

Hosted by Cypriot Parliament, high-level conference in Nicosia tackles corruption

OSCE parliamentarians and experts gathered in Nicosia, Cyprus, for a two-day international conference on “Combating Corruption, Defending Democracy: the Role of National Parliaments,” held on 27-28 May and hosted by the House of Representative of Cyprus.

Coming at the initiative of Vice-President and Special Representative on Fighting Corruption Irene Charalambides (Cyprus), the conference served as a platform to share experiences and best practices of national parliaments in combating corruption and enhancing transparency, with a focus on the contribution of independent institutions and investigative journalists.

The conference was attended by over 150 participants, including 60 parliamentarians from some 30 OSCE participating States and featured keynote speakers representing the world’s leading anti-corruption organizations and representatives of international organizations. Opening addresses



were delivered by President of the House of Representatives of Cyprus Annita Demetriou, PA President Margareta Cedersfelt (Sweden), Cypriot Foreign Minister Ioannis Kasoulides, Special Envoy of the OSCE Chairmanship-in-Office Artur Dmochowski, and PA Secretary General Roberto Montella. Participants noted that parliaments are well equipped for the fight against corruption and that exchanging best practices is critical to enhance transparency and accountability.

SR Henriksen expresses support for conflict-affected populations in visit to Georgia

OSCE PA Special Representative on the South Caucasus Kari Henriksen (Norway) was in Georgia last week, where she emphasized the importance of continued efforts to improve the lives of people affected by protracted conflicts, also in times of crisis in the OSCE region.

Henriksen started her two-day visit with meetings in the parliament, where discussions focused on the regional security environment and the impact of the war in Ukraine on the South Caucasus region. She met with the Head of the Georgian Parliamentary Delegation to the OSCE PA, Nikoloz Samkharadze and Nino Iobashvili, as well as with the Chair and the Deputy Chair of the Defense and Security Committee, Irakli Beraia and Vladimer Chachibaia.

The main focus of her visit was the current situation of the people affected and displaced by the conflicts in Georgia. She visited the administrative boundary line near Khurvaleti, and in Tserovani and Tbilisi, IDP housing facilities provided by the



government and met with IDPs, discussing ongoing efforts of the government in improving the conditions of displaced persons.

At the Headquarter of the European Union Monitoring Mission in Georgia, confidence-building measures were also in focus. Henriksen was briefed about the work of the mission and expressed her appreciation for the close co-operation between the OSCE and the EU in Georgia.

Pons visits Athens to discuss environmental, energy challenges in Mediterranean

Second Committee Chair Pere Joan Pons held meetings in Athens Monday with the Mediterranean Action Plan of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP/MAP) and relevant Hellenic authorities.

Accompanied by OSCE PA Senior Advisor Marco Bonabello, Pons met with UNEP/MAP Coordinator Tatjana Hema and other officials, with discussions focusing on the OSCE PA’s recent joining of the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development, which operates within the UNEP/MAP as a multi-stakeholder advisory body. Monday’s meetings were intended to facilitate co-ordination between the PA and the

UNEP/MAP and explore ways to strengthen strategic partnerships to better address growing challenges in the Mediterranean region. Among the priorities identified were co-operation on water issues, biodiversity protection, and environmental pollution, including curbing plastic waste.

The PA delegation also met with Dionysia-Theodora Avgerinopoulou, Chair of the Special Permanent Committee on Environmental Protection at the Hellenic Parliament, and Greek Minister of Environment and Energy Kostas Skrekas. In these meetings, discussions focused on strategies to address the energy crisis.

Digitalization in Cyprus focus of visit to Nicosia by Special Rep Mihail

OSCE PA Special Representative on Digital Agenda Radu-Mihai Mihail (Romania) held meetings on 26 May in Nicosian to learn about Cyprus’s digital strategies, to exchange views and lessons learned. Accompanied by Anna Di Domenico from the International Secretariat, he met with Deputy Ministry of Research, Innovation and Digital Policy, Kyriacos Kokkinos; Commissioner of Communication George Michaelides, Director of the Digital Security Authority Antonis Antoniadis, Chief Officer Diamandis Zafeiriades, and with the national Computer Security

Incident Response Team. He also visited the House of Representatives of Cyprus and attended a plenary session.

Discussions centered on Cyprus’s digital transformation and action plans to achieve further goals. The interlocutors highlighted the fast progress made in areas such as connectivity, integration of digital technology in business, online digital services, and cyber security. The meetings also focused on challenges still lying ahead, including low digital skills and literacy.