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Parliamentary Association



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Report of the Canadian Delegation to the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe Parliamentary Assembly

29th Annual Session

Birmingham, United Kingdom

From July 2 to 6, 2022

Report

From 2 to 6 July 2022, a delegation of nine Canadian parliamentarians attended the 29th Annual Session of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe Parliamentary Assembly's (OSCE PA), which was held in Birmingham, United Kingdom (U.K.). The delegation comprised:

- The Honourable Dr. Hedy Fry, P.C., M.P., head of delegation;
- Mr. John Aldag, M.P., interim head of delegation;
- The Honourable Senator Gwen Boniface;
- The Honourable Senator Patricia Bovey;
- The Honourable Senator David Wells;
- Mr. Earl Dreeshen, M.P.;
- Ms. Leah Gazan, M.P.;
- Ms. Yvonne Jones, M.P.;
- Ms. Kristina Michaud, M.P.

Due to a medical emergency, Dr. Hedy Fry was unable to attend meetings held in the afternoon of 2 July and between 3 and 6 July. Mr. John Aldag served as interim head of the Canadian delegation in place of Dr. Fry. As well, due to unforeseen issues related to travel, Mr. Luc Berthold, M.P., who was originally a member of the Canadian delegation, was unable to attend the Annual Session.

The delegation was assisted by Brian Hermon and Anne-Marie Therrien-Tremblay, Advisors, Matthieu Boulianne, the Association's Secretary, and Martin Champagne, Conference Coordinator.

2022 OSCE PA ANNUAL SESSION

Parliamentarians from across the OSCE region met in Birmingham, U.K., for the OSCE PA's 29th Annual Session. This was the OSCE PA's first in-person Annual Session since 2019. Canada was scheduled to host the 2020 Annual Session in Vancouver, but it was cancelled because of the COVID-19 pandemic. The 2021 session was held in a hybrid format with some members appearing online and others in person from Vienna, Austria.

The 2022 Annual Session included a session of the Standing Committee, three plenary sessions, as well as meetings of the three General Committees: Political Affairs and Security; Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and the Environment; and Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions. The Annual Session also included a meeting

of the Ad Hoc Committee on Migration¹, as well as a working lunch on gender issues. A number of side events were also held over the course of the Annual Session.

The *Birmingham Declaration* was adopted during the closing plenary². The declaration contains resolutions of the three General Committees as well as Supplementary Items (SIs) which had been proposed by individual delegates. Elections for OSCE PA officer positions, including for President and several Vice-President positions, as well as for Committee officers, also took place.

STANDING COMMITTEE

The Standing Committee, which comprises OSCE PA heads of delegation and members of the Bureau, met the morning of 2 July 2022. The meeting was opened by OSCE PA President Margareta Cederfelt (Sweden). Presentations were then made by OSCE PA Secretary General Roberto Montella and OSCE PA Treasurer Peter Juel-Jensen (Denmark).³ Mr. Juel-Jensen's remarks focused on the OSCE PA's financial situation, including OSCE PA national contribution scales. Following his presentation, the budget for the 2022–2023 financial year was approved.

Members of the Standing Committee also discussed current international political issues, as well as upcoming meetings of the OSCE PA.

During the meeting, the Ukrainian Delegation proposed an amendment to the Rules of Procedure, that would provide a mechanism for suspending the mandate of an OSCE PA delegation whose country had violated the sovereignty and territorial integrity of another OSCE participating State. Following remarks by Artur Gerasymov (Ukraine), Vice-Chair of the General Committee on Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and the Environment, and Secretary General Montella, the Standing Committee agreed to refer the matter to the OSCE PA's Rules Committee.

A. ACTIVITIES OF THE CANADIAN DELEGATION

The Honourable Dr. Hedy Fry, M.P., represented the Canadian delegation at the Standing Committee. Dr. Fry reminded delegates that Canada will host the OSCE PA's 30th Annual Session in Vancouver, British Columbia in the summer of 2023.

OPENING PLENARY SESSION

The Opening Plenary featured keynote remarks from a number of speakers. Mr. John Whittingdale (U.K.) welcomed delegates to Birmingham. He noted that delegates met at a difficult time for the organization and for regional security due to Russia's aggression in Ukraine. Mr. Whittingdale noted his recent appointment as OSCE PA Special Representative on War Crimes in Ukraine and emphasized the importance of holding

¹ The Bureau and the Ad Hoc Committee on Countering Terrorism also met but there are no Canadian delegates on those bodies.

