

# OSCE Parliamentary Assembly

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*The OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, which has its International Secretariat in Copenhagen, represents the Organization's parliamentary dimension. Established by the 1990 Paris Summit to promote greater national parliamentary involvement in the OSCE, the Assembly today comprises 320 parliamentarians. Its primary task is to support inter-parliamentary dialogue, an important aspect of the overall effort of meeting the challenges of democracy throughout the OSCE region.*

*2007 was a busy year for the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly. It held three major conferences, highlighted by the 16th Annual Session in Kyiv, Ukraine, and the fifth bi-annual Economic Conference in Andorra. It also led six OSCE election observation missions.*

Assembly President Goran Lenmarker travelled extensively throughout the year, with major visits to the Caucasus, Central Asia, the Balkans, Russia and the United States (U.S.). He addressed the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, the Election Co-ordination Group of the European Parliament and the U.S. Helsinki Commission in Washington, as well as the Ministerial Council in Madrid. He also addressed the OSCE Conference on Intolerance and Discrimination held in Cordoba, Spain in October. Assembly President Lenmarker and Secretary General Spencer Oliver met twice with OSCE Chairman-in-Office Miguel Angel Moratinos in Madrid to discuss election observation.

## Inter-parliamentary dialogue

**16<sup>th</sup> Annual Session, Kyiv, July.** The theme of the Assembly's 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Session in Kyiv, Ukraine, was Implementation of OSCE Commitments. The five-day session was attended by parliamentarians from 49 countries and resulted in a Declaration, with recommendations for all 56 participating States and OSCE institutions.

Representing the collective voice of OSCE parliamentarians, the *Kyiv Declaration* expresses support for all efforts to achieve a peaceful settlement of the so-called frozen conflicts in Moldova and Georgia based on the principles of territorial integrity. Reaffirming the crucial importance of democratic values, the Declaration calls on Belarus and governments of other participating States to pursue their international commitments.

The Declaration urges all participating States to sign and ratify the *Energy Charter Treaty* and the *Kyoto Protocol*. It calls for greater action on migration and against human trafficking, especially of children, and for the dismantling of criminal networks which facilitate illegal migration. It contains provisions on women, peace and security, cluster bombs, environmental security, human rights and intolerance.

The Declaration emphasizes that the Parliamentary Assembly is the OSCE's most valuable asset in enhancing the credibility of its efforts to promote democracy and the establishment and improvement of parliamentary institutions.

It reiterates the relevance of OSCE Electoral Observation Missions and states that parliamentarians contribute a wide range of professional political experience and visibility to these missions.

Ukrainian President Victor Yushchenko and Chairman-in-Office Moratinos addressed the Session. **Winter Meeting in Vienna, February.** The Assembly held its sixth annual *Winter Meeting*, the second-largest event in the Assembly's calendar, in Vienna on 22 and 23 February. Parliamentarians from 53 participating States attended. Speakers included President Lenmarker, Josep Borrell, Special Envoy of the OSCE Chairman-in-Office, Barbara Prammer, President of the Austrian Parliament, and OSCE Secretary General Marc Perrin de Brichambaut.

In a debate focused on energy security in the OSCE area, many speakers underlined the importance of finding global solutions that create stability and reliability, while others stressed the new environmental aspects of energy security as well as conservation and alternative sources to fossil fuels.

Kazakhstan was formally approved as the host of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly's *Annual Session* in 2008.

**Fall Meetings in Portoroz, Slovenia, September/October.** The *Fall Meetings*, held in Portoroz, Slovenia from 29 September to 1 October, consisted of a

*Parliamentary Conference*, a meeting of the Standing Committee and a *Forum on the Mediterranean*.

The theme of the *Parliamentary Conference*, organized within the Parliamentary Troika of the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe, was *Security through Co-operation in South East Europe: The Role of Parliamentarians*. Conference sessions included: Decentralization and Local Government in South East Europe; Education as a Basis for Security: Knowing Your Neighbour; and Regional Co-operation in Energy Security.

The OSCE Secretary General briefed the Standing Committee on the OSCE budget, stressing that the Assembly, as one of the original OSCE bodies established by the Charter of Paris, was “vital for the OSCE.”

During the *Forum on the Mediterranean*, the parliamentarians focused on minority protection and non-discrimination in the Mediterranean region.

