

OSCE Parliamentary Assembly 18th Autumn Meeting



OSCE PA
MOROCCO

MARRAKECH 4-6 October 2019

Contents

**OSCE Parliamentary Assembly
18th Autumn Meeting**

Marrakech, Morocco

4-6 October 2019

- 1** Summary
- 4** Parliamentary Conference Opening Session
- 7** Session One - OSCE and African Regional Co-operation for Innovation and the Exchange of Good Practices
- 13** Session Two - The Euro-Mediterranean Region and the Challenges Posed by Climate Change: Economic Development and Environmental Migration
- 21** Session Three - Combating Intolerance and Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief
- 27** Closing Session
- 29** Standing Committee Meeting
- 31** Ad Hoc Committee on Migration
- 33** Ad Hoc Committee on Countering Terrorism
- 35** Mediterranean Forum

Summary

More than 300 participants from some 50 countries, including 190 parliamentarians, gathered in Marrakech for the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly's 18th Autumn Meeting on 4-6 October 2019. It was the first meeting hosted by a Mediterranean Partner for Co-operation, and the first OSCE PA meeting in Africa.

The Autumn Meeting included a Mediterranean Forum, held under the theme "North-South Co-operation Models and Economic Connectivity of the Mediterranean Region in a Globalized World," and a Parliamentary Conference under the theme "Promoting Security Across the Euro-Mediterranean Region: The Role of the OSCE and its Partners." The Standing Committee of heads of national delegations met on 5 October, hearing reports by OSCE Parliamentary Assembly President George Tsereteli (Georgia), Treasurer Peter Juel-Jensen (Denmark), and Secretary General Roberto Montella.

Chaired by OSCE PA Vice-President and Special Representative on Mediterranean Affairs Pascal Allizard (MP, France), the Mediterranean Forum included the participation of Makis Voridis, Greek Minister of Rural Development and Food; and Ambassador Igli Hasani, Chairman of the OSCE Contact Group with the Mediter-

anean Partners for Co-operation.

The Mediterranean Forum also featured the participation of the parliamentary delegations from the OSCE Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation, including Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, and Morocco.

Chaired by OSCE PA Vice-President Roger Wicker (United States) session one of the parliamentary conference focused on the theme, "OSCE and the African Regional Co-operation for Innovation and the Exchange of Good Practices." OSCE PA Vice-President Nilza de Sena (Portugal) opened the second session, held under the theme, "The Euro-Mediterranean Region and the Challenges Posed by Climate Change: Economic Development and Environmental Migration." Session three, chaired by OSCE PA Vice-President Kari Henriksen (Norway), covered the topic "Combating Intolerance and Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief."

President Tsereteli noted in his conclusions that the Marrakech Autumn Meeting provided OSCE parliamentarians with a deeper understanding of the challenges facing the Euro-Mediterranean region, including climate change, migration, terrorism and the need to combat religious intolerance.



OSCE PA MOROCCO

MARRAKECH 4-6 October 2019





Parliamentary Conference Opening Session

The OSCE Parliamentary Assembly's 18th Autumn Meeting opened in Marrakech, Morocco, on 4 October 2019 with calls for greater co-operation between north and south, as well as east and west. Security in Europe and security in the Mediterranean region are mutually reinforcing, participants stressed, and require strong multilateral engagement.

Speakers at the opening session included George Tsereteli, President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly; Hakim Benchamach, President of the House of Councillors of the Kingdom of Morocco; Khalid Samadi, Secretary of State in charge of Higher Education and Scientific Research; Alassane Bala Sakande, President of the African Parliamentary Union and Speaker of the National Assembly of Burkina Faso; Moustapha Cisse Lo, Speaker of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Parliament.

Opening Session



George Tsereteli, President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly

President Tsereteli noted that the Autumn Meeting was a historic occasion for both the Assembly and for Morocco. Not only was it Morocco's first time hosting a meeting of the OSCE PA, Tsereteli underlined, it was also the Assembly's first time holding a meeting in an OSCE Partner State. "Gathering here is a testament to the value that we attach to the Mediterranean Partnership and to the interconnectedness of our regions," he said.

Issues such as migration, counter-terrorism, climate change, economic connectivity and sustainable development can only be tackled through regional and international co-operation, Tsereteli stressed. He noted the historic importance of the Helsinki Process of the 1970s in bringing an end to the Cold War should be appreciated, pointing out that similar processes have taken place in Africa, with various projects attempting to build a political consensus to preserve African independence and unity in the post-colonial era. Several nations of North Africa have also participated in

the OSCE through the Mediterranean Partnership, Tsereteli underlined, with the Partnership marking its 25th anniversary this year.

Hakim Benchamach, President of the House of Councillors of the Kingdom of Morocco

President Benchamach underlined the need to root out the causes of tensions and threats for the whole region. Mediterranean countries are faced with common challenges, he said, including the threat of terrorism and hate speech.

"The question we need to ask is to what extent we can achieve significant results without disarming terrorist groups that are involved in geopolitical conflicts and rivalries," Benchamach said. He also emphasized the link between terrorism and globalization and questioned the geopolitical strategy of "creative chaos," stressing the importance of all countries working together.

Khalid Samadi, Secretary of State in charge of Higher Education and Scientific Research

Khalid Samadi noted that the first-ever OSCE PA meeting in an OSCE Partner for Co-operation country reflects the growing and distinguished position of Morocco in regional and international organizations.

Morocco is pursuing serious and active engagement in international efforts to raise economic and social development, Secretary Samadi said.

