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**Report of the Canadian Parliamentary Delegation
respecting its participation at the 16th Winter Meeting
of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly**

**Canadian Delegation to the Organization for Security and
Co-operation in Europe Parliamentary Assembly (OSCE PA)**

**Vienna, Austria
February 22-24, 2017**

Report

From 22 to 24 February 2017, a delegation of three Canadian parliamentarians attended the 16th Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe Parliamentary Assembly (OSCE PA, or PA)¹ Winter Meeting in Vienna, Austria. The **Honourable Hedy Fry, P.C., M.P.** led the delegation, which included – from the Senate – the **Honourable Senator Ghislain Maltais** and – from the House of Commons – **Mr. Jamie Schmale, M.P.** The delegation was accompanied by Ms. Katherine Simonds, Advisor. The Winter Meeting was attended by more than 250 parliamentarians from OSCE participating States and the Mediterranean Partners for Cooperation.²

Amid growing nationalism in the OSCE region, the primary focus of the Winter Meeting was protecting human rights in times of crisis. Other OSCE priorities – including the migrant and refugee crisis in Europe, the situation in Ukraine, counter-terrorism climate change and water security – were also discussed. The program included opening and closing joint sessions, as well as meetings of each of the three OSCE PA General Committees: Political Affairs and Security; Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and Environment; and Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions. In addition, meetings of the Standing Committee and the Ad Hoc Committee on Migration were held.

A. Ad Hoc Committee on Migration

The **Honourable Hedy Fry, P.C., M.P.** participated in the meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee on Migration (the Ad Hoc Committee) held on Wednesday, 22 February 2017. Hosted by the French Embassy, this meeting marked the third occasion on which the Ad Hoc Committee has met since being struck at the 15th Winter Meeting of the OSCE PA with a mandate to serve as a focal point for the OSCE PA's work in the field of migration in all three dimensions³ of the OSCE, and to develop policy recommendations aimed at improving the treatment of, and prospects for, migrants in OSCE countries.

The meeting opened with introductory remarks by His Excellency Pascal Teixeira DaSilva, Ambassador of France to Austria, Mr. Alain Neri (France), Vice-Chair of the Ad Hoc Committee on Migration, and Mr. Filippo Lombardi (Switzerland), Chair of the Ad Hoc Committee on Migration. Mr. Lombardi stressed the need for the OSCE and the OSCE PA to cooperate on the difficult issue of migration. Ambassador Claude Wild, Permanent Representative of Switzerland to the OSCE and former Chair of the Informal

¹ Canadian Delegation to the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe Parliamentary Assembly [OSCE PA], [Overview](#).

² Some of the remarks and reports presented at the 16th OSCE PA Winter Meeting are available at: OSCE PA, [2017 Winter Meeting](#).

³ The OSCE's commitments, decisions and activities stem from a comprehensive understanding of security that extends beyond the political–military model. In the Charter for European Security, adopted at the November 1999 Istanbul Summit, the heads of state and of government of the participating countries agreed to “address the human, economic, political and military dimensions of security as an integral whole.” See “[Charter for European Security](#),” para. 9, in Istanbul Document 1999, Istanbul Summit, 1999.

Working Group Focusing on the Issue of Migration and Refugee Flows, then detailed the process leading up to the 2016 Hamburg Ministerial Council Decision on “the OSCE’s Role in the Governance of Large Movements of Migrants and Refugees.” Ambassador Wild also called on Ad Hoc Committee members to exert pressure on OSCE participating States to adhere to the relevant conventions to combat human trafficking.

At the request of the Chair of the Ad Hoc Committee, the **Honourable Hedy Fry, P.C., M.P.** provided an overview of Canada’s Resettlement Assistance Program, with a focus on privately sponsored refugees. Her presentation highlighted the Global Refugee Sponsorship Initiative that aims to provide training and advice to countries interested in replicating the Canadian model. The goal of the Global Refugee Sponsorship Initiative is to mobilize citizens and create alternative pathways for the admission of refugees into Canada. Canada’s Syrian refugee initiative was also discussed, and it was noted that – as of 29 January 2017 – 40,081 Syrian refugees had been resettled in 350 communities across Canada.⁴

During a discussion of the Ad Hoc Committee’s draft report and recommendations, the **Honourable Hedy Fry, P.C., M.P.** underscored the importance of incorporating gender-based analysis within the Ad Hoc Committee’s work to ensure that the recommendations put forward reflect the particular vulnerabilities facing women and girl migrants. She also urged members of the Ad Hoc Committee who are participating in fact-finding missions to assess whether responses to the influx of migrants and refugees have adequately incorporated gender mainstreaming. The meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee on Migration was closed following the adoption of a draft report to be presented to the Standing Committee.