**Economic Conference.** The Assembly held its fifth biennial *Economic Conference* in Andorra la Vella, Andorra, from 24 to 26 May. Nearly 100 parliamentarians from more than 30 OSCE countries participated in the conference on international trade and security, which was inaugurated by the President of the Andorran Parliament, Joan Gabriel I Estany. President Lennmarker and Andorran Prime Minister Albert Pintat also addressed the participants.

## Election observation

The Assembly continued to play a leading role in observing elections in the OSCE area. The Assembly deployed more than 250 observers to monitor parliamentary elections in Serbia, Armenia, Kazakhstan, Ukraine, Russia and Kyrgyzstan. In observing elections, the Assembly often works in co-operation with the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights and the region’s other parliamentary assemblies.

In accordance with practice, the Chairman-in-Office appointed senior Assembly members as his Special Co-ordinators, as follows:

- President Lennmarker led the observer mission to the elections in Serbia;
- Vice-President Tone Tingsgaard of Sweden led the observer mission to the elections in Armenia;
- Vice-Chair of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly’s First General Committee Consiglio Di Nino of Canada led the observer mission to the elections in Kazakhstan;
- Vice-President Tingsgaard also led the observer mission to the elections in Ukraine;
- Vice-President Kimmo Kiljunen of Finland led the observer mission to the elections in Kyrgyzstan.

For the Russian elections in December 2007, the Assembly formed a joint observation mission with the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, with the participation of the Nordic Council. President Lennmarker headed the Assembly’s delegation.



↖ Parliamentarians vote at the Annual Session in Kyiv. (OSCE/Andreas Baker)

← President Goran Lennmarker talks with Prime Minister Albert Pintat at the Economic Conference. (OSCE/Andreas Baker)

↑ OSCE Parliamentary Assembly Vice-Presidents Joao Soares (left) and Kimmo Kiljunen are interviewed by Reuters on the OSCE observation mission in Kyrgyzstan in December. (OSCE/Andreas Baker)

## Special Representatives

President Lennmarker appointed the following new OSCE Parliamentary Assembly Special Representatives during the year:

- U.S. Congresswoman Hilda Solis, Vice-Chair of the Committee on Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, was appointed Special Representative on Migration, with the mandate “to promote interest and discussion on migration issues within the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly.”
- Senator Carlo Vizzini, head of the Italian delegation to the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, was appointed Special Representative on Transnational Organized Crime, with the mandate “to act as a link to OSCE governmental agencies fighting transnational organized crime and corruption.”
- Vice-President Kiljunen was appointed Special Representative for Central Asia, with the mandate “to encourage active participation by parliamentarians from Central Asia in the work of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly.”
- U.S. Congressman Christopher Smith was appointed Special Representative on Human Trafficking, with the mandate “to promote dialogue in the OSCE on how to combat human trafficking.”

## Parliamentary field work

In co-operation with the Nordic Council, the Assembly Vice-President and Special Representative for Central Asia Kiljunen organized a seminar in Oslo in December on regional parliamentary co-operation in Central Asia.

Assembly Vice-President and Special Representative on Guantanamo Anne-Marie Lizin of Belgium paid a second visit to the detention facility at Guantanamo in June. In her report, she called for closure of the base and transfer of the detainees. She addressed the Permanent Council in Vienna about her visit.

The OSCE Parliamentary Assembly’s working group on Belarus, headed by Uta Zapf of Germany, and the Assembly’s Belarusian delegation jointly organized the seminar *Exploring the Opportunities for Belarus within the European Neighbourhood Policy* in Minsk in March.

President Lennmarker accompanied the Chairman-in-Office on a trip to Azerbaijan and Armenia to encourage the parties to reach an agreement on the peaceful settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

As the chair of the Parliamentary Troika of the Stability Pact on South Eastern Europe, the Assembly organized a seminar in Belgrade in June. The Stability Pact will be replaced next year by a Regional Co-operation Council with headquarters in Sofia, Bulgaria.

Petur Blondal of Iceland, the Assembly’s Special Representative on the OSCE budget, visited Albania in July to examine the work of an OSCE presence in the field and assess the use of financial and

human resources. He also met with the Secretary General in Vienna.

Assembly Vice-President and Special Representative for Central Asia Kiljunen visited Turkmenistan in October together with the head of the Norwegian OSCE Parliamentary Assembly delegation, Morten Hoeglund. The purpose of the visit was to encourage greater participation in Assembly activities by the Turkmenistan parliamentarians.

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