

President Pons signs MoU with Dutch Parliament for 33rd Annual Session



Pere Joan Pons signs the Memorandum of Understanding for the Annual Session at the Dutch parliament on 17 March 2026.



Pere Joan Pons with the Dutch Delegation to the OSCE PA in The Hague, 17 March 2026.

OSCE PA President Pere Joan Pons (Spain) has been in The Hague this week to sign a Memorandum of Understanding with Dutch parliamentary leadership for the hosting of the 33rd Annual Session, scheduled for 4-8 July 2026 at the World Forum Convention Center. This visit represents a significant milestone in preparations for an Annual Session that will leverage The Hague's unique position as the host of international courts and tribunals, as well as the OSCE's High Commissioner on National Minorities, for timely discussions on the rule of law as a cornerstone of security co-operation.

The selection of The Hague, President Pons noted, provides an exceptional opportunity to engage representatives from the international legal community, stressing that The Hague's unique position as the world's legal capital is an excellent opportunity for parliamentarians to reaffirm the enduring relevance of international law and shared principles for the entire OSCE region.

While in The Hague, President Pons met with Speaker of the Senate Mei Li Vos, Speaker of the House of Representatives Thom van Campen, Secretary General of the Senate Remco Nehmelman, and Secretary General of the House of Representatives Peter Oskam, as well as Members of the Dutch OSCE PA Delegation, including Farah Karimi, Boris Dittrich, and Robert van Gasteren.

Discussions focused on both political and practical matters related to the Annual Session. The sides discussed the general programme for the meeting and President Pons thanked the Dutch parliamentary leaders for their generosity and hospitality, as well as their commitment to advancing dialogue and co-operation by hosting the largest event on the Assembly's calendar. The President was supported on the visit by Deputy Secretary General Gustavo Pallares and Head of Conference Services Odile Lelarge from the OSCE PA International Secretariat.

Second School Dialogue to take place in Montenegro

On 24 March, the OSCE PA's Ad Hoc Committee on Countering Terrorism will hold its second School Dialogue in Montenegro. Following an event in Italy last November, the Montenegro School Dialogue is part of an ongoing effort to ensure that the experiences of students directly inform parliamentary work on countering violent extremism and strengthening digital resilience. For more information on the Montenegro event, please click here: <https://bit.ly/3NnSMYL>

Special Representative Kugler discusses demographic change in ODIHR webinar

OSCE PA Vice-President and Special Representative on Demographic Change and Security Gudrun Kugler (Austria) participated today in a webinar entitled "Intergenerational Democracy: Demographic Change and Youth Political Participation in the OSCE Region," hosted by the OSCE/ODIHR. In her address, Kugler presented key findings from her 2025 report, "Demographic change in the OSCE region - analysis, impact and possible solutions of a mega trend reshaping society," which describes demographic change as affecting nearly every area of public life.

While declining birth rates are often treated as a matter of economics or social policy, Kugler explained that it is also a democratic question, noting that across much of the OSCE region, aging populations and territorial depopulation are reshaping constituencies and voting blocs. She raised the notion of "electoral gerontocracies," in which aging electorates may increasingly shape political incentives and policy



priorities, and noted the increased importance of ensuring avenues for youth participation in political debates.

The challenge, she said, is not simply to counter the mega-trend of demographic decline, but also ensuring that democratic systems remain resilient. She stressed in this regard both mitigation and adaptation strategies, including intergenerational fairness, as well as focusing on how to handle the democratic gap created by aging societies.

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