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**Report of the Canadian Parliamentary Delegation
respecting its participation to the 26th Annual Session of
the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly**

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

**Minsk, Belarus
5-9 July 2017**

Report

From 5–9 July 2017, a delegation of eight Canadian parliamentarians attended the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe Parliamentary Assembly's (OSCE PA's) Annual Session in Minsk, Belarus. The Honourable Hedy Fry, P.C., M.P. led the delegation, which included – from the Senate – the Honourable Senators René Cormier and Percy Downe, and – from the House of Commons – Mr. John Aldag, M.P., Mr. Dean Allison, M.P., Mr. Luc Berthold, M.P., Mr. Angelo Iacono, M.P., Mr. Majid Jowhari, M.P. and Ms. Christine Moore, M.P. Ms. Katherine Simonds, Advisor, and Ms. Josée Thérien, Association Secretary, accompanied the delegation.

2017 Annual Session¹

More than 260 parliamentarians from across the OSCE region, together with representatives of the “Partners for Cooperation” states, met in Minsk, Belarus, for the OSCE PA's 2017 Annual Session.

Throughout the Annual Session, the discussions were guided by the theme “Enhancing mutual trust and co-operation for peace and prosperity in the OSCE region.” The program included meetings of the Standing Committee, each of the three General Committees, three Plenary Sessions and several side events. Two meetings of the Ad Hoc Committee on Migration, a working lunch on gender issues and a meeting of the Bureau were also held. The final day of the Annual Session was devoted to a closing Plenary Session at which the Minsk Declaration – which contains recommendations designed to help shape OSCE and national policies in the fields of political-military affairs, economics and the environment, and human rights – was adopted. Elections for several OSCE PA officer positions, including the President, Vice-Presidents and Treasurer, as well as for committee officers, also took place.

The Inaugural Opening of the Annual Session took place on 5 July 2017. Delegates were welcomed by His Excellency Aleksandr Lukashenko, President of the Republic of Belarus, and by Vladimir Andreichenko, Chairman of the House of Representatives of the National Assembly of the Republic of Belarus. President Lukashenko underscored the important role of the OSCE PA in facilitating the constructive exchange of opinions. Mr. Adreichenko's address also centred on the importance of parliamentary diplomacy. Austrian Foreign Minister Sebastian Kurz, as well as OSCE PA President Christine Muttonen (Austria), also delivered remarks focused on conflicts in the Middle East, the situation in Ukraine and the threat of terrorism.

A. Standing Committee

The Standing Committee² met on 5 July 2017, and heard reports from OSCE PA officials, including the Treasurer, Doris Barnett (Germany), who detailed the OSCE PA's

¹ Reports presented at the Annual Session, and video of the sessions, are available on the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe Parliamentary Assembly's [OSCE PA's] [website](#).

² The Standing Committee of the OSCE PA comprises the Heads of National Delegations and members of the Bureau.

financial situation. Ms. Barnett explained that the OSCE PA's financial standing remains strong, and that a 2% increase over the previous year's budget was being requested to reflect higher allowances for OSCE PA staff with children. Secretary General Roberto Montella (Italy) then outlined his activities during the year, and his priorities going forward.³ He also thanked the Ad Hoc Committee on Migration for its dedication to tackling this issue. Secretary General Montella also highlighted progress relating to the planning of future OSCE PA meetings.

The heads of election observation missions, Special Representatives and chairs of ad hoc committees provided reports on their work. Mr. Kent Harstedt (Sweden) reported on the activities of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Belarus, Ms. Arta Dade (Albania) on the activities of the Parliamentary Team on Moldova, and Mr. Filippo Lombardi (Switzerland) on the activities of the Ad Hoc Committee on Migration. As Special Representatives, the following individuals reported on their activities in their particular topic area: Mr. Ilkka Kanerva (Finland) on mediation; Mr. Nikolay Kovalev (Russia) on terrorism; Mr. Ola Elvestuen (Norway) on Arctic issues; Mr. Kristian Vigenin (Bulgaria) on the South Caucasus; and Mr. Roberto Battelli (Slovenia) on South East Europe.⁴

As well, President Muttonen described the priority issue areas that she has worked on since being elected President in July 2016. According to her, these areas have included enhancing the contribution of parliamentarians to the activities of the OSCE, broadening external cooperation with other regional and international organizations, facilitating greater discussion among parliamentarians relating to peace and security issues, enhancing the impact of the OSCE PA's work at the field level, and increasing the role of women in confidence building, dialogue and conflict resolution efforts. She also outlined activities undertaken during her presidency.⁵ As well, President Muttonen announced plans to engage in consultations relating to the work of the Ad Hoc Committee on Strengthening OSCE Engagement Through Transparency and Reform, formerly known as the Ad Hoc Committee on Transparency and Reform of the OSCE.