B. Standing Committee

The Standing Committee, which is comprised of OSCE heads of delegation and members of the Bureau, was opened by OSCE President Christine Muttonen (Austria). Reports were presented by the OSCE’s President, Treasurer and Secretary General, as well as several of the PA’s special representatives, heads of election observation missions, and the chairs of ad hoc committees.

Activities of the Canadian Delegation:

Senator Ghislain Maltais participated in the meeting of the Standing Committee.

C. Opening Joint Session of the Three General Committees

Delegates were welcomed to the opening Joint Session of the three General Committees by Doris Bures, President of the National Council of Austria. In her remarks, Ms. Bures emphasized that while violent extremism and radicalization continue to pose a significant threat to the safety and security of citizens of OSCE countries, effective responses must be rational and cohesive, not rooted in fear and isolationism. She also outlined the three priorities of Austria’s 2017 chairmanship of the

⁴ Government of Canada, “[Canada’s Resettlement Programs](#).”

OSCE: defusing existing conflicts in the OSCE region; fighting radicalization and violent extremism; and fostering the re-establishment of trust and confidence among OSCE participating States.

President Muttunen (Austria) also addressed the opening Joint Session. She expressed concern that a number of crises were taking place across the OSCE region simultaneously, and particularly mentioned the deteriorating security situation in eastern Ukraine, the escalation of violence in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, the growing threat of terrorism, and rising nationalism in a number of OSCE countries in response to the influx of migrants and refugees. President Muttunen called on parliamentarians to cultivate stronger relationships among OSCE participating States and partners, and warned that aggressive rhetoric and nationalist politics would hinder the cooperation and dialogue that are needed to address these wide-ranging challenges.⁵

In her capacity as the OSCE PA's Special Representative on Gender Issues, the **Honourable Hedy Fry, P.C., M.P.** also addressed the opening Joint Session, as discussed below.

Activities of the Canadian Delegation:

As the OSCE PA's Special Representative on Gender Issues, the **Honourable Hedy Fry, P.C., M.P.** presented her ideas for the 2017 gender report to the opening Joint Session. Focusing on the OSCE's 23rd Ministerial Council that took place in December 2016, she informed the PA that the term "gender" was not mentioned in any of the 12 decisions, declarations or statements adopted by the Ministerial Council. In her view, going forward, OSCE executive structures should consistently integrate gender mainstreaming into their work. While she commended Austria for its plans to encourage the participation of women in its efforts to address protracted conflicts in the OSCE region as part of its 2017 OSCE Chairmanship, she asked that the action be stronger: ensure their participation, rather than simply encourage their participation.

Regarding the annual gender report, the **Honourable Hedy Fry, P.C., M.P.** explained that the 2017 report would expand on the topic of last year's report – [A Gender Sensitive Response to the Migrant and Refugee Influx in Europe is Needed](#) – to focus more extensively on one aspect of the issue: the integration of refugees and migrants into host communities. She stressed that integration is crucial for peace and prosperity and, as such, outlined three key requirements for successful social integration: a social network; a welcoming host community; and practical supports for refugees and migrants to enable them to learn about their new society. She also called on OSCE parliamentarians to invest in programs that promote inclusivity and diversity. Her presentation concluded with a reminder that, in order to have safe and functioning communities, everyone must feel as though he/she is part of a society and has access to opportunities.⁶

The Opening Joint Session was attended by all members of the Canadian delegation. **Senator Ghislain Maltais** spoke in support of the address by the **Honourable Hedy**

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ OSCE PA, "[Address by Dr. Hedy Fry, Special Representative on Gender Issues to the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly](#)," Vienna, Austria, 23 February 2017.

Fry, P.C., M.P. and also made an intervention concerning the mutual responsibilities of host countries and migrants in facilitating integration.

D. General Committee on Political Affairs and Security (First General Committee)

Chair: Roger Wicker (United States)

Vice-Chair: Guglielmo Picchi (Italy)

Rapporteur: Margareta Cederfelt (Sweden)

The First General Committee was chaired by Senator Roger Wicker (United States), who discussed the impact of extremism in the OSCE region. He also argued that instability in the region had reached levels not seen since the end of the Cold War, and called for increased support for OSCE field operations, which are consistently under-resourced. The First General Committee rapporteur, Margareta Cederfelt (Sweden), then outlined the main points that she plans to include in her report and draft resolution at the PA's Annual Session in Minsk, Belarus in July 2017; these points include countering radicalization, cybersecurity, Ukraine, frozen conflicts and the role of women in peacebuilding.

