parliament and the Vice-Chair in the NATO Mediterranean Group. He is the chair of the Centre of Co-operation in the Defence Economy, and is Head of Delegation to the Euromediterranean Parliamentary Assembly.

Mr. Raidel has a background in administrative management.

Oleh Bilorus (Ukraine)



was elected Vice-President during the 2008 Annual Session in Astana. Mr. Bilorus is Chairman of the Permanent Delegation of Ukraine to the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and Chairman of the Parliament Committee of Foreign Affairs of the

Verkhovna Rada (Parliament) of Ukraine. An economist, manager and diplomat, Mr. Bilorus has a Ph.D. in Economics and is a Full Professor and member of the Ukrainian National Academy of Sciences. He was first elected a People's Deputy of Ukraine in 1998. Prior to that, he had been the Ambassador of Ukraine to the United States, Director General of the Institute of World Economy and International Relations, and Director General of the International Management Institute in Kyiv.

Anne-Marie Lizin (Belgium)



was elected Vice-President at the Annual Session in Kyiv in 2007, after having served as Chair of the Third Committee since 2006. Prior to that, she served as Rapporteur of the Committee. She is also the OSCE PA Special Representa-

tive on Guantanamo. Ms. Lizin, who was between 2004 and 2008 Speaker of the Belgian Senate, has a long history of involvement in women's rights organizations. A former Secretary of State for European Affairs, Ms. Lizin is Honorary Speaker of the Belgian Senate. She has participated in several OSCE PA Election Observation Missions.

General Committee Officers



One of the most important aspects of the work of the Annual Session is the deliberation that takes place in the three General Committees.

Following the Madrid Declaration, three committees were established along the lines of the three main “baskets” or sections of the Helsinki Final Act: The First General Committee on Political Affairs and Security; the Second General Committee on Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and Environment; and the Third General Committee on Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions. The Rapporteur of each Committee is responsible for preparing a report and a draft resolution to be presented to the Committee. Other speakers and experts may also be invited to address the Committees. After debate and discussion, a draft resolution is adopted by each Committee for presentation to the Annual Plenary Session of the Assembly, which is then included in the Final Declaration.

The staff of the International Secretariat receives invaluable assistance from the British House of Commons, adding experience and expertise to the General Committees, the plenary sessions, and the drafting Committees. The Officers of the three General Committees join with the President, Vice-Presidents, Treasurer, and President Emeritus to form the Assembly Bureau, which works to ensure the efficient operation of the Assembly between meetings of the Standing Committee.

First General Committee

Jean-Charles Gardetto (Monaco)

has served as Chair of the First Committee since 2006, after having served as Vice-Chair of the Committee. Mr. Gardetto has been a Member of the National Council of Monaco since 2003, and is Head of Delegation of Monaco to the



OSCE PA. Mr. Gardetto is Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee and a Member of the Legislative, Finance, Education & Youth and Women’s Rights Committees. He is also active in the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, where he serves as Chair of the Subcommittee on Human Rights. As an attorney he is active in international legal organizations and associations.

Consiglio Di Nino (Canada)



was elected Vice-Chair of the First General Committee during the Annual Session in Kyiv in 2007 and re-elected in 2008. He is also the Head of the Canadian Delegation to the OSCE PA. Senator Di Nino has been a Member of Parlia-

General Committee Officers



Second General Committee on Economic Affairs,
Science, Technology and Environment

ment since 1990, and is currently the Chair of the Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade. He has also been particularly active in OSCE PA election observation activities. Senator Di Nino has a background in business affairs.

Riccardo Migliori (Italy)

was elected Rapporteur of the First General Committee during the Annual Session in Astana. Mr. Migliori has been a member of the Italian delegation to the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly since July 2006 and was elected Head of the Delegation in June 2008. A member of the Chamber of Deputies, he has served on the Constitutional Affairs Committee and as Deputy Chair of the Bicameral Regional Affairs Committee. A member of the PDL (Popolo della Liberta) Parliamentary Group, he is also a member of the Committee on Foreign Affairs. With a degree in law from Florence University, Mr. Migliori has served on the Florence City Council as well as on the Tuscany Regional Council.