Its priorities also include the development of sustainable approaches to tackle environmental and security challenges, and to promote peace around the world, he noted.

Alassane Bala Sakande, President of the African Parliamentary Union and Speaker of the National Assembly of Burkina Faso

The key role afforded to regional co-operation by the OSCE is important today for all the countries of the world and especially in Africa, Sakande said.

Today's problems cannot be reduced to a single country, and therefore we must build global and concerted efforts to enable us to meet challenges including climate change, security and

migration, he said. Meeting in Africa reflects a new and realistic vision, which is based on the redefinition that we are all interdependent, Sakande noted.

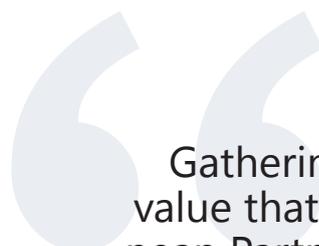
Moustapha Cisse Lo, Speaker of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Parliament

ECOWAS has set parliamentary diplomacy as a top priority to boost the process of African integration, Moustapha Cisse Lo said in his address. Stressing the importance of a parliamentary

dimension to international relations, he noted that more global partnerships are needed and argued that leadership by governments on the international level must include a parliamentary dimension. These

are the principles he follows when he carries out his duties, he said, noting that there are many obstacles to overcome.

Parliamentarians and all citizens must take our destinies in our hands, he argued, saying that we all have a role to play on issues such as regulating the environment and migration. It is not enough to organize these forums and draft documents – we must insist that the outcomes of parliamentary work are implemented.



Gathering here is a testament to the value that we attach to the Mediterranean Partnership and to the interconnectedness of our regions.

- OSCE PA President George Tsereteli

Session One

OSCE and African Regional
Co-operation for Innovation and
the Exchange of Good Practices

Roger Wicker, Vice-President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly

Chaired by OSCE PA Vice-President Roger Wicker (United States), session one of the parliamentary conference focused on the theme "OSCE and the African Regional Co-operation for Innovation and the Exchange of Good Practices." Opening the session, Vice-President Wicker stressed that with its comprehensive approach to security, the OSCE can play a valuable role in strengthening dialogue with regional partners on a wide range of common issues.

Wicker emphasized that the session will provide an opportunity to explore vital topics and develop new avenues for co-operation with regional partners. "Our security is bound to the

fate of our neighbors," Wicker said, noting that deepening co-operation with African partners has long been a priority for the OSCE PA. "When our African partners succeed, all of us succeed."

African regional organizations have demonstrated great interest in the OSCE structures, the Vice-President noted, with many having visited OSCE headquarters in Vienna. The OSCE's Mediterranean Partners have also regularly participated in OSCE forums including PA events, Wicker said, noting that the PA has adopted seven resolutions dealing with Africa over the years.



Mbarka Bouaida, President of the Guelmim-Oued Noun Region

Mbarka Bouaida noted that while the Autumn Meeting may be the first time for the PA meeting in Africa, it should not be the last. Stressing that all regions of the OSCE area share the same concerns and must meet the same challenges, she argued that it no longer makes sense to draw a distinction between "northern and southern shores of the Mediterranean." Migration, for example, is a multinational phenomenon, which highlights the necessity to develop local responses to global challenges. We must strengthen and consolidate international dialogue at the grassroots level, she said.

Morocco, she noted, is a country of transit for migrants, as well as a host and source country. There are tens of thousands of migrants in Morocco that must be integrated, she said, stressing that the drivers of migration are not just economic but because people are searching for basic well-being. In this sense, she stressed, it is necessary to carefully examine what the challenges are before we can address them.

Challenges must be dealt with at a local level, she said, which is why we need to see a greater devolution of state decision-making. Bouaida noted that Morocco started this process of decentralization in 2015, emphasizing the importance of regional financial autono-

my, the need to create jobs and find solutions. There is an imperative to focus on good governance because citizens in the contemporary world are very demanding and expect a high level of service.

Regional confidence must be consolidated in order to move forward, she said, noting that change is impossible without that confidence. She highlighted the communication gap between politicians and citizens, stressing the need for decentralization of power and women's participation in political life. Active participation of women in managing important matters would render our approach more humane and humanitarian, she said.



When our African partners succeed,
all of us succeed.

- OSCE PA Vice-President Roger Wicker

Discussion

In the question and answer session, members emphasized the need to promote enterprise, innovation and economic growth in order to enhance the empowerment of women. Members stressed the need to address entrenched conflicts in the region and enhance co-operation with Mediterranean partners. Practical co-operation should be intensified in areas of common interest, it was stressed, with praise for OSCE initiatives to develop co-operation

in areas of energy security and sharing of best practices.

Women and equality were touched upon, with a delegation stressing that discrimination hinders women from participating in the societies in which they live. When empowered, women are an incredible resource to help overcome challenges such as poverty and illiteracy, it was pointed out. Therefore, investing in women is one of the most important steps that can be taken.

Other topics of discussion included science, technology and innovation. African countries have opportunities to develop technology and promote economic growth, it was highlighted, with emphasis on the importance of regional economic programmes. Specifically, projects of the African Union, World Bank, UNESCO and the African Development Bank were lauded as important efforts to boost economic competition, development and integration.