³ OSCE PA, "[Report of the Secretary General of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, Mr. Roberto Montella](#)," 26th Annual Session of the OSCE PA, Minsk, Belarus, 5–9 July 2017.

⁴ OSCE PA, "[Report by Chair Filippo Lombardi \(Switzerland\) to the Standing Committee](#)," 26th Annual Session of the OSCE PA, Minsk, Belarus, 5 July 2017; OSCE PA, "[Report of the Special Representative for Arctic Issues, Ola Elvestuen \(Norway\)](#)," 26th Annual Session of the OSCE PA, Minsk, Belarus, 5 July 2017; OSCE PA, "[Report of the Chair of the Parliamentary Team on Moldova, Arta Dade \(Albania\)](#)," 26th Annual Session of the OSCE PA, Minsk, Belarus, 5 July 2017; OSCE PA, "[Report of the Special Representative on South East Europe, Roberto Battelli \(Slovenia\)](#)," 26th Annual Session of the OSCE PA, Minsk, Belarus, 5 July 2017; OSCE PA, "[Report of the Special Representative on Mediation, Ilkka Kanerva \(Finland\)](#)," 26th Annual Session of the OSCE PA, Minsk, Belarus, 5 July 2017; OSCE PA, "[Report by the Special Representative on Anti-Semitism, Racism, and Intolerance, Benjamin L. Cardin \(United States\)](#)," 26th Annual Session of the OSCE PA, Minsk, Belarus, 5 July 2017; and OSCE PA, "[Report of the Special Representative on Human Trafficking Issues, Chris Smith \(United States\)](#)," 26th Annual Session of the OSCE PA, Minsk, Belarus, 5 July 2017.

⁵ OSCE PA, "[Report of the President of the OSCE PA, Christine Muttonen \(Austria\)](#)," 26th Annual Session of the OSCE PA, Minsk, Belarus, 5 July 2017.

The Standing Committee considered 15 supplementary items (SIs) to be added to the Annual Session's agenda.⁶ The Standing Committee voted against debating an SI proposed by a Lithuanian delegate on the topic of "The Situation in Belarus"; 14 SIs were approved and placed on the agenda for debate. Two SIs were allocated to the First General Committee, three to the Second General Committee and five to the Third General Committee. Three SIs – "Ensuring a Coherent, Shared and Responsible Governance of Migration and Refugee Flows," "Migration" and "Promoting Gender Inclusive and Responsive Mediation" – were allocated to Plenary Sessions for debate.

The Standing Committee also established an Ad Hoc Committee on Terrorism tasked with developing an effective response to extremist violence in the OSCE region.

Canadian Participation:

The **Honourable Hedy Fry, P.C., M.P.** represented the Canadian delegation at the Standing Committee meeting.

B. Ad Hoc Committee on Migration

The first meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee on Migration (the Ad Hoc Committee) – which serves as a focal point for the OSCE PA's work in the field of migration – was held on 4 July 2017, prior to the official opening of the Annual Session. The Ad Hoc Committee comprises a Chair, five Vice-Chairs and 15 additional members. The Chair of the Ad Hoc Committee, Filippo Lombardi (Switzerland), opened the meeting and then gave the floor to Ambassador Claude Wild, Chair of the OSCE's Informal Working Group Focusing on the Issue of Migration and Refugee Flows (IWG), who briefed the Ad Hoc Committee on developments on the governmental side. He also noted that a main challenge for the OSCE is to stay connected in the debates led by the United Nations regarding a global compact on migration.