Second General Committee

Petros Efthymiou (Greece)

was elected Chairman of the Second General Committee at the July 2008 Session in Astana

after having served as Vice-Chair of the Committee. A former Minister of Education and Religious affairs, Mr. Efthymiou has a long background in media. He is now member of the Committee of Defence and Foreign Affairs of the Greek Parliament. Mr. Efthymiou has also been a Member of the European Parliament.



Roland Blum (France)

was elected Vice-Chair of the Second General Committee at the Annual Session in Astana, after having served several terms as Rapporteur of the Committee. He is Vice-President of the Foreign Affairs Committee in the French National Assembly, where he has served since 1986. From 1984 to 1988 Mr. Blum was a Member of the European Parliament. As a member of the Foreign Affairs committee, he has been Rapporteur of several missions, including on the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, Non-Governmental Organizations and the World Trade Organization. He has been President of the mission on the future of the Euromed.



General Committee Officers



Third General Committee on Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions

Ivor Callely (Ireland)

was elected Rapporteur of the Second General Committee in Astana. Mr. Callely is a member of the 23rd Seanad of Ireland and serves as Chairman of the All Party Oireachtas Human Rights Committee and as Head of the Irish Delegation to the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly. He is presently Government Spokesman on Enterprise, Trade and Employment as well as a member of the Joint Committee on Enterprise and Small Business and the Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs.



Third General Committee

Hilda Solis (USA)

was elected Chair of the Third General Committee at the 2008 Annual Session, after having served one year as Vice-Chair. First elected to the House of Representatives in 2000 from the state of California, she currently serves as Vice-Chair of the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Environment and Hazardous Materials. She also serves as a member of the House Committee on Natural Resources and the Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming. In



2007, Representative Solis was named a member of the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe (Helsinki Commission).

Walburga Habsburg-Douglas (Sweden)

was elected Vice-Chair of the Third General Committee during the Annual Session in Astana, after having served for one year as its Rapporteur. Ms. Habsburg Douglas is also the Head of the Swedish Delegation to the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly. With a background in law and journalism, Ms. Habsburg-Douglas served as Secretary General of the International Pan-European movement prior to being elected to parliament in 2006.



Natalia Karpovich (Russian Federation)

was elected Rapporteur of the Third General Committee during the 17th Annual Session in Astana. Ms. Karpovich is a lawyer and has a background in sports education and media. Elected to Parliament in 2007, she is Vice-Chair of the State Duma Committee on Family, Women and Children's Affairs, as well as Chair of the Sub-Committee on Demography.



Parliamentary Assembly Overview

The main elements of the Parliamentary Assembly are the Assembly Plenary, the Standing Committee of Heads of Delegation, the Bureau and the three General Committees.



The Plenary

At the Annual Session, the Assembly meets in Plenary to adopt a Final Declaration and Resolutions and elect Assembly Officers. Decisions at the Annual Session are taken by majority vote.

General Committees

The work of the Assembly is divided into three General Committees, which correspond to the three main sections of the Helsinki Final Act:

- The First General Committee on Political Affairs and Security;
- The Second General Committee on Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and Environment;
- The Third General Committee on Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions.

A Chair, Vice-Chair and Rapporteur are elected for a one-year term by the members of each Committee. The General Committees meet during the Annual Session and the Winter Meeting. At meetings during the Annual Session, decisions are taken by majority vote.

Standing Committee

The Standing Committee consists of the 56 Heads of National Delegations and Members of the Bureau. The Standing Committee guides the work of the Assembly, approves its budget, and appoints the Secretary General.

Bureau

The Assembly's Bureau consists of the President, the nine Vice-Presidents, the Treasurer, and the Officers of the three General Committees. The President Emeritus (immediately preceding former President) is also an ex officio non-voting Member.

