

## OSCE PA holds 18th Autumn Meeting in Morocco



The OSCE PA met for its 18th Autumn Meeting on 4-6 October in Marrakech, Morocco. Consisting of a Mediterranean Forum and a Parliamentary Conference under the theme “Promoting Security Across the Euro-Mediterranean Region: The Role of the OSCE and its Partners,” the Autumn Meeting was attended by more than 300 participants, including 190 parliamentarians, from some 50 countries. It was the first time for the PA meeting in a Partners for Co-operation country, and the first time in Africa.

In his opening address on 4 October, President George Tsereteli (Georgia) called for greater commitment to effective multilateralism. “Whether the issue is migration, counter-terrorism, climate change or pursuing economic connectivity and sustainable development, we cannot hope to make progress without regional and international co-operation,” he said. The President also expressed hope for positive developments in the resolution of the Ukraine conflict.

Also addressing the opening session were Hakim Benchamach, President of the House of Councillors 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; and Moustapha Cisse Lo, Speaker of the Economic Community of West African States.

OSCE PA Vice-President and Special Representative on Mediterranean Affairs Pascal Allizard (France) chaired the Mediterranean Forum, which featured the participation of the parliamentary delegations from OSCE Partners Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, and Morocco. The Mediterranean Forum was held under the theme “North-South Co-operation Models

and Economic Connectivity of the Mediterranean Region in a Globalized World.”

Chaired by OSCE PA Vice-President Roger Wicker (United States), session one of the parliamentary conference focused on “OSCE and the African Regional Co-operation for Innovation and the Exchange of Good Practices.” Vice-Presidents Nilza de Sena (Portugal) and Margareta Cederfelt (Sweden) co-chaired 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 covered the topic “Combating Intolerance and Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief.” Chaired by Vice-President Kari Henriksen (Norway), the session featured keynote addresses by Mohamed Belkebir, representing the Mohammedia League of Moroccan Ulama; and Ambassador Mehmet Paçacı, Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office on Combating Intolerance and Discrimination against Muslims.

The Standing Committee met on 5 October, featuring discussions on a wide range of international issues. OSCE PA Treasurer Peter Juel-Jensen (Denmark), Chair of the Sub-Committee on Rules of Procedure and Working Practices Peter Bowness (United Kingdom) and Secretary General Roberto Montella reported to the committee on the Assembly’s finances and efforts to improve the services provided by the Secretariat to Members of the Assembly.

OSCE PA Special Representatives reported to the Standing Committee on their activities and plans, particularly in relation to developing OSCE PA involvement on Arctic issues, civil society engagement, and combating corruption. The chairs of the OSCE PA’s ad hoc committees also briefed the Assembly’s leadership.

The Ad Hoc Committee on Migration met and heard from special guests representing the government of Morocco and the IOM. Chaired by Nahima Lanjri, the committee discussed issues related to Moroccan migration policy and the return and reintegration of migrants. The Ad Hoc Committee on Countering Terrorism met to discuss the role of the PA in counter-terrorism, including a project to promote implementation at the national level of UN Security Council Resolution 2396 on border security and information sharing.

## Montella meets with delegation from Albanian Parliament at OSCE PA headquarters in Copenhagen



PA Secretary General Roberto Montella met today at the International Secretariat with a delegation of the Albanian Parliament’s European Integration Committee, composed by its Chair Rudina Hajdari, deputy Chair Senida Mesi and Member Ralf Gjoni. The delegation was accompanied by the Albanian Ambassador to Denmark, Elida Petoshati and

by Sidrit Minxhozi, Head of the Parliament’s International Department.

Discussions touched upon a number of issues, including the upcoming decision by the European Council on the start of EU accession negotiations, latest domestic developments as well as the electoral and judicial reform processes. Montella underlined that the upcoming Albanian OSCE Chairmanship is a responsibility and an opportunity for the country as a whole, and a process which must see the engagement and co-operation of all national stakeholders. He expressed hope to further strengthen the already excellent co-operation on the occasion of the PA’s expected high-level visit to the country in November.