Mr. Lombardi presented the Ad Hoc Committee's draft report and draft recommendations based on numerous meetings with migration experts, cooperation with the IWG on the OSCE's governmental side, as well as several field visits. Mr. Lombardi told delegates that the 2,000 deaths of migrants and refugees attempting to cross the Mediterranean Sea in 2017 are a reminder that the crisis is far from over.

The draft report called for a cohesive, balanced and coordinated response to the situation in Italy, Greece and Turkey as those countries continue to accommodate a disproportionate share of migrants and refugees. It also noted that the emergency mechanism adopted by the European Union (EU) in 2015 to re-distribute asylum seekers to other EU countries is not working. For example, the draft report highlighted that only 21,000 persons had been re-located from Greece and Italy, a figure far below the target of 160,000. It also drew attention to reports of abuse in detention facilities in Libya and called for urgent action to protect the most vulnerable refugees. The issues addressed by the draft recommendations were wide-ranging and outlined the Ad Hoc Committee's perspective on the principles that should guide migration policies, such as

⁶ Supplementary items are resolutions proposed by parliamentarians to supplement the principal resolution to be debated in each General Committee. Rules of procedure limit the number of supplementary items that can be considered in an Annual Session to 15.

solidarity, responsibility sharing and respect for human rights. The draft recommendations also touched on internal reforms of the EU's asylum policies and the management of mixed migration flows from countries outside the EU, particularly Libya and Turkey. After discussion, the Chair requested that an additional meeting be held to allow more time to finalize the Ad Hoc Committee's draft report and draft recommendations.

The second meeting was held on Thursday, 6 July 2017. There was a discussion about the migration-related SIs that were adopted in the first Plenary Session that had been held on the previous day; these SIs had been sponsored by Mr. Lombardi and Alain Neri (France). The Ad Hoc Committee then continued to debate its draft report and draft recommendations. It was agreed that the Ad Hoc Committee would conduct more fact-finding missions, restructure the draft report, and continue to work on the draft recommendations before finalizing them at the OSCE PA's Autumn Session to be held in Andorra in October 2017. The meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee was closed following a discussion of future business.

Canadian Participation:

Because the **Honourable Hedy Fry, P.C., M.P.** is a member of the Ad Hoc Committee, she participated in both of its meetings. She contributed to the discussion on the draft report and draft recommendations, and asked the Chair to ensure that the Ad Hoc Committee's future fact-finding missions examine, in more detail, the specific challenges facing women and girls during their journey to safety, the gender-based violence and abuse at reception centres and camps, the barriers to accessing basic services, and the challenges and opportunities for integration of refugees and migrants into host societies.

C. Plenary Sessions

Plenary Sessions were held on Thursday, 6 July, Saturday, 8 July and Sunday, 9 July.

1. First Plenary Session

At the first Plenary Session, two supplementary items on the topic of migration were debated and adopted. The first SI – “Ensuring a Coherent, Shared, and Responsible Governance of Migration and Refugee Flows” – was sponsored by Mr. Lombardi, Chair of the Ad Hoc Committee on Migration. It welcomed the political resolve of the international community to protect the most vulnerable refugees, as demonstrated by the September 2016 “Global compact for safe, orderly, and regular migration,” underscored the importance of disrupting human smuggling networks, noted with regret recent incidents of xenophobia occurring in OSCE participating States, encouraged OSCE participating States to share responsibility for ensuring the safety of unaccompanied child refugees, and called on OSCE countries to increase significantly their support to improve conditions for Syrian and other refugees in border countries, such as Turkey, Jordan and Lebanon, including to provide access to shelter, education, health care and other basic needs. Mr. Neri sponsored an SI on the topic of “Migration” that expressed concern about some OSCE participating States' responding to the migration crisis by tightening border controls, rather than prioritizing humanitarian protection efforts. As well, this SI reiterated the obligations of OSCE participating States

relating to granting asylum to refugees in compliance with the Geneva Conventions, and called on OSCE countries to address the root causes of the migration crisis; these causes include conflict, religious extremism, lack of economic opportunity, demographic issues and climate change. Following debate, both SIs were adopted.