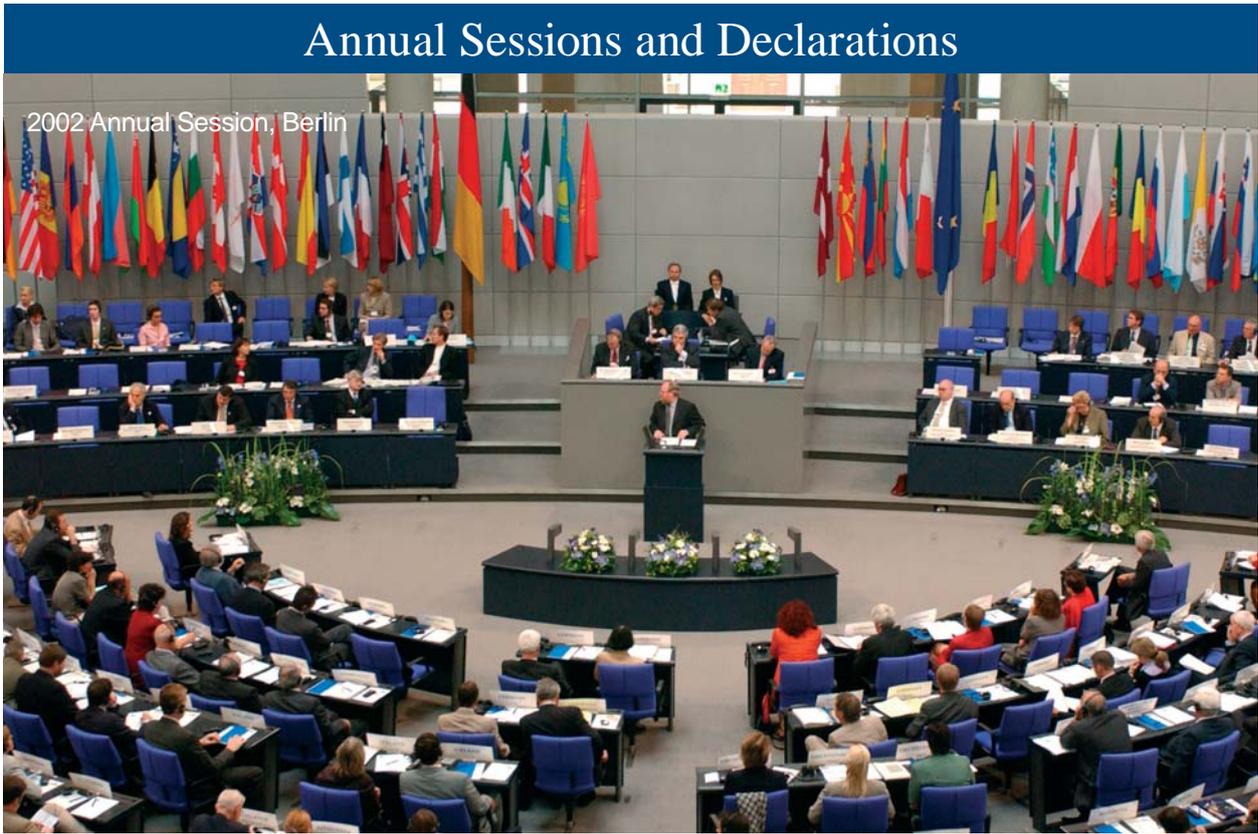
The Bureau is responsible for ensuring that the decisions of the Standing Committee are carried out. Decisions are taken by majority vote.

Budget

The Assembly's budget covers most of the organizational expenses related to the Annual Session, Winter Meeting, Fall Meetings, Standing Committee and Bureau Meetings, official visits, the election observation programme, as well as the costs of the International Secretariat. Host Parliaments of the Annual Sessions have all contributed significantly by providing considerable support to these regular events, ensuring their success and contributing substantive cost savings. The Danish Folketing has very generously provided excellent office facilities free of charge for the Assembly's International Secretariat.

Annual Session

The Annual Session, held in early July every year, is the most important event in the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly calendar. At the end



Annual Sessions and Declarations

2002 Annual Session, Berlin

So far, seventeen Annual Sessions have been held, the first in Budapest in 1992 and the latest in Astana in 2008.



Budapest 1992

The Assembly passed the Budapest Declaration which addressed issues relating to European security, peacekeeping, environmental co-operation, human rights and the crisis in the former Yugoslavia. The Declaration also urged parliamentarians of the CSCE to participate more actively in the prevention, management and settlement of conflicts, and invited all national parliaments to participate in a session or a debate each year to discuss the state of progress in CSCE co-operation. Furthermore, the Budapest Declaration recommended that the CSCE send observers to Kosovo and Vojvodina and other threatened regions to monitor the protection of minorities. The Budapest Session also resolved to accept the invitation of the Danish Parliament (Folketing) to locate the International Secretariat of the CSCE PA in Copenhagen, Denmark.



