

President Kauma addresses OSCE Chairpersonship's gender conference in Tetovo



Group photo of OSCE representatives at gender conference in Tetovo, 5 September 2023

Speaking Tuesday at the high-level opening session of the OSCE Chairpersonship's Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Conference in Tetovo, OSCE PA President Pia Kauma (Finland) underlined that in times of crisis, vital topics such as gender equality must not be neglected. "I strongly believe that, while actively working with OSCE participating States and their parliaments, we ought to lead by example," President Kauma said.

In this regard, the President informed the conference participants that at its Annual Session in July, the OSCE PA amended its Rules of Procedure to ensure that gender equality is taken into account when appointing Chairs and Members to Ad Hoc Committees. The PA, she recalled, has long benefited from the work of its Special Representative on Gender Issues and has adopted numerous resolutions focusing on gender equality and women's empowerment, recognizing the excellent contributions by various OSCE offices on gender equality.

Accompanied by OSCE PA Secretary General Roberto Mon-



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tella and Chief of Staff Andreas Baker, President Kauma has held a number of bilateral meetings on the margins of the conference in Tetovo. Meeting with OSCE Chair-in-Office Bujar Osmani, Kauma underscored the need for continued co-operation between OSCE parliamentarians and the OSCE governmental side, particularly in these times of unprecedented political challenges. She welcomed the attention paid by North Macedonia's Chairpersonship to the critical topics of gender equality and women's empowerment.

President Kauma also met with OSCE Secretary General Helga Schmid for discussions that focused on the state of the OSCE. The President noted that OSCE parliamentarians are concerned about the challenges facing the organization, stressing that this may be the most important time in its almost 50-year history, and urged stronger co-operation between the Assembly and all OSCE structures.

On Thursday, President Kauma will address the ambassadors of the 57 OSCE participating States at the Permanent Council meeting in Vienna.

Deadline approaching to register as election observer in Poland

To participate in the OSCE PA Election Observation Mission to Poland for the 15 October 2023 parliamentary elections, national delegations are kindly asked to nominate their members by Friday, 15 September 2023. Completed registration documents should be sent to the International Secretariat (at eom@oscepa.dk) as soon as possible, and no later than the above mentioned date.

President visits International Secretariat, appoints Special Representatives

OSCE PA President Pia Kauma visited the International Secretariat in Copenhagen last week for a series of meetings that focused on priority issues for the year ahead. Following the meetings, President Kauma appointed Special Representatives and Chairs of Ad Hoc Committees to cover a range of issues. In a letter to OSCE PA Members on Tuesday, President Kauma announced the following appointments:

- Special Representative on Anti-Semitism, Racism and Intolerance Ben Cardin (United States)
- Special Representative on the Arctic and the High North Mark Pritchard (United Kingdom)
- Special Representative on Central Asia Farah Karimi (Netherlands)
- Special Representative on Climate Change Pere Joan Pons (Spain)
- Special Representative on Combating Organized Crime Eugenio Zoffili (Italy)
- Special Representative on Eastern Europe Kristian Vigenin (Bulgaria)
- Special Representative on Fighting Corruption Irene Charalambides (Cyprus)
- Special Representative on Gender Issues Hedy Fry

(Canada)

- Special Representative on Human Trafficking Issues Chris Smith (United States)
- Special Representative on Mediterranean Affairs Pascal Allizard (France)
- Special Representative on Political Prisoners Steve Cohen (United States)
- Special Representative on the South Caucasus Kari Henriksen (Norway)
- Special Representative on South East Europe Kyriakos Hadjiyanni (Cyprus)
- Special Representative on Youth Engagement Monika Zajkova (North Macedonia)

President Kauma will chair the Parliamentary Support Team for Ukraine, which was established during the Vancouver Annual Session, with Joe Wilson (United States) and Mykyta Poturaiev (Ukraine) serving as Co-Chairs. Daniela De Ridder (Germany) will take over as Chair of the Ad Hoc Committee on Migration. Reinhold Lopatka (Austria) will continue to lead the Ad Hoc Committee on Countering Terrorism, while Pascal Allizard (France) carries on as Chair of the Sub-Committee on the Rules of Procedure.