

News from Copenhagen

Assembly leadership meets at Danish Parliament in Copenhagen



Margareta Cederfelt



Marietta Tidei



Kyriakos Kyriakou-Hadjjiyanni

The OSCE PA's leadership met in Copenhagen on Monday for discussions at the Danish Parliament (Folketinget) focused on upcoming and ongoing work. The PA's President, Treasurer, Vice-Presidents and Committee Officers were joined at the Bureau meeting by a number of Special Representatives, Chairs of Ad Hoc Committees, and Head of the PA's Belarusian Delegation Boleslav Pirshtuk, who reported on preparations underway for the 26th Annual Session in Minsk on 5-9 July.

Head of the Danish Delegation Peter Juel Jensen welcomed participants and reiterated the commitment of Denmark to the OSCE, including by hosting its Parliamentary Assembly.

President Christine Muttonen (MP, Austria) thanked the Danish Parliament both for its support in hosting the PA and for organizing the spring meeting of the Bureau every year. She spoke about recent terrorist attacks in several cities, noting that she participated last month in an anti-terrorism conference in St. Petersburg co-organized by the OSCE PA and the Interparliamentary Assembly of the Commonwealth of Independent States, which emphasized the need for a proactive response to terrorism that recognizes the various underlying issues fueling violent extremism.

Muttonen also reported to the Bureau on the conference hosted last month by the PA and the Austrian Parliament on "OSCE Security Policy - Female Perspectives," which explored issues such as the role of women in developing a

new pan-European security architecture and prospects for gender mainstreaming in OSCE field work.

Debates on topical issues featured prominently in the meeting, including discussions on Turkey, with several members speaking about the recent Turkish referendum. A number of Bureau members expressed concern about recent reported developments, and noted the importance of continuing dialogue with the Turkish government.

Rapporteurs of the OSCE PA's three general committees – Margareta Cederfelt (MP, Sweden), Marietta Tidei (MP, Italy) and Kyriakos Kyriakou-Hadjjiyanni (MP, Cyprus) – presented their draft reports and resolutions. Among the key issues highlighted by the Rapporteurs were terrorism, cybersecurity, protracted conflicts, climate change, migration, and strengthening OSCE human rights enforcement mechanisms. Following their presentations, the Rapporteurs addressed questions and comments from other Bureau members.

Treasurer Doris Barnett (MP, Germany) presented the OSCE PA's draft budget for fiscal year 2017/2018, which she noted contains no significant changes from the previous year, acknowledging that many national parliaments are operating under reduced or frozen budgets. She announced that the draft proposed budget would be circulated to the Standing Committee in advance of the Minsk Annual Session.

Secretary General Roberto Montella reported on his recent activities, focusing in particular on financial rules and regulations developed as part of an overall effort to promote transparency and modernize the International Secretariat. Montella also elaborated on the role of the PA in election observation, emphasizing the importance of preserving and reinforcing election observation as a unique activity of the OSCE. He highlighted the special role of parliamentarians in election observation as well as the multiple layers of scrutiny applied to parliamentary observers.

Condolences over the death of OSCE SMM monitor Joseph Stone in Ukraine

Members expressed condolences at the Bureau meeting over the death of Joseph Stone, an American member of the OSCE's Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine, and urged a full investigation into the explosion to ensure accountability for those responsible. Members noted that the incident recalls the need to end the violence in Ukraine and to resolve the crisis based on the implementation of the Minsk Agreements and respect for the principles of the Helsinki Final Act.

Full support was expressed for all OSCE personnel in the field, with appreciation noted for the often difficult and dangerous conditions in which they work.