² See: Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe Parliamentary Assembly (OSCE PA), [Birmingham Declaration and Resolutions](#), 29th Annual Session, 2-6 July 2022.

³ For access to selected reports and remarks presented at the 29th Annual Session of the OSCE PA see: OSCE PA, [29th Annual Session, Birmingham](#).

Russian perpetrators to account. Lord Tariq Ahmad of Wimbledon, Minister of State for South Asia and the Commonwealth, then addressed delegates. In his remarks, Lord Tariq Ahmad called for resolve in the face of Russian aggression in Ukraine and said that the U.K. stands firmly in support of the Ukrainian people.

President Cederfelt was next to address the assembly. She spoke about her recent visit to Ukraine where she witnessed the damage caused by Russia's war. She said that the OSCE PA stands in solidarity with the people of Ukraine and would continue to defend the rights of Ukrainians to exercise their sovereignty and choose their own future.

President Cederfelt's remarks were followed by an address from Ms. Helga Maria Schmid, Secretary General of the OSCE. Secretary General Schmid spoke about the work that the OSCE has done in Ukraine and emphasized the importance of upholding the principles of the *Helsinki Final Act*. She also spoke about other security threats facing the OSCE region, including climate change and human trafficking.

Following these interventions, delegates debated and adopted the following Compromise SI:

- *The Russian Federation's War of Aggression Against Ukraine and Its People, and Its Threat to Security Across the OSCE Region* (Ms. Vilija Aleknaite Abramikiene, Lithuania, Mr. Mykyta Poturaiev, Ukraine, and Mr. Roger Wicker, United States (U.S.)), adopted with 10 amendments.

After the Opening Plenary, delegates were addressed by Sir Lindsay Hoyle, Speaker of the U.K. House of Commons, who welcomed members of the OSCE PA to Birmingham.

A. ACTIVITIES OF THE CANADIAN DELEGATION

Ms. Kristina Michaud, M.P. spoke in support of the compromise SI. In her remarks, Ms. Michaud condemned Russia's illegal and unprovoked war on Ukraine and called on participating States to find concrete ways to continue to support the Ukrainian people and to hold Russia accountable.

The Honourable Dr. Hedy Fry, M.P. sponsored an amendment to the compromise SI which condemned Russia's threatening nuclear rhetoric and called on all States parties to the *Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons* to recommit to the goal of nuclear disarmament. In Dr. Fry's absence, **Mr. John Aldag, M.P.** presented her amendment, which was adopted.

GENERAL COMMITTEE ON POLITICAL AFFAIRS AND SECURITY

Chair: Mr. Richard Hudson (U.S.)

Vice-Chair: Mr. Costel Neculai Dunava (Romania)

Rapporteur: Mr. Laurynas Kasciunas (Lithuania)

The First General Committee considered and debated a draft report and a draft resolution submitted by the Rapporteur. These documents focused on diverse topics including the war in Ukraine, the Transdniestrian conflict, the security situations in Nagorno-Karabakh

and Georgia, hybrid warfare and nonconventional security and the Women, Peace and Security agenda.

Following the Rapporteur's presentation of the draft report and draft resolution, delegates debated issues raised in these documents. Proposed amendments to the draft resolution were then debated, and the draft resolution was adopted as amended. The First General Committee also debated, amended and adopted three SIs proposed by delegates:

- *Victims of Terrorism* (Mr. Reinhold Lopatka (Austria), Chair of the Ad Hoc Committee on Countering Terrorism), adopted with two amendments.
- *The Arctic Region* (Ms. Bryndís Haraldsdóttir (Iceland), OSCE PA Special Representative on Arctic Issues), adopted with no amendments.
- *Effective Youth Engagement Towards Secure, Inclusive, and Democratic Societies* (Ms. Farah Karimi (Netherlands), OSCE PA Special Representative on Youth Engagement), adopted with one amendment.

OSCE Chairman-in-Office and Foreign Minister of Poland, Zbigniew Rau, delivered remarks to the First General Committee on 4 July 2022. In his speech, Mr. Rau stressed the importance of building resilience in the OSCE region in the face of threats to European security. Mr. Rau also spoke about the need for the OSCE to support Ukraine, including if the country wished to initiate a dialogue with Russia.