The OSCE PA's delegates heard a presentation by Ambassador Steffen Kongstad, Chair of the Security Committee of the OSCE Permanent Council and Permanent Representative of Norway to the OSCE. He outlined the Security Committee's work plan for 2017, noting that tackling violent extremism and radicalization is a key priority. Ambassador Kongstad also underscored that increased cooperation among OSCE participating States is necessary to address transnational threats, such as terrorism and organized crime, and could help to facilitate improved border management, law enforcement and cybersecurity. Lastly, he mentioned the important role of women in advancing peace and security efforts, and noted that gender will be a cross-cutting priority for the Security Committee.⁷

Ambassador Cristian Istrate, Chair of the Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC) and Permanent Representative of Romania to the OSCE, then discussed the Forum's key areas of focus for 2017. He said that, amidst rising instability in the OSCE region, Romania's chairmanship of the FSC would focus on the crisis in Ukraine, protracted conflicts in the greater Black Sea region, the Conventional Armed Forces in Europe Treaty, the Vienna Document and cybersecurity. Ambassador Istrate also highlighted recent events hosted by the FSC that addressed topics that included arms control and non-proliferation, the role of military chaplains, gender equality in the military, and the political-military activities of OSCE field missions.⁸

The First General Committee then heard a presentation by Henrik Villadsen, Director and Officer in charge of the OSCE's Office of the High Commissioner on National Minorities. Mr. Villadsen reminded delegates that the OSCE had been without a High Commissioner on National Minorities since August 2016 due to its inability to achieve

⁷ Permanent Delegation of Norway to the OSCE PA, "[Presentation by the Chair of the OSCE Security Committee Ambassador Steffen Kongstad, Permanent Representative of Norway to the OSCE](#)," 16th Winter Meeting of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, Vienna, Austria.

⁸ "[Statement by Ambassador Cristian Istrate to the General Committee on Political Affairs and Security](#)," 16th Winter Meeting of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly Vienna, Austria, 24 February 2017.

consensus on a successful candidate. He expressed concern about deepening divisions in the OSCE region but was optimistic about the “tools in the OSCE’s toolbox” that could be used to help defuse tensions. As well, Mr. Villadsen discussed the role of education in promoting respect for minorities, and noted that 2018 will mark the 20th anniversary of the Oslo Recommendations regarding the Linguistic Rights of National Minorities.

The debate on the topic of “Transnational security in the OSCE Area: confronting terrorism” was introduced by Rasa Ostrauskaite, OSCE Co-ordinator of Activities to Address Transnational Threats. She encouraged OSCE parliamentarians to strengthen collective action against terrorism. During the debate, delegates raised a number of considerations relating to counter-terrorism efforts. For example, several delegates stressed that education and intercultural dialogue are essential both to improving social cohesion in the OSCE region and to reducing the threat of terrorism. Delegates also emphasized the importance of addressing the root causes of conflicts in the Middle East and North Africa region in order to find lasting solutions.

Activities of the Canadian Delegation:

The meeting of the First General Committee was attended by all members of the Canadian delegation.

E. General Committee on Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and the Environment (Second General Committee)

Chair: Nilza Sena (Portugal)

Vice-Chair: Artur Gerasymov (Ukraine)

Rapporteur: Marietta Tidei (Italy)

The General Committee on Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and the Environment was chaired by Nilza Sena (Portugal), who opened the meeting before the rapporteur – Marietta Tidei (Italy) – outlined some ideas for her report and draft resolution at the OSCE PA’s Annual Session in Minsk. She discussed the importance of the Paris Agreement on climate change, but expressed concern that few countries had made significant progress towards implementing their commitments. Ms. Tidei also stated that industrialized countries have a role to play in assisting developing countries pursue sustainable development. She thanked the 2016 German OSCE Chairmanship for including “greening the economy” among its key priorities and placing the issue on the OSCE’s agenda.

The Committee then heard a presentation by Ambassador Kairat Sarybay, Chair of the OSCE Economic and Environmental Committee and Permanent Representative of Kazakhstan to the OSCE, who outlined that committee’s work plan for 2017. He said that the committee would focus its work on the following themes: transportation; hazardous material safety; the promotion of renewable energy; energy security; water governance; and disaster risk reduction. Ambassador Sarybay also highlighted the strong links among sustainable development, security and stability.