Session Two

The Euro-Mediterranean Region and the Challenges Posed by Climate Change: Economic Development and Environmental Migration

Chaired by OSCE PA Vice-President Nilza de Sena (Portugal), the second session included presentations by Moustapha Cisse Lo, Speaker of ECOWAS Parliament; Teresa Botella of the International Organization for Migration; Ralf Earnst of the OSCE Office of the Co-ordinator for Economic and Environmental Activities, and an active discussion featuring the participation of more than two dozen OSCE parliamentarians.



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Nilza de Sena, OSCE PA Vice-President

OSCE PA Vice-President Nilza de Sena (Portugal) opened the second session, held under the theme, "The Euro-Mediterranean Region and the Challenges Posed by Climate Change: Economic Development and Environmental Migration." De Sena noted the links between food and water security, massive migration flows, social tensions and environmental degradation. She underlined that economic growth, sustainable development and environmental protection are mutually reinforcing.

De Sena noted how climate change is broadly recognized as a core development and security challenge with serious implications for international peace and stability, including in the Mediterranean region. Stressing the importance of all countries adhering to the Paris Agreement and advancing the Sustainable Development Goals, she pointed to the need to build resilience and adapt to new circumstances, focusing on clean energy. She underlined the need to work in synergy with OSCE executive structures and support the effort of the OSCE Chairmanships to bring climate change to the very forefront of the OSCE agenda.

Moustapha Cisse Lo, Speaker of ECOWAS Parliament

Moustapha Cisse Lo stressed the dramatic and irreversible consequences of climate degradation, as certified by thousands of scientific efforts all over the globe. He stressed the need to implement the Paris Agreement as soon as possible as time is running out, especially for those countries which are more severely affected, including in the Mediterranean region. The challenges are exacerbating already

existing problems of the region, such as lack of good governance, poor water management and massive migratory movements, amplifying existing weaknesses. Highlighting the links between the north and south of the region, he stressed the challenges posed by clandestine immigration, severely impacting on African youth and undermining the development of many African countries.

Teresa Botella, International Organization for Migration

Teresa Botella, Deputy Chief of Mission of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in Morocco, stressed the links between climate change, migration and human security, noting several vulnerability factors, such as gender and poverty. Noting the importance of placing human beings at the core of policy dialogue, she informed the participants that 14 per cent of the world's migrants are hosted in the MENA region. She stressed that while environmental degradation is clearly a root cause of migration, its direct impact is not always easy to determine.

She explained that the IOM works on different levels to support member states address migration and its consequences, including improving their migration policies (e.g. creation of legal migration channels), building national capacities and directly supporting people on the move. Botella stressed that agricultural development and regional water management are key to prevent people from migrating in the MENA region and noted objective two in the Global Compact on Migration on the nexus between climate change and migration.



Ralf Ernst, OSCE OCEEA

Ralf Ernst, Deputy Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities, spoke about recent and future OSCE efforts to support OSCE participating States addressing the security challenges stemming from climate change. He explained that within the OSCE, the issue of climate change is considered as a threat multiplier, for instance on water-stress challenges in the MENA region.

Disaster risk management and energy security are two important areas of work for the OSCE, he said, strictly linked to climate change. He talked about the outcomes of recent OSCE efforts to address climate change-related challenges, such as identification of hotspots where climate change impacts on security, development of regional threat assessments and delivery of capacity building to national stakeholders. He also announced a new,

broader initiative on climate change and security implications in Eastern Europe, South Caucasus, Southeastern Europe and Central Asia. The project aims at developing adaptation and mitigation strategies in these regions, including through engagement of parliamentarians.

Ernst discussed the OSCE's close cooperation with the Union for the Mediterranean and recalled the key role of parliamentarians, including in holding their governments accountable for what they have committed to at the international level. He also noted the excellent co-operation with the OSCE PA and anticipated the possibility to hold a side event at the next Winter Meeting on climate change and the role of MPs.

