

PA President Cederfelt addresses OSCE ambassadors, Baltic Assembly

OSCE PA President Margareta Cederfelt (Sweden) addressed the OSCE Permanent Council on 27 October, reiterating the importance of standing up for shared values and responding to violations of international law. The President noted that the Russian Federation's war in Ukraine constitutes "the most severe assault on European security since the signing of the Helsinki Final Act," with "widespread implications for the whole OSCE region and beyond."

She expressed appreciation for the current OSCE Polish Chairmanship and the upcoming Chairmanship of North Macedonia, noting that taking the helm of the OSCE at such a time of turmoil "is an act of courage and valour." The President also spoke about the importance of facilitating a clean energy transition, as well as the recent resurgence of fighting between Armenia and Azerbaijan. "We must give diplomacy a chance to prevail over the use of force," she said.

Following her speech, representatives from 15 OSCE delegations took the floor to respond to points she raised, including issues related to the war in Ukraine and the situation in the South Caucasus, as well as possible changes to the PA's Rules of Procedure and debate over appropriate measures to sanction participating States that violate the Helsinki Final Act. Many Permanent Representatives expressed appreciation for the work of the Assembly and welcomed further co-operation with the OSCE's parliamentary dimension.

While in Vienna, President Cederfelt met with the Perma-



Margareta Cederfelt addresses the OSCE Permanent Council in Vienna, 27 October 2022 (Photo: Micky Kroell/OSCE)

nent Representatives of Ukraine, Poland, and North Macedonia, as well as the Charge d'Affaires of the United States. She also had an opportunity to exchange views with students from the Warsaw Diplomatic Academy.

Following her engagements in Vienna, Cederfelt traveled to Riga for the 41st session Baltic Assembly, which brought together parliamentarians from Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania to discuss co-operation and regional challenges, including energy supplies. Addressing the parliamentarians on 28 October, Cederfelt emphasized the importance of recognizing the Baltic perspective on international affairs, and thanked the Baltic States for their contributions to the OSCE. The President held a working lunch with the leadership of parliaments from Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Montenegro, Poland, and Ukraine.

Op-ed published ahead of OSCE PA's US election observation mission

President Margareta Cederfelt, who is serving as Special Co-ordinator of the OSCE short-term observer mission to the US midterm elections next week, has published an op-ed at *The Hill*: <https://bit.ly/3T1Td7s>

Some 110 members of the OSCE PA from more than 30 countries are set to travel to the United States to observe the 8 November elections, led by Head of Mission Pere Joan Pons (Spain).

Special Representative on Gender Issues Fry launches Women's Network

On 27 October, OSCE PA Special Representative on Gender Issues Hedy Fry (Canada) held the inaugural meeting of the OSCE PA Women's Network, bringing together a diverse group of parliamentarians for the first of a series of discussions on gender equality and gender diversity in the OSCE region.

Opening the event, Dr. Fry outlined the role and the purpose of establishing the Women's Network, noting that there is a need for better interaction and sharing of best practices among women parliamentarians in the OSCE PA. Through informal interactions among parliamentarians, the Women's Network aims to identify areas where gender progress has been made, along with the key obstacles preventing the

more fulsome realization of gender equality in the OSCE region, as well as within the OSCE PA and other OSCE structures.

President Margareta Cederfelt addressed the online meeting, welcoming the initiative and encouraging active participation of both women and men parliamentarians in identifying gender issues and working together to advance gender equality in the OSCE region. Secretary General Roberto Montella also addressed the meeting, commending the work of Special Representative Fry in mainstreaming gender issues in the OSCE.

During the discussion, parliamentarians engaged in informal discussions of current gender-related issues in their countries and the OSCE region and exchanged ideas and best practices aimed at improving gender equality.

Featured tweets @oscepa

PA Vice-President Reinhold Lopatka, who also serves as the PA's Special Representative for Parliamentary Dialogue on Ukraine, tweeted the following on 27 October: "In my capacity as #OSCE PA Special Representative for the Parliamentary Dialogue on #Ukraine I discussed with @TomTugendhat a former chair of UK House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee how to end our reliance on gas supplies from authoritarian regimes like Russia."

In the Birmingham Declaration adopted last July, PA called on OSCE participating States "to avoid dependency on any one source of energy supply and on the energy resources of the Russian Federation in particular."

 **Reinhold Lopatka** @ReinholdLopatka · Oct 27
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