

## PA webinar highlights OSCE work on military transparency and confidence-building



Beatrice Heuser, Richard Hudson, Ian Anthony, Robin Mossinkoff

The PA held a webinar on Monday focused on promoting predictability in military affairs and enhancing implementation of OSCE confidence-building measures such as the 2011 Vienna Document. Featuring remarks by First Committee Chair Richard Hudson (United States), University of Glasgow's Beatrice Heuser, Senior FSC Support Officer of the OSCE CPC Robin Mossinkoff, and SIPRI's Ian Anthony, the event explored the history and political dimension of military information exchange and its role in building a peaceful OSCE region.

Opening the meeting, Hudson highlighted the continued relevance of the confidence-building measures contained in the Vienna Document and expressed hope that it can be effectively modernized to address the OSCE region's most

pressing security challenges. Prof. Heuser provided some history of information-sharing commitments as well as the current state of their application by OSCE participating States. Mossinkoff explained the OSCE commitments regarding military transparency and implementation. Dr. Anthony said that there is a trend toward military build-ups across the OSCE area, with increased defence spending and military thinking moving up the hierarchy of concerns across Europe.

In the discussion, participants raised the importance of coupling arms control with confidence-building measures, as well as how to ensure military transparency in the context of the new realities of hybrid warfare in the OSCE area. The need to comprehensively address all stages of the conflict cycle was also emphasized as vital in ensuring effectiveness.

OSCE PA President Peter Lord Bowness offered remarks, noting that the OSCE's work on confidence-building deserves to be more widely appreciated. Secretary General Roberto Montella said that there needs to be more political will to implement the OSCE's toolbox.

## Bureau meets online to establish modalities for OSCE PA's 2021 Remote Session

On 10 June, the PA Bureau decided that the Remote Session will take place in a hybrid format, with the three General Committees meeting fully online on 30 June and 1-2 July. Meetings of the Standing Committee and Plenary will take place 5-6 July in hybrid format, with Heads of Delegation, Bureau Members and Special Representatives attending in-person in Vienna and other Members of the Assembly joining on Zoom. The Bureau also validated the list of candidates for the election of Assembly officers, with voting to take place electronically over a 30-hour period starting on Monday 5 July at 10:00 (CEST).

## PA participates in OSCE Alliance against Human Trafficking Conference

OSCE parliamentarians actively participated in the 21st Conference of the Alliance against Trafficking in Persons via Zoom this week. The PA's Special Representative on Human Trafficking Issues, US Congressman Chris Smith, intervened twice, at Monday's session entitled "Protecting the most vulnerable: putting a spotlight on the demand that fosters trafficking in children," and Tuesday's session entitled "Ensuring Survivor Voices in All

Anti-Trafficking Policies." Third Committee Chair Kyriakos Hadjiyianni (Cyprus) addressed Panel 4, entitled "Pathways for Implementation," focusing his remarks on the role of parliaments in the fight against trafficking. Other OSCE PA members taking part in the event were Second Committee Rapporteur Elona Gjebrea Hoxha (Albania) and Gudrun Kugler (Austria), Vice-Chair of the PA's Ad Hoc Committee on Migration.

## CCT Chair Lopatka addresses opening of UNOCT office in Doha

OSCE PA Ad Hoc Committee on Countering Terrorism Chair Reinhold Lopatka (Austria) spoke Wednesday at the opening ceremony of the UNOCT Programme Office on Parliamentary Engagement in Preventing and Countering Terrorism in Doha, Qatar. Addressing the assembled representatives of the Qatari government and Vladimir Voronkov, Under Secretary General for Counter-Terrorism, Lopatka congratulated the UNOCT for opening the Doha office, noting that it represents an important step in the

global fight against terrorism. By leveraging parliamentary assets, the international community can better develop an effective counter-terrorism strategy, Lopatka said.

"As elected officials, we are called to provide adequate answers to the threats posed by terrorism and violent extremism to our societies," said Lopatka. "Adequately addressing terrorism and violent extremism requires multi-dimensional responses, as well as strong national and international collaboration."

## Hadjiyianni speaks at OSCE HDC meeting on freedom of assembly

OSCE PA Third Committee Chair Kyriakos Hadjiyianni (Cyprus) spoke at the OSCE Human Dimension Committee's meeting on freedom of peaceful assembly on Tuesday, stressing that COVID-19 has raised questions about legitimate restrictions during times of emergency. He

reiterated the PA's position that any limitations imposed by the State must serve the interest of the people's enjoyment of their rights and be protected from politically motivated interference as an essential basis for the sharing of opinions, ideas and knowledge envisaged by the Helsinki Final Act.