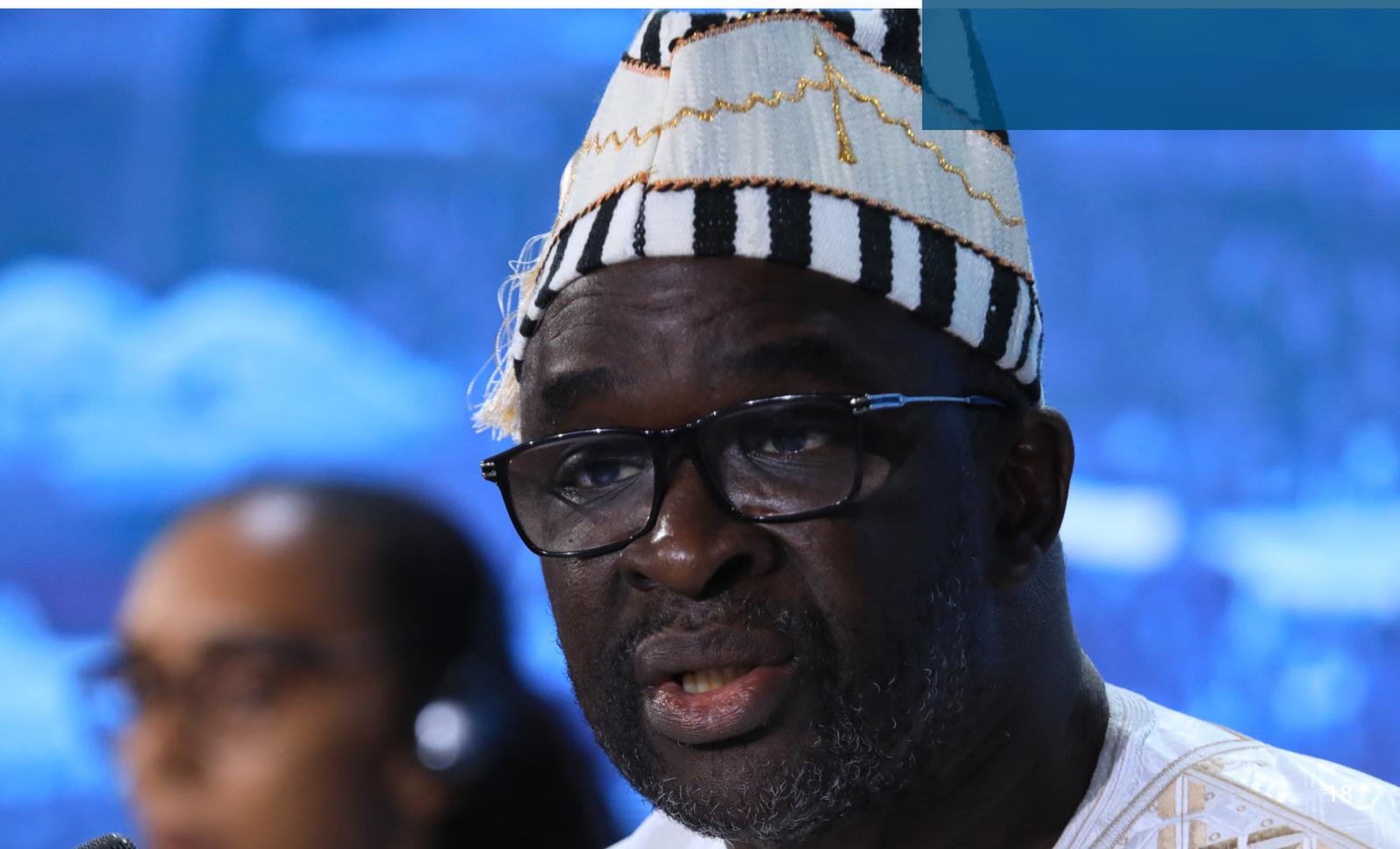
Session Two



Discussion

Featuring a total of 30 interventions, the discussion touched on issues such as climate change, clean energy, and environmental migration. OSCE parliamentarians highlighted climate change as a cross-dimensional issue, stressing the urgent need to counter, adapt and mitigate its detrimental effects. The security implications of migration should be addressed by the OSCE, members said, highlighting security implications of human smuggling, trafficking and foreign terrorist fighters as priorities. The detrimental impact of climate degradation in Central Asia was stressed, including on fueling massive movements of environmental migrants.

Parliamentarians highlighted the need to deal with south-north migratory movements and fight traffickers in the Mediterranean region. There is a need to establish a universal definition for environmental migrants and protect all human beings during and after their migratory movements, parliamentarians said, as well as a need to focus on youth, as they will be most affected by the climate crisis. Parliaments have an important role to play in developing green policies, members noted. The gap between the scientific world on one side, and the politicians and the general public on the other, was highlighted, with observations that changes in policy are not happening fast enough.



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Session Three

Combating Intolerance and Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief

Chaired by OSCE PA Vice-President Kari Henriksen (Norway), session three was devoted to the theme “Combating Intolerance and Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief.” The session included presentations by Mohamed Belkebir, Director of the Study and Research Center on Values, Mohammedia League of Moroccan Ulama; and Ambassador Mehmet Pacaci, Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office on Combating Intolerance and Discrimination against Muslims.



KARI HENRIKSEN

VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE OSCE PA

NORWAY

Session Three

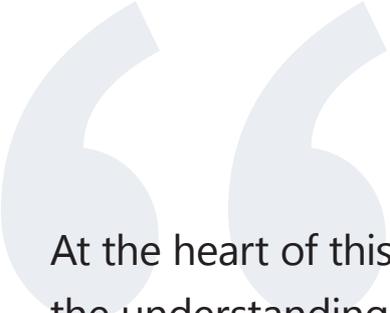
Kari Henriksen, OSCE PA Vice-President

Henriksen opened the session by discussing the OSCE's history of combating intolerance and discrimination based on religion or belief, noting that this topic has been high on the OSCE agenda since its earliest days. She highlighted that support for freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief was included in the Helsinki Final Act's decalogue of principles, and when OSCE Heads of States met again in 1999 in Istanbul, they declared that these are security threats.

She stressed that essential to addressing this topic is the understanding of fundamental equality of people. "This means countries have the responsibility to respect and protect the freedom to believe as well as to not believe," she said. "And naturally this also means that both individuals and com-

munities enjoy the right to change their belief systems."

She noted that the Assembly has consistently spoken out against intolerance and in favour of respect, with many concrete recommendations being put forward in PA Declarations, including at the most recent Annual Session in Luxembourg. In the Luxembourg Declaration, she said, the PA urged "all members of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and national parliaments to create a coalition of respect by publicly speaking out against hate speech and other manifestations of intolerance." Such proactive steps, she noted, are an important way not only to keep this question high on the agenda, but also to serve as a way to counteract narratives based on intolerance.



At the heart of this topic is of course the understanding of fundamental equality of people. This means countries have the responsibility to respect and protect the freedom to believe as well as to not believe. And naturally this also means that both individuals and communities enjoy the right to change their belief systems.

- Kari Henriksen



Mohamed Belkebir, Director of the Study and Research Center on Values, Mohammedia League of Moroccan Ulama

In his remarks, Belkebir described the work of his center, which he explained tries to counter radical narratives and religious extremism by demonstrating that extremist ideology is not based on the Koran, and emphasizing instead the real meaning of Islamic teachings.

