

Parliamentarians reaffirm OSCE principles at 25th Winter Meeting in Vienna



Panel for the joint session on 20 February, Vienna Winter Meeting

The OSCE PA held its 25th Winter Meeting in Vienna on 19-20 February. The meeting opened with a strong focus on Ukraine, with high-level speakers – including Austrian National Council President Walter Rosenkranz, Chairman of Ukraine’s Verkhovna Rada Ruslan Stefanchuk, OSCE PA President Pere Joan Pons (Spain), and OSCE Secretary General Feridun Sinirlioğlu – condemning the war and underlining its devastating impact on Ukrainian civilians and foundational principles of international law. Calls were also renewed for the release of three unlawfully detained OSCE staff members: Vadym Golda, Maxym Petrov, and Dmytro Shabanov.

The afternoon sessions of the general committees featured committee debates on topics including the fight for Helsinki principles, geoeconomics and security, and election integrity amid hybrid threats and foreign influence. Committee rapporteurs Tobias Winkler (Germany), Paula Cardoso (Portugal) and Carina Ödebrink (Sweden) also presented ideas for the reports and draft resolutions being prepared for this summer’s Annual Session.

The meeting concluded with a joint general debate on the theme “Human Rights as a Basis for Security,” chaired by President Pons and introduced by Speaker of the Parliament of Denmark Søren Gade and PACE President Petra Bayr. Fifty-eight parliamentarians intervened, with the debate covering the war in Ukraine, human trafficking, political prisoners, international law, and demographic issues. Participants advocated for a just and lasting peace in Ukraine, renewed efforts toward Middle East peace, consistent human rights standards without double standards, and self-determination for Greenland’s people. Belarusian opposition leader Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya urged sustained pressure for a free and democratic Belarus.

Additional meetings included the Parliamentary Support Team for Ukraine, which discussed security, humanitarian needs, and crimes against journalists; the Ad Hoc Committee on Countering Terrorism, which focused on online radicalization and institutional synergies; and the Ad Hoc Committee on Migration, which reviewed local integration practices and the EU Migration Pact.

The Standing Committee discussed ongoing activities, election observation reports, and President Pons’s recent engagements, including at the Munich Security Conference. OSCE PA Treasurer Johan Büser and Secretary General Roberto Montella also reported to the Standing Committee, highlighting the Assembly’s continued high level of engagement despite budget constraints. The Standing Committee also adopted a change to the Rules of Procedure, adjusting certain deadlines in advance of the Annual Session.

Winter Meeting reports, photos and videos available online

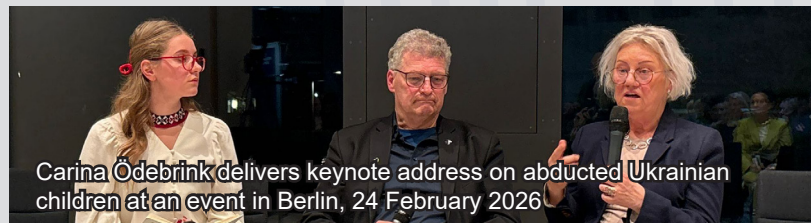
The PA President, SG, Chairs of Ad Hoc Committees and Special Representatives issued reports at the Vienna Winter Meeting, which are available at the Winter Meeting web page. Other online resources include photos, videos, and selected speeches.

Click here for more information: <https://bit.ly/3H9ZvOF>

Ödebrink urges action on abducted Ukrainian children during Berlin visit

Marking four years since Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine, OSCE PA Special Envoy on Russian Abductions and Deportations of Ukrainian Children Carina Ödebrink (Sweden) delivered a keynote at Café Kyiv, a major public event series organized by the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung in Berlin, emphasizing that the forcible deportation and assimilation of Ukrainian children strikes at the heart of the conflict and tests the international community’s commitment to human rights.

On Tuesday, Ödebrink spoke at the event titled “Every child must be brought home,” noting that Ukrainian authorities have identified nearly 20,000 deported children. Ödebrink spotlighted the International Coalition for the Return of Ukrainian Children and Ukraine’s Bring Kids Back UA initiative, which has secured over 1,600 returns. The OSCE PA is the first parliamentary body



Carina Ödebrink delivers keynote address on abducted Ukrainian children at an event in Berlin, 24 February 2026

to join the Coalition, she noted.

Head of Germany’s OSCE PA Delegation and First Committee Rapporteur Tobias Winkler also spoke at the KAS event, focusing his remarks on the work of the OSCE and the PA. Today, Ödebrink held meetings at the Federal Foreign Office and the Bundestag, including with Alternate Member Robin Wagener.

Special Representative Onori calls for smart AI regulation at conference in Rome

At a conference at the University of Rome La Sapienza last week, OSCE PA Special Representative on Artificial Intelligence Federica Onori (Italy) advocated for balanced, effective governance of AI. She stressed the need to safeguard vulnerable people while promoting innovation and competitiveness.

“We must not drift into a free-for-all on artificial intelligence,” Onori said. “Rules are necessary – but they have to be smart and effective.” She highlighted that AI could worsen inequalities for women, young people, and at-risk workers, yet also create

opportunities through clear regulations, algorithmic transparency, and targeted policies.

Onori emphasized structured public-private co-operation between governments, international organizations, and industry to ensure responsible AI aligned with democratic values and fundamental rights. She reaffirmed her mandate to foster parliamentary dialogue on AI governance, ethics, and regulation. The event also included representatives from Google, Meta, TikTok, and Italy’s Treccani encyclopedia institute.

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