The following individuals were elected as officers of the First General Committee for 2022–2023:

Chair: Mr. Richard Hudson (U.S.)

Vice-Chair: Mr. Costel Neculai Dunava (Romania)

Rapporteur: Mr. Laurynas Kasciunas (Lithuania)

A. ACTIVITIES OF THE CANADIAN DELEGATION

Senator Gwen Boniface intervened on the subject of nuclear risk reduction during the general debate on the Rapporteur's report and draft resolution. In her remarks, Senator Boniface referred to Russia's threatening nuclear rhetoric as dangerous and destabilizing. She called on participating States to condemn Russia's nuclear rhetoric and bullying, to reinforce norms against the use of nuclear weapons, and to recommit to creating a nuclear weapon-free world.

Ms. Yvonne Jones, M.P., spoke in support of the SI on *The Arctic Region*. Ms. Jones said that climate change is the most important issue facing the Arctic region which she noted affects all aspects of security in the region and acts as a threat multiplier. **Senator Patricia Bovey** also spoke in support of the SI on *The Arctic Region*. In her remarks, Senator Bovey underlined the need to strengthen the rules-based international order in the Arctic and in Arctic institutions.

GENERAL COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC AFFAIRS, SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND ENVIRONMENT

Chair: Mr. Pere Joan Pons (Spain)

Vice-Chair: Mr. Artur Gerasymov (Ukraine)

Rapporteur: Ms. Gudrun Kugler (Austria)

The Second General Committee considered and debated a draft report and a draft resolution submitted by the Rapporteur. The overall focus of Ms. Kugler's report and resolution was on the need to advance economic and environmental security, promote sustainable development and implement relevant international commitments in the OSCE region.

Following the Rapporteur's presentation of the draft report and draft resolution, delegates debated issues raised in these documents. Proposed amendments to the draft resolution were then debated, and the draft resolution was adopted as amended. The Second General Committee also debated, amended and adopted three SIs proposed by delegates:

- *Code of Conduct for Members of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly* (Ms. Irene Charalambides (Cyprus), OSCE PA Special Representative on Fighting Corruption), adopted with three amendments.
- *Implementing the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals* (Mr. Askar Sharikov (Kazakhstan), OSCE PA Special Representative on the Sustainable Development Goals), adopted with two amendments.
- *Accelerating the Green Energy Transition* (Mr. John Aldag, Canada), adopted with three amendments.

The following individuals were elected as officers of the Second General Committee for 2022–2023:

Chair: Mr. Azay Guliyev (Azerbaijan)

Vice-Chair: Mr. Artur Gerasymov (Ukraine)

Rapporteur: Ms. Gudrun Kugler (Austria)

A. ACTIVITIES OF THE CANADIAN DELEGATION

The Honourable Dr. Hedy Fry, M.P. sponsored an amendment to the committee's draft resolution that urged OSCE participating States to adopt a gender-inclusive approach to the economic recovery from COVID-19. Due to Dr. Fry's medical emergency, **Mr. John Aldag, M.P.** presented her amendment, which was adopted. Dr. Fry also sponsored an amendment to the SI entitled *Code of Conduct for Members of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly*, which strengthened the language around the prevention of sexual harassment and gender-based violence. The amendment, which was adopted, was presented by **Ms. Kristina Michaud, M.P.** .

During the general debate on the Rapporteur's report and draft resolution **Mr. John Aldag, M.P.** spoke about climate change and energy security. He also sponsored an amendment to the committee's draft resolution that urged OSCE participating States to

intensify economic pressure on Russia in response to its illegal war in Ukraine. That amendment was adopted. Mr. Aldag also presented his SI entitled *Accelerating the Green Energy Transition*, which was adopted with three amendments.

Mr. Earl Dreeshen, M.P. spoke during the general debate on the Rapporteur's report and draft resolution about economic and energy security. **Ms. Leah Gazan, M.P.** also spoke during that general debate about the rights of Indigenous peoples, climate change and economic security. Ms. Gazan also spoke in support of Mr. Aldag's SI on *Accelerating the Green Energy Transition*.