Whenever we have intercultural dialogue, Belkebir explained, it enriches everyone who is engaged in such dialogue. There are many different options for exploring this dialogue, he said, pointing out that faith-based dialogue doesn't always need to focus on religion; it can instead focus on broader problems facing humanity. This is how his center engages with

other faiths, he said.

Stressing the need to promote universal access to our common wellbeing, Belkebir emphasized the need to work together to safeguard the continuation of civilization. People of all walks of life dream of peace, friendship, beauty and coexistence, he said, and realizing those dreams can be accomplished through cultural dialogue. He argued that it is necessary to move away from a narrow religious focus and to see things also through a scientific point of view, stressing that religions must be open to all schools of thought.

Terrorism perpetrated in the name of Islam, he said, is based on a misunderstanding of religion and therefore people must develop a deeper understanding of religion and the Muslim faith. Highlighting two streams of extremism, which he described as those who propagate these views and the young people who are not well-versed in religion and only know what they hear from the extremists, Belkebir stressed the need for emphasizing genuine Islamic teachings and dismantling radical discourse.

Ambassador Mehmet Pacaci, Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office on Combat- ing Intolerance and Discrimination against Muslims

Amb. Pacaci discussed the work of the OSCE Slovak Chairmanship in developing a comprehensive approach to combating hate crimes and other forms of intolerance. It is an undeniable and unfortunate fact that incidents of

intolerance and hate crimes against Muslims have increased in recent years, he said. Listing a number of the more prominent types of hate crimes, he stressed that these incidents encourage the extremists of opposite sides and even provide justification for each other.

Discriminatory discourse that has become more prominent over decades, and particularly after the terrorist attacks on New York and Washington on 11 September 2001, has recently been manifesting itself more in acts of violence and intolerance against Muslims, he noted. One can also notice that legislative initiatives are also targeting Muslims, he pointed out. He highlighted programmes of the OSCE as necessary action to promote a commitment to fundamental freedoms and human rights.

Anti-Muslim rhetoric should be addressed similar to xenophobic speech and incitement to violence, he argued. Hate crimes must be properly monitored and reported as this is the only way to gauge the extent of the problem and develop effective responses.





Discussion

In the discussion, parliamentarians recalled the importance of pro-actively speaking out against intolerance, and the power of education in contributing to respect and combating intolerance. There were calls for the establishment of an international day for tolerance as well as focusing on building social cohesion in OSCE countries. Concern was raised that the OSCE has three different representatives on religion, rather than focusing more broadly on the principle of freedom of belief.

Other topics discussed included LGBT rights, gender equality, and the importance of focusing on education in combating discrimi-

nation. Children are not born racist or intolerant, it was pointed out, with these views being learned through socialization processes. Therefore, developing education practices that emphasize tolerance is vital.

Closing Session

OSCE parliamentarians have developed a deeper understanding of the challenges facing the Euro-Mediterranean region, including climate change, migration, terrorism and the need to combat religious intolerance, OSCE Parliamentary Assembly President George Tsereteli (Georgia) said in his conclusions.

The outcome of these discussions will help inform and guide the OSCE PA in its Mediterranean activities for years to come, he said. "Following this important meeting, the OSCE PA will continue to actively support the OSCE's Mediterranean dimension from a parliamentary perspective, enhancing relations between the Organization's participating States and the Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation and among the Partners themselves," Tsereteli said.

Hakim Benchamach, President of the House of Councillors of the Kingdom of Morocco, thanked the OSCE parliamentarians for their active engagement in Marrakech. He highlighted the dangers of falling into the trap of delaying democracy and stressed that Morocco has building its institutions in this regard. Ben-chamach reviewed the topics covered at the

Autumn Meeting and urged parliamentarians and policymakers to take courageous decisions in pursuit of meeting challenges.

Secretary General Montella expressed satisfaction for the productive and successful outcome of the meeting.

"I am very grateful to our Moroccan hosts for organizing this event," Montella said. "By meeting at the frontier of the OSCE region, the OSCE PA and its partner countries wished to send a clear message: we must make use of

all forms of co-operation to revive effective multilateralism, to address common threats and to benefit from common opportunities. The PA will remain engaged on this."

The Closing Session of the Autumn Meeting also included a segment expressing gratitude to three senior members of the Assembly who were leaving

the PA: OSCE PA Vice-President Nilza de Sena, Chair of the Ad Hoc Committee on Migration Nahima Lanjri and former Rapporteur of the Committee on Political Affairs and Security Alan Farrell.

Following this important meeting, the OSCE PA will continue to actively support the OSCE's Mediterranean dimension from a parliamentary perspective, enhancing relations between the Organization's participating States and the Mediterranean Partners.

- OSCE PA President George Tsereteli



Standing Committee Meeting

The Standing Committee consists of the OSCE PA's 57 Heads of National Delegations and Members of the Bureau. Meeting three times a year – at the Winter Meeting, Autumn Meeting and Annual Session – the Standing Committee guides the work of the Assembly, approves its budget and appoints the Secretary General.

OSCE PA President George Tsereteli opened the Standing Committee meeting on 5 October with a report on his activities. The President noted his participation in the OSCE Informal Ministerial meeting convened by Slovak Foreign Minister and OSCE Chairperson-in-Office Miroslav Lajcak in the High Tatra Mountains of Slovakia, where he presented the Luxembourg Declaration.