Helsinki 1993

The Helsinki Declaration included a full chapter on the crisis in the former Yugoslavia, illustrating the importance attached to this issue. The Declaration also called for the establishment of a CSCE Security Committee and a CSCE decision-making procedure which no longer requires consensus or “consensus-minus-one”. The Assembly expressed its determination to emphasize monitoring of elections as an important task on the CSCE Parliamentary agenda. The Helsinki Declaration appealed to the parliaments of the CSCE participating States to intensify their efforts to support the transformation process in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union.



Vienna 1994

Again the Assembly included a chapter on the crisis in the Former Yugoslavia in the adopted Declara-

Annual Sessions and Declarations

tion. The Vienna Declaration also included the development of a Code of Conduct in the field of political and military security, the Chernobyl tragedy, the International War Crimes Tribunal and the human rights situation in Turkey. The Vienna Declaration furthermore requested that the CSCE Budapest Summit Meeting debate the creation of a formal procedure for considering CSCE PA resolutions and recommendations, so that co-operation between the CSCE Assembly and the CSCE could be further strengthened. At the same time, the Assembly also urged national parliaments to consider the creation of a formal procedure for consideration of the resolutions adopted by the Parliamentary Assembly of the CSCE. The Assembly continued to call for change in the CSCE's consensus rule, in order to accelerate and streamline CSCE decision-making procedures.

Ottawa 1995



The Ottawa Declaration encompassed a series of resolutions and recommendations relating to OSCE activities regarding the Former Yugoslavia, the Baltic region, Nagorno-Karabakh, Chechnya and Moldova. The Assembly stressed the need for strengthening the Institutions of the OSCE and called for the development of criteria that would allow for the suspension of a participating State in case of “flagrant failure to implement OSCE decisions and commitments.” The Ottawa Declaration also urged the OSCE and its participating States to actively explore decision-making procedures based on an approximate consensus.

The Assembly called upon participating States to ensure that equal rights are given to all individuals as citizens rather than as mem-

bers of a particular national or ethnic group. The Assembly also strongly supported the establishment of an international criminal court.



Stockholm 1996

The Fifth Annual Session focused on the discussion of a Comprehensive Security Model for Europe for the 21st Century. The final

Declaration reiterated the Parliamentary Assembly's support for the adoption of a broad concept

“It is the task of the Assembly to bring the views and suggestions of democratically elected Parliaments and Parliamentarians to the governments of the CSCE.”

Illka Suominen,

first CSCE PA President, 1992-94

of security, stressing, inter alia, the importance of economic stabilization and environmentally sustainable development in the security dimen-

sion. The Assembly called for the creation of a common European security area in which existing OSCE commitments could be implemented. To carry out these OSCE commitments, the Declaration also emphasized the need to develop and strengthen preventive diplomacy, conflict prevention and post-conflict rehabilitation.

The Stockholm Assembly also adopted a draft Code of Conduct on the “Politico-Democratic Aspects of Co-operation,” which recognized the increased interdependency of States and stressed that international conflicts should only be resolved through peaceful political means.

Warsaw 1997



The Sixth Annual Session focused on enhancing the implementation of commitments undertaken in the context of the CSCE and OSCE, including the Helsinki Final Act, the Charter of Paris and the Budapest and Lisbon Summit documents.

The Resolution concerning Political Affairs

Annual Sessions and Declarations

and Security focused on implementing the principles of territorial integrity and the inviolability of State frontiers. In the field of Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and the Environment, a resolution was passed to promote economic co-operation and provide assistance to the countries undertaking the transition to market economies. The Resolution on Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions focused on the importance of the media in a democracy, stressing that an independent, pluralistic and free media can play a decisive role in the resolution of existing conflicts.

Copenhagen 1998



The Copenhagen Declaration stated that in order to meet the challenge of implementing OSCE principles and commitments with greater effectiveness, a refinement of existing OSCE tools and

resources should be pursued. The Assembly also continued to call for revision of OSCE decision-making procedures and urged the OSCE Ministerial Council to “consider expanding those circumstances under which the existing consensus-minus-one decision-making mechanism is utilized to include, inter alia, approval of budgets, deployment of missions and selection of senior personnel.”