Dr. Halil Yurdakul Yigitguden, Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities, also spoke about the priorities of his office for 2017. He noted that the 2016 Ministerial Council Decision on “Strengthening good governance and promoting

connectivity” would help to guide the OSCE’s work in relation to its economic and environmental dimension. In identifying efforts to combat corruption as a key priority for that Committee, he urged OSCE participating States to enact, implement and enforce anti-corruption legislation. Dr. Yigitguden mentioned that the Committee would also be examining best practices for tackling money laundering, the harmonization of customs and border crossing procedures, migration management, strengthening early warning capacity in disaster risk reduction, and increasing the resilience of critical infrastructure, among other issues.

The debate about “Managing natural resources, addressing water security and combating climate change” was opened by Vice-Chair Artur Gerasymov (Ukraine), who emphasized that water security is a fundamental human right, and that fair and equitable water distribution should be guaranteed. Dr. Yigitguden added that climate change will exacerbate water insecurity around the world. In the debate that followed these initial remarks, several delegates referred to the links between water scarcity and conflict, and warned that migration flows would only increase in the future unless immediate steps are taken to assist the most vulnerable in their efforts to address the impacts of climate change.

Activities of the Canadian Delegation:

The meeting of the Second General Committee was attended by **Mr. Jamie Schmale, M.P.** He participated in the debate about water security and climate change, and outlined some of the ways in which Canada protects its water supply for drinking, farming, fishing, transporting goods and sustaining natural ecosystems. He also discussed Canada’s long history of cooperation with the United States on transboundary water issues, and explained that adopting cooperative water governance mechanisms can help to anticipate, prevent and resolve water-related disputes between countries.

The meeting of the Second General Committee was held concurrently with that of the meeting of the General Committee on Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions, which was attended by other members of the Canadian delegation.

F. General Committee on Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions (Third General Committee)

Chair: Ignacio Sanchez Amor (Spain)

Vice-Chair: Ivana Dobesova (Czech Republic)

Rapporteur: Kyriakos Kyriakou-Hadjjiyanni (Cyprus)

The Third General Committee on Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions was chaired by Ignacio Sanchez Amor (Spain), who opened the meeting. After describing recent activities undertaken in his capacity as Chair, he said that he was concerned about the humanitarian situation facing migrants and refugees in the OSCE region. Mr. Sanchez Amor also expressed solidarity with Turkey following the July 2016 attempted coup, but stressed the need for the country to respect the rule of law. The rapporteur, Kyriakos Kyriakou-Hadjjiyanni (Cyprus), then presented his ideas for his report and draft resolution, indicating that they would focus on protecting human rights in times of heightened security threats. He suggested that while emergency

measures and restrictions on some rights can be warranted in certain situations, their use must be limited. Mr. Kyriakou-Hadjjianni then called on OSCE participating States to adhere to their human dimension commitments, and urged them to work collaboratively in response to the refugee and migrant crisis.

Michael Georg Link, Director of the OSCE's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), outlined his institution's recent work, which focused on tackling discrimination against Roma and Sinti populations, anti-Semitism and human trafficking. He also noted the importance of cooperation between ODIHR and the PA on election monitoring missions. Referring to the OSCE's comprehensive approach to security, he reminded delegates that human rights and security are complementary.

Ambassador Sian Macleod, Chairperson of the OSCE's Human Dimension Committee and Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom to the OSCE, presented the Human Dimension Committee's work plan for 2017; she noted that it reflects the priorities of the Austrian OSCE Chairmanship. As well, Ambassador Macleod asserted that human rights challenges in the OSCE region have reached unprecedented levels, and that issues relating to freedom of expression, torture, gender, democracy and hate crime will be on the Committee's agenda.

During the debate on the topic of "Protecting human rights amid growing populism," delegates voiced a number of concerns, including polarization across Europe, shrinking space for civil society, and growing isolationism that has led some OSCE participating States to close their borders to refugees and migrants.

Activities of the Canadian Delegation:

The meeting of the Third General Committee was attended by the **Honourable Hedy Fry, P.C., M.P.** and **Senator Ghislain Maltais**.

The **Honourable Hedy Fry, P.C., M.P.** participated in the Third General Committee's debate, warning that neglecting the OSCE's human dimension commitments when faced with security threats gives credibility to the forces of fear and division. She also reminded delegates that parliamentarians have a responsibility to ensure that their citizens' basic human rights are upheld.