The President also informed the Standing Committee that he had visited Kyiv, attending the opening session of the new Verkhovna Rada (Parliament) and meeting the new Chief Monitor of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission in Ukraine.

He highlighted new appointments he made for leadership roles in the Ad Hoc Committee on Countering Terrorism, as well as a number of new Special Representatives.

The Standing Committee discussed current international political issues, with members from Germany, United Kingdom, Azerbaijan, Switzerland, Russia, France, Italy, Cyprus, Ukraine, Armenia, United States, Slovakia, Switzerland and Turkey taking the floor.

Peter Bowness (United Kingdom), Chair of the Sub-Committee on Rules of Procedure and Working Practices, discussed a range of

issues being considered, including related to supplementary items, the quorum, responsibilities of the Standing Committee regarding supplementary items, as well as additional responsibilities being delegated to OSCE PA Vice-Presidents and accountability of Special Representatives.

Treasurer Peter Juel-Jensen (Denmark) reported on the state of OSCE Parliamentary Assembly finances and gave a positive assessment of the organization's financial management. He informed the Standing Committee about a recent meeting with Secretary General Roberto Montella and staff of the International Secretariat. He announced that the Assembly remains within the approved budget and assessed that autonomy from the OSCE budget makes the OSCE PA more reliable and responsive.

Secretary General Montella thanked the Moroccan hosts and highlighted that 2019 represented a first in many aspects, such as the work of the Counter-Terrorism and Migration Committees, appointments of new Special Representatives, newly adopted comprehensive guidelines on election observation and joint OSCE and OSCE PA press releases. He underlined the great relationship the Assembly has with the OSCE governmental side and OSCE Chairmanship, as well as ODIHR and partners on elections.

Vice-President Henriksen (Norway) commented on the need to enhance gender balance and women's representation at higher levels. Margareta Kiener Nellen (Switzerland) reported on her experience participating in the election observation mission to the Ukraine parliamentary elections.

Lisa Chambers (Ireland), Co-Chair of the Ad Hoc Committee on Countering Terrorism, reported on the committee's efforts to ensure the security of citizens the Assembly represents through targeted initiatives and strategic partnerships.

Head of the Delegation of San Marino Luca Santolini welcomed the OSCE PA participants to the 2020 Autumn Meeting which will be held in San Marino.

Nahima Lanjri (Belgium), Chair of the Ad Hoc Committee on Migration highlighted Morocco's migration management practices in one of the main ports of the departure of migration flows through the Western route. Last year the committee conducted field visits to Belgium, Sweden and Denmark, she reported, and at the last Annual Session, the committee adopted a Resolution on Effective Migration Governance Based on Promoting Inclusive Societies and Dignified Returns.

Special Representative on Mediterranean Affairs Pascal Allizard (France) while reporting on his activities reminded of a scheduled visit to Egypt to co-operate closer with this Mediterranean OSCE PA partner.

Torill Eidsheim (Norway), Special Represent-

ative on Arctic Issues, commended the PA for taking a more active role in Arctic-related issues. She highlighted that the High North is taking a greater political and economic significance. The bond of OSCE PA, she said, can be used not only to prevent conflicts but also to prevent the negative impact of climate change.

Kyriakos Hadjiyianni (Cyprus), the Chair of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly's human rights committee reported on the field visit to Ukraine that served the mission of greater visibility regarding the engagement of the OSCE PA in addressing the continuing sequences of the conflict with a special focus on humanitarian aspects.

Newly appointed Special Representative on Civil Society Engagement Pia Kauma (Finland) underlined the importance the PA attaches to the contribution of civil society and NGOs to strengthening and upholding OSCE commitments by participating States.

Special Representative on Fighting Corruption Irene Charalambides (Cyprus) reported on her activities and discussed future work she intends to carry out, including visits to Paris and Strasbourg to strengthen co-operation with the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development and the Council of Europe. She also announced an anticorruption conference that will be held in Cyprus next May and welcomed OSCE PA participants.

Vice-President Margareta Cederfelt (Sweden) reported on her efforts related to the investigation of the Boris Nemtsov assassination.

Ad Hoc Committee on Migration

Morocco's national policies on immigration and asylum, including its voluntary return practices and re-integration of migrants, were in focus at the OSCE PA's Ad Hoc Committee on Migration meeting on 5 October. With ten members of the committee participating, the meeting was chaired by Belgian parliamentarian Nahima Lanjri, who welcomed the opportunity to learn more about migration policy in an OSCE Partner for Co-operation State. Morocco has faced the challenge of adapting to its evolving status from a country of origin and transit to a country of destination, she noted.

Ahmed Skim, Director for Migration Affairs of Morocco, presented an overview of the measures implemented since 2013 in the field of immigration and asylum policy in Morocco, focusing on the regularization of irregular migrants and the National Strategy for Immigration and Asylum.

Overall, 50,000 persons have been documented in two exceptional regularization operations (2014 and 2016-2017), he noted. Furthermore, during 2014-2019, refugee status was granted to 803 persons.

Morocco provides migrant children access to public and private schools and since 2008 all health services in basic healthcare facilities are provided free of charge for irregular migrants, he said. In the field of employment, regularized migrants can access job search services as well as the services of the National Agency for Promotion of Employment and Skills. Integration programmes are also being implemented at the local level, he said, with the

involvement of civil society and local actors, through annual calls for projects launched by the Ministry.

Skim noted that Morocco is actively managing migration flows and combatting human trafficking, and has facilitated the voluntary return of more than 11,500 persons in partnership with international organizations between 2005 and 2018.