A supplementary item on Kosovo appealed to all parties in the Kosovo conflict to return to the principles of non-violence, and denounced the policies of the Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia for its military aggression against the Albanian population of Kosovo.

The Declaration urged the OSCE to implement gender mainstreaming in all its activities.

St. Petersburg 1999

Looking ahead to the new millennium, resolutions were passed on the general theme of



Common Security and Democracy in the Twenty-First Century. The St. Petersburg Declaration also included resolutions on the situation in Kosovo, which wel-

comed the end of military hostilities, the democratic deficit within the OSCE, the role of the OSCE in crisis prevention and conflict settlement, the problem of human trafficking, as well as resolutions concerning specific issues in Belarus, Russia and South-Eastern Europe.

Reiterating the Assembly’s commitment to reforming the Institutions of the OSCE and redressing the democratic deficit in the Organization, the St. Petersburg Declaration called for the Parliamentary Assembly to be consulted more widely on issues of major importance, such as the appointment of the Secretary General and the budgetary activities of the main OSCE Institutions.

Bucharest 2000



Covering a wide range of issues, the Assembly passed resolutions calling on all sides to pave the way for free, fair

and internationally recognizable parliamentary elections in Belarus and, regarding Moldova, expressing its concern about the stalemate in the negotiations on the status of Transdnistria and emphasizing the need for a common State for all the peoples of Moldova.

The Assembly also adopted a resolution on developments in the North Caucasus, calling for a political solution to the conflict in Chechnya. The Assembly also passed a resolution calling for a convention regulating the arms trade.

The Assembly adopted a resolution calling for reduced reliance on secondment in the long-term field missions to ensure the continuity of the missions’ work. On

Annual Sessions and Declarations

economic and environmental issues, the Assembly appealed to all OSCE participating States to honour their commitments under the Kyoto and Århus Protocols. Other resolutions included appeals to abolish the death penalty for all crimes.

Paris 2001



The Paris Declaration included a unanimously adopted a resolution on strengthening

transparency and accountability in the OSCE and proposed that before making major decisions the Ministerial Council should take into account the opinion of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly. The Assembly also recommended that as long as the OSCE complies with the strict consensus rule the decision-making process should not be secret and that objections to any proposal must be made known to any interested OSCE participating State or OSCE Institution.

An Ad Hoc Committee was established to monitor the implementation of the resolution and to promote transparency and accountability in the OSCE.

Resolutions were also adopted on the abolition of the death penalty; prevention of torture, abuse, extortion or other unlawful acts; combating trafficking in human beings, corruption and international crime.

Berlin 2002



The Berlin Declaration resolutely condemned all acts of terrorism, whatever their motivations or origin, and

underlined the solidarity of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly in the struggle against terrorism.

The Declaration reminded all OSCE partici-

pating States that any measures taken to address terrorism must fully respect international law and relevant OSCE commitments. It also called upon the governments of participating states to revise the Bucharest Plan of Action for Combating Terrorism by including provisions relating to the impact of terrorism on women, and by recognizing the need for increased participation of women in the process of conflict prevention and conflict resolution.

The Assembly urged the government of Belarus to co-operate with the OSCE in facilitating compliance with OSCE commitments, and the leadership of Moldova and Transdnistria to resume dialogue on the status of Transdnistria.

The resolution on anti-Semitic violence condemned the alarming escalation of anti-Semitic violence in the OSCE region.

Rotterdam 2003

The Rotterdam Declaration stated that with Europe's ongoing development in security structures, the OSCE's real strength lies in its capacity to respond to security threats and challenges and in its strong field presence. To uphold the credibility of the OSCE, it added, it is imperative to provide the OSCE field activities with adequate funding and high-quality staff.

The Declaration recommended that the OSCE Permanent Council be requested to consult the PA prior to making a decision to terminate any OSCE field activity.

The Declaration also suggested that the OSCE should adopt a more balanced regional approach to promoting the implementation of the participating States' human dimension commitments. The Assembly also adopted a resolution on the parliamentary follow-up of OSCE activities at the national level. National Parliaments were encouraged to introduce practices whereby annual reports on the activities of the OSCE PA by national OSCE PA delegations are regularly debated in an appropriate manner in national parliaments.