G. Closing Joint Session of the Three General Committees and Special Debate on "Protecting human rights in times of crisis"

The closing Joint Session was chaired by President Christine Muttonen (Austria), who told delegates that the OSCE's strength is rooted in its multi-dimensional, comprehensive approach to security. OSCE Secretary General Lamberto Zannier applauded the growing cooperation between the PA and the governmental side of the OSCE, and stated that parliamentary diplomacy is a vital component of peace and prosperity in the OSCE region. Sebastian Kurz, OSCE Chairperson-in-Office and Foreign Minister of Austria, also addressed the closing Joint Session. He commended the OSCE PA for its valuable contribution to building trust and confidence among OSCE participating States. In addition, Director Link and Mr. Sanchez Amor (Spain) delivered remarks, relaying the key messages that arose from the Third General Committee's debate that was held earlier.

The second part of the closing Joint Session involved a special debate on the topic of “protecting human rights in times of crisis.” A wide range of issues were identified, including counter-terrorism, radicalization, protracted conflicts in the OSCE region and the importance of upholding fundamental human rights. Due to OSCE parliamentarians’ high level of interest in the special debate, the OSCE PA Secretariat limited the speaker’s list in order to ensure that at least one speaker from each OSCE participating State had the opportunity to make remarks.

Activities of the Canadian Delegation:

All members of the Canadian delegation attended the closing Joint Session and the special debate.

The **Honourable Hedy Fry, P.C., M.P.** noted that Canada’s efforts to promote diversity and inclusion are based on a fundamental respect for human dignity and unassailable rights. She provided a number of examples of these efforts, including the welcoming of refugees, and the provision of humanitarian assistance and development aid. She also underscored that Canada views diversity as a strength, rather than as a weakness, and that such values promote stability by creating enduring channels for dissent and peaceful progress. She further urged parliamentarians to develop long-term strategies that address the root causes of conflict.

Additional Activities of the Canadian Delegation

On 23 February 2017, the Canadian delegation met with Canada’s Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the OSCE, Her Excellency Natasha Cayer, and other Embassy staff, for a briefing on the main issues in Canada–OSCE relations. The briefing focused on a number of issues, including the situation in Ukraine, Canada–Russia relations, and European perspectives on the migrant and refugee crisis.

The **Honourable Hedy Fry, P.C., M.P.** attended a side event organized by the OSCE Permanent Delegation of Finland on the topic of the “Human Security Dimension in Peace Mediation.” At the same time, **Mr. Jamie Schmale, M.P.** attended an event sponsored by the Ukrainian delegation on the topic of “energy security.”

As well, the **Honourable Hedy Fry, P.C., M.P.** met with Dr. Marcin Walecki, Head of the Democratization Department of ODIHR, and ODIHR Director Link to discuss their plans and priorities for 2017.

Members of the Canadian delegation also attended a reception hosted by the Austrian National Parliament. At the reception, they had the opportunity to meet with colleagues from other national delegations.

On 24 February 2017, the Canadian delegation met with members of the Israeli delegation to the OSCE PA, where issues of common concern were discussed. They were accompanied by Mr. Jean-François Lacasse, Counsellor, Deputy Permanent Representative, Delegation of Canada to the OSCE. Members of the Canadian and Israeli delegations agreed to continue working collaboratively within the PA to advance mutual interests.

Respectfully submitted,

Hon. Hedy Fry, P.C., M.P.

Director

Canadian Delegation to the Organization for Security and Co-operation
in Europe Parliamentary Assembly (OSCE PA)

Travel Costs

ASSOCIATION	Canadian Delegation to the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe Parliamentary Assembly (OSCE PA)
ACTIVITY	16th Winter Meeting of the OSCE PA
DESTINATION	Vienna, Austria
DATES	February 22-24, 2017
DELEGATION	
SENATE	Hon. Ghislain Maltais, Senator
HOUSE OF COMMONS	Hon. Hedy Fry, P.C., M.P. Mr. Jamie Schmale, M.P.
STAFF	Ms. Katherine Simonds, Advisor
TRANSPORTATION	\$34,750.81
ACCOMMODATION	\$2,474.70
HOSPITALITY	\$24.08
PER DIEMS	\$1,836.19
OFFICIAL GIFTS	0
MISCELLANEOUS	0
TOTAL	\$39,085.78