Teresa Botella, Deputy Chief of Mission of the International Organization for Migration, Morocco, presented an overview of the activities of IOM in Morocco since 2007, both in facilitating the voluntary return of Moroccan migrants to Morocco as well as the return of irregular migrants from Morocco to their countries of origin.

She outlined three main fields of activity for the IOM in Morocco:

- youth support and development
- protection and resilience of migrants
- migration, development and governance

IOM is active in the field of prevention, she said, working with Moroccan youth in schools and providing training, reaching about 11,000 youth in 2018. In terms of protection and resilience, IOM provides direct assistance to the most vulnerable migrants, she said, with 793 minors receiving assistance in 2018.

A total of 12,000 migrants have returned from Morocco to their countries of origin since 2005 through IOM's Assisted Voluntary Return

and Reintegration (AVRR) Programmes, Botella reported. IOM has also facilitated the voluntary return of Moroccans to Morocco, mainly from Greece, Germany, Switzerland, Italy and Turkey.

Botella also touched upon IOM's support activities for unaccompanied minors.

Reviewing current international developments in the field of migration, committee members drew attention to the situation of the 4 million externally displaced persons including 3.6 million Syrians in Turkey, as well as one million regular migrants. More equitable burden and responsibility sharing is needed from the international community, it was stressed, particularly through complementary pathways for admission among all countries such as resettlement, humanitarian admission, family reunification, humanitarian visas, and labour mobility schemes.

Attention also focused on the serious situation on the Greek island of Lesbos where one migrant died in a fire in the Moria refugee camp, as well as in Calais and Dunkirk (France) where the police have adopted a heavy-handed approach to clearing the irregular migrant camps.

Committee members also discussed upcoming activities, including a possible event at the Vancouver Annual Session in 2020 focused on Canadian integration policy, as well as proposals for field visits to Spain and the US-Mexico border.

Lanjri informed the members of the committee that she has to step down from her position as Chair after the Autumn Meeting when the new delegation of Belgium comes into effect, noting that a new Chair will be appointed by President George Tsereteli and the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly will be duly informed.



Ad Hoc Committee on Countering Terrorism

At the sixth meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee on Countering Terrorism (CCT), held on the margins of the Marrakech Autumn Meeting on 4 October, members heard a presentation by former CCT Chair Makis Voridis, debated current issues, and discussed plans for upcoming CCT activities.

Committee Chair Abid Raja (Norway) welcomed Voridis, now Minister of Rural Development and Food in Greece, and thanked him for his vision and leadership while chairing the committee from 2017 to 2019.

Minister Voridis reflected over the last two years of CCT work, which he considered very successful, and offered ideas on how the CCT should continue to play an important role in the coming years. In particular, he emphasized the need to be as strategic, pragmatic, realis-

tic and co-operative as possible to truly add value in this critical field, where many stakeholders are already quite active and usually more operational than the PA. For instance, the ability to mobilize co-ordinated oversight by national parliaments over the timely implementation of critical obligations in the field of border security and information sharing represents a rather unique feature of the PA on which the CCT should further build, Voridis said.

He finally advised to focus on the top counter-terrorism priorities of the international community, thus avoiding themes which are either divisive or too vague, and to do so in strict co-ordination with the OSCE, the UN and with other parliamentary assemblies.

Raja explained his intention to build on the



solid results achieved under Vovides' leadership by deepening partnerships with the OSCE executive structures and the UN, developing targeted CCT activities, and supporting national parliaments to fully realize their counter-terrorism potential. In this context, he stressed the need to continue to focus on cutting edge themes, such as border security, FTFs, use of internet for terrorist purposes, radicalization and de-radicalization, and links with other forms of crime. Co-Chair Lisa Chambers (Ireland) stressed the need to continue sharing good practices and influencing policymaking in the OSCE region. In this context, the important counter-terrorism experience of the Kingdom of Morocco was highlighted by several members.

At this critical juncture, the Chair encouraged members to share ideas on potential issues they would like to see addressed through future CCT initiatives and/or resolutions. During a tour de table, the following key issues emerged:

- border security and information sharing
- repatriation of FTFs and their family members
- links between terrorism and organized crime, especially in terms of financing use of new technologies, mass media and social networks to spread violent extremism and radicalization, as well as cyber terrorism dealing with the legacy of terrorism and promoting national reconciliation prevention of radicalization and de-radicalization, including in prisons

- building partnerships with other parliamentary assemblies and civil society

Committee members also discussed upcoming activities, including a visit to Norway and a scheduled address by the CCT Chair to the OSCE Security Committee the following month, with Raja announcing that he intends to take part in numerous OSCE events in the coming months to further co-operation and co-ordination with the executive structures.

Raja also reminded members about the final report of the PA Initiative on Strengthening Border Security and Information Sharing, which was presented in Luxembourg. The report highlights key challenges and promising practices, as well as several policy recommendations.

Raja announced that a draft Memorandum of Co-operation with the OSCE PA and the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism has been finalized and it will be signed in the coming months. This document represents an important milestone for the PA as it will pave the way to more operational work with the UN in this critical field, Raja said.

Further, the CCT is actively collaborating with the OSCE executive structures, Raja reported, in the framework of an OSCE project proposal aimed at strengthening the role of national parliaments in countering terrorism.