GENERAL COMMITTEE ON DEMOCRACY, HUMAN RIGHTS AND HUMANITARIAN QUESTIONS

Chair: Vacant

Vice-Chair: Mr. Michael George Link (Germany)

Rapporteur: Mr. Johan Buser (Sweden)

The Second General Committee considered and debated a draft report and a draft resolution submitted by the Rapporteur entitled *Human Security for All as a Basis for European Security*. The draft resolution focused on issues related to human rights, freedom of the media, and freedom of association in the OSCE region, as well as on the human rights and humanitarian implications of the war in Ukraine.

Following the Rapporteur's presentation of the draft report and draft resolution, delegates debated issues raised in these documents. Proposed amendments to the draft resolution were then debated and adopted, and the draft resolution was adopted as amended. The Third General Committee also debated, amended and adopted three SIs proposed by delegates:

- *The Importance of the Human Dimension in the Context of Current Threats to Security in the OSCE Area Stemming from the Russian Aggression against Ukraine* (Grzegorz Bierecki, Poland), adopted with four amendments.
- *Combating Violence Against Women Journalists and Politicians* (Dr. Hedy Fry, Canada), adopted with no amendments.
- *Ensuring the Safety of Journalists in Conflict Zones* (Mr. John Whittingdale, U.K.), adopted with no amendments.

The following individuals were elected as officers for the Third General Committee for 2022–2023:

Chair: Mr. Nikoloz Samkharadze (Georgia)

Vice-Chair: Ms. Farah Karimi (Netherlands)

Rapporteur: Mr. Johan Buser (Sweden)

A. ACTIVITIES OF THE CANADIAN DELEGATION

The Honourable Senator Patricia Bovey discussed the protection of Ukrainian cultural heritage in the context of the war in Ukraine. Specifically, Senator Bovey called for respect for the *Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict*.

Ms. Kristina Michaud, M.P. also spoke in response to the Rapporteur's report and draft resolution. Her remarks focused on Internet freedom and the need to strengthen tools to defend against misinformation and disinformation.

The Honourable Senator David Wells focused his comments in response to the Rapporteur's report and draft resolution on global food security. Senator Wells called for an urgent end to Russia's blockades in the Black Sea and Sea of Azov, which he said were having devastating effects on the Ukrainian economy and regional and global food security.

The Honourable Senator Gwen Boniface presented Dr. Fry's SI on *Combating Violence Against Women Journalists and Politicians*. That SI, which called for gender-sensitive policy approaches to address violence against journalists and politicians, was adopted without amendment.

SECOND AND FINAL PLENARIES

During the second plenary, delegates heard from Mr. Kristian Vigenin (Bulgaria), Chair of the Ad Hoc Committee on Migration, as well as Mr. Kamil Aydin (Türkiye), Vice Chair of the Ad Hoc Committee on Countering Terrorism, both of whom presented the reports of their respective committees. Reports were then presented by the special representatives, the heads of election observation missions, as well as by Ambassador Lamberto Zannier, OSCE PA High-Level Expert, who talked about the Call for Action – Helsinki + 50 Initiative.

Special addresses were also made by Lord McFall of Alcluith, Lord Speaker, who discussed the role that parliamentarians can play to address common security challenges, and by Lord Peter Bowness, former OSCE PA President, who thanked members for the invitation to attend the 29th Annual Session. An open debate took place in the final plenary, during which time nearly 40 delegates intervened on various topics. Secretary General Montella also delivered his report for the preceding year and President Cederfelt provided closing remarks.

The *Birmingham Declaration* was adopted during the final plenary and the results of the elections for officers of the OSCE PA were announced. The following individuals were elected as officers to the OSCE PA:

Ms. Margareta Cederfelt (Sweden) re-elected President to the end of the 2023 Session;

Ms. Irene Charalambides (Cyprus) re-elected Vice-President to the end of the 2025 Session;

Mr. Mark Pritchard (U.K.) elected Vice-President to the end of the 2025 Session;

Mr. Pere Joan Pons (Spain) elected Vice-President to the end of the 2025 Session;

Mr. Michael Georg Link (Germany) elected Vice-President to the end of the 2023 Session.

A. ACTIVITIES OF THE CANADIAN DELEGATION

During the Second Plenary, **the Honourable Senator Patricia Bovey** presented Dr. Fry's 2022 gender report entitled *Ensuring a Gender-Inclusive Economic Recovery from the COVID-19 Pandemic*. Senator Bovey explained that the report by Dr. Fry, the OSCE PA Special Representative on Gender Issues, examined the gendered impacts of the pandemic and outlined best practices for a gender-inclusive economic recovery.