Annual Sessions and Declarations

Edinburgh 2004



The Edinburgh Declaration condemned terrorism in all forms and manifestations and called upon the international community to target the profound political, social, economic and environmental causes of terrorism and to ensure that the fight against terrorism be carried out in compliance with the principles of the UN Charter and international law.

The Assembly also adopted a resolution on torture calling upon all participating States to abide by the obligation that no exceptional circumstances may be invoked as a justification of torture.

A resolution called on sustained OSCE attention to fulfilling commitments regarding the fight against racism, anti-Semitism and xenophobia. In the resolution on Kosovo, the Assembly called upon participating States to provide the additional forces necessary to maintain stability and to ensure a secure environment for those persons wishing to return to their homes in Kosovo.

A resolution on co-operation between the OSCE and the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly reiterated previous recommendations that the OSCE carry out the necessary reforms with regard to its consensus decision-making procedure. The resolution also requested that the OSCE PA be given free access to all OSCE meetings and recommended that the Special Representative of the OSCE PA in Vienna be included in consultative processes.

Washington 2005



In the Washington Declaration, the Assembly addressed a range of political issues, including increasing information exchanges with non-OSCE States on trafficking and upgrading the status of the OSCE's Forum for Security Co-operation.

The importance of respecting human rights commitments was also emphasized, including voting rights. In this context, the Assembly recalled the obligation of participating States to allow international OSCE observers of election procedures.

The document supported recommendations on OSCE reform, based on reports by the 2005 Panel of Eminent Persons appointed by the Chairman-in-Office and the OSCE PA's June 2005 colloquium on 'The Future of the OSCE.'

The Assembly also called upon the OSCE to improve the gender balance in the organization and to adopt more transparency and accountability in its working methods. The document addressed issues on fighting piracy, relations in the Mediterranean region, countering corruption, stopping the traffic in small arms, and combating trafficking in human beings. The Assembly also passed a resolution calling for the citizens of Washington, DC to be granted voting representation in the U.S. Congress.



Brussels 2006

The Brussels Declaration called for increased support for OSCE Field Missions and closer co-operation with other international organizations on this issue. The Assembly also emphasized the importance of energy security, calling for increased dialogue between participating States to ensure reliable supplies of energy.

Regarding election observation, the Assembly urged continued political leadership by parliamentarians, who provide "visibility and credibility" to such missions. The Declaration also called attention to 'crimes of honour,' and urged legislative action to combat these practices. The Assembly also noted the need for greater attention to the protection of children's rights, and legislative action to combat child pornography.

The Assembly issued a specific call for OSCE States to ensure that their territory is not used to assist rendition flights or to operate secret detention centres. Recommendations on settling

Annual Sessions and Declarations



2007 Annual Session, Kyiv

the Transnistrian conflict in Moldova, dealing with the consequences of natural disasters, combating corruption, and anti-Semitism and other forms of intolerance were also issued by the parliamentarians.

The Assembly offered strong support to the work of the United Nations in Afghanistan, and recommended further consideration of increased co-operation with representatives of Afghanistan.

Kyiv 2007



The OSCE Parliamentary Assembly ended its 16th Annual Session in Kyiv by adopting a Declaration that expresses regret at the lack of progress in resolving so-called 'frozen conflicts'

in the OSCE region and recommends strengthened action in several fields including migration

and energy and environmental security.

Reaffirming the crucial importance of all democratic values, the Declaration called on Belarus and governments of other OSCE participating States to pursue their international commitments and principles

“Since its creation in 1990, the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly has worked to reflect the aspirations of the peoples across the OSCE area. It has consistently driven forward the debate among participating States. With all this, the parliamentary dimension has become vital for the good health of the Organization.”

Alexander Stubb,
OSCE Chairman-in-Office, 2008

linked to the notion of each being a free and democratic country.

Ukrainian President Victor Yushchenko, and the OSCE Chairman-in-Office, Spanish Foreign Minister Miguel Angel Moratinos, addressed the meeting.

The Declaration urged all OSCE participating States to sign and ratify the Energy Charter Treaty and the Kyoto Protocol. It also called for greater action on migration and against human trafficking, especially children, and for the dismantling of criminal networks which facilitate illegal migration. In addition, it contained provisions on women; peace and security; cluster bombs; environmental security; human rights and intolerance.

