



STATEMENT BY TURKEY
In response to Mr. George Tsereteli, President of the OSCE-PA
(1245th Meeting of the Permanent Council, 31 October 2019)

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.

I join previous speakers in warmly welcoming President Tsereteli to the Permanent Council and thank him for his address. Let me start Mr. President by congratulating you on your re-election last July in Luxembourg and wish you continued success.

Turkey greatly values parliamentary diplomacy and believes that the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly provides a prominent platform for direct interaction among elected representatives from 57 countries.

I take this opportunity to express our appreciation for your close and constructive contacts with your Turkish counterparts, recently with the Head of the Turkish Parliamentary Delegation in Marrakech. I also thank you for highlighting your meeting with the Speaker of the Turkish Parliament on the margins of the Belgrade IPU Conference on 16 October, two days before the pause of the Operation Peace Spring. I assume that it was a good opportunity to get first-hand information and to better understand Turkey's sensitivities and legitimate security concerns on its imminent border area with Syria. We believe that such frequent contacts are important for parliamentary dialogue and to hear directly from your counterparts.

Mr. President,

Challenges posed by the crisis in and around Ukraine and the protracted conflicts continue to feature prominently in the work of the Parliamentary Assembly. We value your active engagement through visits. We believe that the parliamentary input and support offered by the Assembly can be utilized to strengthen our Organization's multifaceted efforts to address crisis situations in the OSCE area.

There is no doubt that terrorism has been posing one of the most serious challenges to our societies. In line with legally-binding international norms, it is incumbent upon all the countries to fight against all manifestations of terrorism. This is maybe one of the areas where effective multilateralism is most needed. We should avoid making distinctions in our approach to terrorism. We should not employ and support one terrorist group to defeat another. Instead, we must adopt a coherent and principled stance. Otherwise, our joint efforts to mitigate and ultimately defeat this threat are bound to collapse.

Turkey values the role and contribution of civil society in the advancement of the OSCE commitments. Similarly, we attach importance to strengthening the Parliamentary Assembly's engagement with civil society. In this regard, we welcome the PA's increased attention and the appointment of a Special Representative on this matter. On the other hand, vigilance is needed against attempts by terrorist organizations who disguise themselves as civil society. In this context, we would also like to quote the same Paris Charter you referred several times today in which the participating States [I quote] *"recognize their responsibility to defend and protect [...] the democratic order freely established through the will of the people against the activities of persons,*

groups or organizations that engage in or refuse to renounce terrorism or violence aimed at the overthrow of that order or of that of another participating State”.[End of quote]

Mr. President,

We greatly value the Parliamentary Assembly’s complementary efforts in finding a cohesive and balanced international response to migration. Turkey, while focusing on successful migration management and hosting the highest number of migrants in the world, continues to spare utmost efforts in controlling irregular migratory flows in our region. We believe that a sustainable solution to irregular migration can only be attained if the push factors such as wars and conflicts, human rights violations and economic deprivation in many of the origin countries are prevented.

Turkey also continues to play a role in preventing anti-migrant discourses, xenophobia and Islamophobia throughout the world. In face of increasing racism and intolerance in many participating States, we expect the Parliamentary Assembly to be more active and attain a comprehensive and stronger basis on this matter. In this respect, we welcomed the session devoted to the combating intolerance and discrimination based on religion or belief at the Autumn Meeting of the Parliamentary Assembly in Marrakech.

Mr. President,

Strong multilateral engagement requires responsible and unbiased approaches to serve our common goals in the parliamentary dialogue. In this regard, the objective and balanced attitude of OSCEPA officials, including committee leaders as well as Special Representatives, is crucial. This is even more important when these officials publicize their opinions on behalf of the Parliamentary Assembly. We expect all OSCEPA officials, in their capacity as the representatives for all the participating States, to focus on their mandated tasks and display the necessary responsibility. Close contacts and coordination with the respective delegations would also avoid wrong and irrelevant statements based upon lack of background information.

In closing, I would like to express our appreciation for the work of Ambassador Nothelle and his team here in Vienna and look forward to continuing our cooperation with the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly.

Thank you.

Second Intervention

Thank you Mr. Chairperson.

I would briefly like to comment on the statement made by the esteemed Ambassador of Armenia.

As also expressed by our parliamentary delegation in Luxembourg, Parliamentary Assemblies are not appropriate platforms to politicize and legislate history. We totally reject genocide allegations.

In this regard, I also would like to remind that our parliamentary delegation has voted against Luxembourg Declaration.