During the open debate in the Final Plenary, **Ms. Leah Gazan, M.P.**, intervened on the subject of sexual and reproductive health rights. **Ms. Yvonne Jones, M.P.**, also spoke in the open debate on the topic of the Arctic and climate change.

Mr. John Aldag, M.P. intervened in the Second Plenary to raise a question about early voting procedures for the election of officers to the OSCE PA Bureau. He also spoke in the Final Plenary to thank the organizers of the Birmingham Annual Session and to invite members to the next Annual Session in Vancouver in 2023.

WORKING LUNCH ON GENDER ISSUES

The theme of the annual working lunch on gender issues was "Ensuring a Gender-Inclusive Economic Recovery from the COVID-19 Pandemic." The event was hosted by **the Honourable Dr. Hedy Fry, M.P.** and Ms. Caroline Nokes, U.K. Member of Parliament. **The Honourable Senator Patricia Bovey** delivered remarks on behalf of Dr. Fry. In her remarks, Senator Bovey presented aspects of Dr. Fry's 2022 Gender Report, which was on the same theme as the gender lunch. In addition to discussing best practices for a gender-inclusive economic recovery, Senator Bovey explained how gendered economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic continue to jeopardize the economic security and well-being of women throughout the OSCE region.

Ms. Nokes, who serves as Chair of the Women and Equalities Committee of the U.K. House of Commons, spoke about the committee's 2021 report on the gendered economic impacts of the pandemic. She highlighted the importance of applying a gender lens to post-pandemic recovery policies.

Remarks by the co-hosts were followed by a presentation by Ms. Danijela Đurovic, the President of the Parliament of Montenegro and member of the Delegation of Montenegro to the OSCE PA.

President Cederfelt also addressed participants. She expressed the PA's support for the Special Representative on Gender Issues, and for efforts to promote gender equality in the OSCE region, including the creation of an OSCE PA informal network of women parliamentarians. Secretary General Montella also spoke, emphasizing the importance of women's participation in the PA and gender mainstreaming in the OSCE.

A discussion moderated by Senator Bovey followed the presentations. Most members of the Canadian delegation attended the gender lunch.

OTHER SIDE MEETINGS AND SIDE EVENTS

Canadian delegates attended the following side-events over the course of the 29th Annual Session:

- Side event on the prevention of war crimes, hosted by the Special Rapporteur on War Crimes in Ukraine, Mr. John Whittingdale (U.K.);
- Side event on the protection of female journalists, co-hosted by the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, Ms. Teresa Ribeiro;
- Side event on youth in conflict and war zones, co-hosted by the OSCE PA Special Representative on Youth Engagement, Ms. Farah Karimi (Netherlands), Senator Marilou McPhedran (Canada), and M.P. Leah Gazan (Canada);
- Side event on protests and repression in Russia and Belarus, co-hosted by the U.S., Norwegian and Lithuanian Heads of Delegation;
- Meeting of the informal Network of Young Parliamentarians.

Respectfully submitted,

The Honourable Dr. Hedy Fry, P.C., M.P.

Director, Canadian Delegation to the OSCE PA

Travel Costs

ASSOCIATION	Canadian Delegation to the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe Parliamentary Assembly (OSCE PA)
ACTIVITY	29 th Annual Session
DESTINATION	Birmingham, United Kingdom
DATES	From July 2 to 6, 2022
DELEGATION	
	Hon. Gwen Boniface
SENATE	Hon. Patricia Bovey
	Hon. David Wells
	Hon. Hedy Fry
	Mr. John Aldag
HOUSE OF COMMONS	Mr. Earl Dreeshen
	Ms. Leah Gazan
	Ms. Yvonne Jones
	Ms. Kristina Michaud

	Mr. Matthieu Boulianne
	Mr. Brian Hermon
STAFF	Ms. Anne-Marie Therrien-Tremblay
	Mr. Martin Champagne
TRANSPORTATION	\$ 87,896.87
ACCOMMODATION	\$ 19,163.89
HOSPITALITY	\$ 0.00
PER DIEMS	\$ 8,433.09
OFFICIAL GIFTS	\$ 0.00
MISCELLANEOUS	\$ 15.60
REVENUS	\$ -2,842.81 ⁴
TOTAL	\$ 112,666.64

⁴ Amount reimbursed by the Library of Parliament.