

# News from Copenhagen

## Parliamentarians gather in Vienna for 16th OSCE PA Winter Meeting

Some 250 members of parliament from 53 OSCE countries plus several Mediterranean Partners are gathering in Vienna for the OSCE PA's 16th Winter Meeting on 23-24 February. Taking place at the Hofburg Congress Centre, the opening session on Thursday will feature speeches by President of the National Council of Austria Doris Bures, OSCE PA President Christine Muttonen (MP, Austria), and the PA's Special Representative on Gender Issues, Hedy Fry (MP, Canada).

In the closing joint session on Friday afternoon, parliamentarians will hear addresses by Chairperson-in-Office of the OSCE and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Austria Sebastian Kurz and OSCE Secretary General Amb. Lamberto Zannier, followed by a question and answer session. The three general committees will meet to debate issues related to political and security affairs, economics and the environment, and human rights and humanitarian questions.

The PA's Standing Committee of heads of national delegations is meeting Thursday morning to hear reports by President Muttonen, OSCE PA Treasurer Doris Barnett, Chairperson of the Sub-Committee on the Rules of Procedure Peter Bowness, and Secretary General Roberto Montella, as well as from OSCE PA Special Representatives, leaders of recent election observation missions and the chairs of ad hoc committees.

The OSCE PA's general committees on human rights and economic and environmental issues are meeting Thursday afternoon for briefings by senior OSCE officials and government representatives of OSCE countries, as well as to hear preliminary reports from committee rapporteurs on their



ideas for reports and draft resolutions to be prepared for the 2017 Annual Session.

The General Committee on Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions will hold a debate on "Protecting human rights amid growing populism" while the General Committee on Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and Environment will focus on "Managing natural resources, addressing water security and combating climate change."

Meeting on Friday, the General Committee on Political Affairs and Security will hold a debate on "Transnational security in the OSCE area: confronting terrorism." The Winter Meeting concludes with a special debate held in a joint session of the three general committees on the theme "Protecting human rights in times of crisis," with dozens of interventions expected to address the importance of upholding fundamental rights during periods of heightened security concerns.

More information about the Winter Meeting, including the full draft programme, is available at [www.oscepa.org](http://www.oscepa.org), where the meeting will also be livestreaming. Follow the meeting on social media with the hashtag #OSCEPA.

## OSCE PA Ad Hoc Committee on Migration holds discussions ahead of Winter Meeting



The OSCE PA's Ad Hoc Committee on Migration, chaired by Swiss parliamentarian Filippo Lombardi, met on Wednesday at the French Embassy in Vienna for discussions on recent and ongoing activities. The informal working meeting featured a report by Lombardi on recent migration-related briefings in Brussels and Geneva.

Amb. Claude Wild, Permanent Representative of Switzerland to the OSCE and former Chair of the Informal Working Group Focusing on the Issue of Migration and

Refugee Flows, briefed the Ad Hoc Committee on the outcomes of the 2016 OSCE Ministerial Council in Hamburg and in particular the Decision on the OSCE's Role in the Governance of Large Movements of Migrants and Refugees.

Hedy Fry (MP, Canada), Member of the Ad Hoc Committee on Migration and OSCE PA Special Representative on Gender Issues, presented her report "Canada's refugee resettlement programs and the system of private sponsorships," which describes a number of best practices from the Canadian system.

Ad Hoc Committee Vice-Chair Alain Neri (MP, France) submitted an update on the status of unaccompanied minors following the closure of the Calais camp. Discussions also focused on the report and recommendations being prepared by the Ad Hoc Committee to be presented at the OSCE PA's 26th Annual Session this summer in Minsk. In addition, committee members discussed possible upcoming field visits to Greece and Turkey.