Mediterranean Forum

The Mediterranean Forum met on 4 October under the theme of “North-South Co-operation Models and Economic Connectivity of the Mediterranean Region in a Globalized World.” Chaired by OSCE PA Vice-President and Special Representative on Mediterranean Affairs Pascal Allizard (France), the Mediterranean Forum included the participation of President Tsereteli; Makis Voridis, Greek Minister of Rural Development and Food; and Ambassador Igli Hasani, Chairman of the OSCE Contact Group with the Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation.

Pascal Allizard, OSCE Vice-President and Special Representative on Mediterranean Affairs

In his opening remarks, Allizard noted that this is the first time the Mediterranean Forum is being held in a Mediterranean Partner State. He noted that it is the 25th anniversary of the OSCE’s Mediterranean Partnership and pointed out that the Mediterranean is a shared space that many OSCE PA member countries border. “Each of us is particularly attached to its future,” he said, noting that the region is at the center of several sources of crises and tensions, including terrorist threats throughout the Mediterranean basin and the migration crisis, which follows three main routes across the Mediterranean Sea.

He highlighted the changing nature of migratory flows, with the western Mediterranean route becoming more popular among migrants seeking to enter Europe. Morocco has therefore become an important partner in

migration management and border security, Allizard said.

The war against terrorism in the Levant has seen military activities conducted or co-ordinated from the eastern Mediterranean, Allizard said, and the region is impacted by friction between NATO and Russia on the eastern flank of Europe. He also discussed the efforts of China to build infrastructure connecting various regions including the Mediterranean. He advocated a shared strategic vision underpinned by the exchange of information regarding projects spearheaded by China.

George Tsereteli, OSCE PA President

President Tsereteli thanked Allizard for his work and the Moroccan authorities for hosting the meeting. The Mediterranean is not a border separating countries, Tsereteli stressed,

but something that unites Europe and Africa. "Centuries ago," he said, "when the Romans were settled in both southern Europe and North Africa, they used to call the Mediterranean 'Mare Nostrum', 'our sea', because it was almost like a lake within the same region. By meeting here today, we wish to stress that also for the OSCE the Mediterranean is a sort of Mare Nostrum."

Both shores of this sea are facing the same challenges, he noted, including migration flows, terrorist threats and the impact of climate change, as well as the same socio-economic opportunities. "These all need to be addressed jointly, north and south of the Mediterranean together, because common challenges, as I have said many times, require common solutions," Tsereteli said.

Makis Vouridis, Greek Minister of Rural Development and Food

Makis Vouridis, a former member of the Greek Delegation to the OSCE PA and former Chair of the Ad Hoc Committee on Countering Terrorism, shared his strategic views for the PA and more broadly for addressing challenges facing the Mediterranean region. When talking about north and south and the need to pursue policies of co-operation, Vouridis noted that it is necessary to examine where one stands. He pointed out that coming from Greece, he is often considered by Europeans to be a "southerner," but standing in Morocco, he is considered a "northerner." He noted that this distinction can impact the stances that policymakers take in some cases but should serve as a reminder that there is much overlap among national interests.

Minister Vouridis noted that it is important to identify the areas that require serious international co-operation and pursue multilateral approaches. He said that it is not possible to address international challenges such as climate change, trade, corruption and terrorism only at the national level. He stressed that multilateral co-operation is essential, and that through its growing level of activities, the OSCE PA is adding real value to these processes.

He stressed that it is up to parliamentarians through their legislative and oversight functions to ensure that governments live up to international commitments.

Ambassador Igli Hasani, Chairman of the OSCE Contact Group with the Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation

There is no security in Europe if there is no security in the Mediterranean, and there is no security in the Mediterranean if there is no security in Europe, Ambassador Hasani stressed. Discussing migration, he said that while it is a constant in human history, it should be an option, not a necessity. Economic connectivity is essential for security, said Hasani, noting that economic difficulties are having adverse impacts on the OSCE area.

He stressed the importance of the Mediterranean partnership and focused on promoting youth participation in societies. Youth participation is essential for tackling transnational threats such as violent extremism as well as promoting inclusive political systems.

Ambassador Hasani explained the historical

Mediterranean Forum

importance of holding this meeting in Morocco during the year celebrating the 25th anniversary of the Mediterranean Contact Group and highlighted the priorities of the upcoming Albanian OSCE Chairmanship.

Discussion

The Mediterranean Forum featured the participation of the parliamentary delegations from the OSCE Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation, including Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, and Morocco. The parliamentarians raised issues related to security, the environment, economic development and migration. Shoring up the spirit of collegiality is necessary in today's climate, it was stressed, including the possibility of upgrading the status of the Mediterranean Partners to enjoy the benefits of full-fledged membership in the OSCE.

The topic of north-south co-operation has roots in the process of decolonization, but the process has been impacted by globalization,

the Algerian delegation stressed. Focus was placed on resolving the Israel-Palestine conflict, as well as opening dialogue for peace and security in the Mediterranean basin. Structural obstacles are posed by the Israel-Palestine conflict as well as the security situation in the Sahel, parliamentarians noted. Alternative development models not only based on trade and the role of parliamentarians in implementing those models were discussed as possibilities.

In the discussion, delegations raised issues related to a wide array of concerns, including money laundering, energy security, gender, and digital connectivity. Former OSCE PA President and Special Representative on Mediterranean Affairs Alcee Hastings (United States) briefed the forum on his trips to Tunisia and Israel prior to coming to Morocco. Chair of the Ad Hoc Committee on Migration Nahima Lanjri (Belgium) spoke about the Morocco-Spain migration route and the importance of north-south co-operation on this issue.









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