Programme of the 2008 Annual Session



17th Annual Session
ASTANA, 29 June - 03 July 2008



Saturday, 28 June

- 12.00 – 20.00 Registration
- 18.00 – 19.00 Briefing for Secretaries of Delegations
(Sary Arka 1 – Ground floor)
- 19.00 – 19.30 Reception for Secretaries of Delegations hosted by the Parliament of Kazakhstan

Sunday, 29 June

- 09.00 – 12.00 Meeting of the Standing Committee
(Sary Arka 4 – 2nd floor)
- 14.30 – 16.00 Inaugural Plenary Session
(Sary Arka 1 – Ground floor)

Monday, 30 June

- 07.00 – 08.45 Time reserved for meetings of various groups
- 09.00 – 11.00 General Committee on Political Affairs and Security
(Sary Arka 1 – Ground floor)
- 09.00 – 11.00 General Committee on Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and Environment (Sary Arka 4 – 2nd floor)
- 11.30 – 13.30 General Committee on Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions (Sary Arka 1 – Ground floor)
- 14.30 – 18.00 Excursion: Visit to the complex “Map of Kazakhstan Atameken,” concert with national songs and dances, national games, cuisine and exhibition
- 19.30 – 21.00 Reception hosted by H.E. Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, Speaker of the Senate of the Parliament of the Republic of Kazakhstan (Reception House “Saltanat Sarai”)

Tuesday, 1 July

- 07.00 – 08.45 Time reserved for meetings of various groups
- 09.00 – 10.30 General Committee on Democracy, Human

Rights and Humanitarian Questions (Sary Arka 1 – Ground floor)

09.00 – 10.30 General Committee on Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and Environment (Sary Arka 4 – 2nd floor)

11.00 – 12.30 General Committee on Political Affairs and Security (Sary Arka 1 – Ground floor)

12.45 – 14.15 Working Lunch on Gender Issues hosted by the Parliament of Kazakhstan

14.30 – 16.00 General Committee on Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and Environment
(Sary Arka 4 – 2nd floor)

14.30 – 16.00 General Committee on Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions (Sary Arka 1 – Ground floor)

17.00 – 18.30 General Committee on Political Affairs and Security
(Sary Arka 1 – Ground floor)

Wednesday, 2 July

- 07.00 – 09.00 Time reserved for meetings of various groups
- 09.00 – 11.00 General Committee on Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and Environment (Sary Arka 4 – 2nd floor)
- 09.00 – 11.00 General Committee on Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions (Sary Arka 1 – Ground floor)
- 11.30 – 13.30 General Committee on Political Affairs and Security (Sary Arka 1 – Ground floor)
- 13.30 – 14.00 Meeting of the Bureau
(Sary Arka 2 – Ground floor)

15.00 – 18.00 Plenary Session (Sary Arka 1 – Ground floor)

Thursday, 3 July

- 07.00 – 09.15 Time reserved for meetings of various groups
- 09.30 – 12.30 Plenary Session (Sary Arka 1 – Ground floor)
- 12:30 Adjournment immediately followed by a reception offered by the President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly





Philippe Nobile



Secretary General
Spencer Oliver

The OSCE PA International Secretariat provides administrative support for the Assembly in its various activities. The Secretariat organizes the meetings of the Assembly, and provides support for election observation projects, special missions and Presidential activities. Its work is carried out in co-operation with other OSCE Institutions and international parliamentary organizations. The Secretariat, which is hosted by the Danish Parliament, is headed by Secretary General Spencer Oliver, and has a permanent staff of 17, including two staff members at the liason office in Vienna.



Deputy Secretary
General
Tina Schøn



Deputy Secretary
General
Gustavo Pallares



Special
Representative
Andreas Nothelle



Presidential
Advisor
Andreas Baker



Director of
Communications
Klas Bergman



Assistant to the
Secretary General
Dana Bjerregaard



Liaison Officer
Marc Carillet



Programme
Officer
Anna Chernova



Financial Advisor
Per-Henrik Dürr



Senior Counsellor
Semyon Dzakhayev



Logistics Officer
Petra Jezkova



Conference
Co-ordinator
Odile LeLarge



General
Services Officer
Kurt Lerras



Senior Secretary
Connie Mathiesen



Research / Publi-
cations Officer
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