2. Second Plenary Session

At the second Plenary Session, the **Honourable Hedy Fry, P.C., M.P.** presented both her 2017 Gender Balance Report as Special Representative on Gender Issues and an SI on the topic of “Promoting Gender Inclusive and Responsive Mediation,” as discussed below. Following debate and voting on amendments, the SI was adopted. The floor was then opened for general debate. Delegates addressed a wide range of issues, including terrorism, territorial integrity, migration, natural resources and the OSCE PA’s efforts to build trust among participating States.

3. Third Plenary Session

President Muttonen opened the meeting of the third Plenary Session by expressing dismay that the four seats on the podium usually held by the heads of OSCE executive institutions were vacant as a result of political deadlock on appointments: the OSCE Secretary General; the Director of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR); the High Commissioner on National Minorities; and the Representative on the Freedom of the Media. Open debate then continued, with the interventions focusing on several issues that are significant to the OSCE, including transnational terrorism, Ukraine and the work of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission, and the situation in Greece and Italy pertaining to the migrant and refugee crisis.

Ambassador Paul Bekkers, Director of the Office of the OSCE Secretary General, then addressed the Plenary Session in the absence of a new Secretary General. Ambassador Bekkers reiterated the need for the OSCE to adapt in order to respond effectively to emerging threats, and suggested that improving cooperation among the various OSCE institutions and offices, updating the OSCE field offices strategy, and encouraging OSCE participating States to pay their financial contributions in a timely manner could help to facilitate necessary change. He also argued that adopting a multi-year budget would be more effective than the current practice of adopting an annual budget, and would align OSCE practices with those of other multilateral organizations.

Treasurer Barnett addressed the Plenary Session, relaying information previously presented to the Standing Committee. The OSCE PA’s Secretary General then reiterated the comments that he had made at the Standing Committee, and took questions from the floor.

Delegates then voted to adopt the Minsk Declaration and annexed resolutions (SIs). The SI passed by the Third General Committee, which was on the topic of “The Situation in Eastern Europe” and was sponsored by Christian Barenfeld (Sweden), failed to receive a majority and was not included in the final document.

During the third Plenary Session, elections results for OSCE PA leadership positions were announced, as discussed below.

Canadian Participation:

All Canadian parliamentarians attended the three Plenary Sessions.

At the first Plenary Session, the **Honourable Hedy Fry, P.C., M.P.** expressed support for the two supplementary items on migration issues, and their respective calls for stronger cooperation and coordination among OSCE participating States in their responses to the crisis. She underlined that countries have both a regional responsibility to respond to the current crisis, and a global responsibility to support those who are forced to leave their homes. As such, she commented on the need to address the root causes of forced migration by seeking greater opportunities to stem instability and to increase development aid expenditures. She also referred to the Government of Canada's refugee resettlement program, which selects refugees from around the world for permanent residence in Canada, as well as Canada's private sponsorship program.

In her role as OSCE PA Special Representative on Gender Issues, the **Honourable Hedy Fry, P.C., M.P.** presented her annual report during the second Plenary Session. With its focus on "Gender and the Integration of Refugees and Migrants," the report highlighted the importance of developing programs specifically designed to help integrate refugees and migrants into societies. The report noted that, to be effective, integration policies and programs must recognize the diversity of migrant and refugee identities and experiences, including gender considerations, and called for greater opportunities for healing and rehabilitation to be provided to women migrants and refugees who had faced trauma, including sexual abuse. As well, the report focused on social and economic aspects of integration, and also touched on such other issues as legal status, protection, family reunification, and the health of refugee and migrant women. The lack of progress in increasing gender parity within OSCE institutions, including the OSCE PA, was also detailed.⁷

The Honourable Hedy Fry, P.C., M.P. presented an SI on the topic of "Promoting Gender Inclusive and Responsive Mediation." The SI was drafted in collaboration with Mr. Kanerva, and highlighted the underrepresentation of women in formal peace processes. Dr. Fry noted that while mediation is widely recognized as one of the most effective means of preventing, managing and resolving conflict, and that the participation of women in peace processes has proven to be a positive influence on the success of peace agreements, women remain largely absent from mediation and negotiation efforts. The SI called on OSCE participating States to increase the number of women in mediation efforts by removing barriers to their participation, to enhance funding to support mentorship and training opportunities for women, and to ensure that opportunities exist for women to hold meaningful roles as decision-makers in mediation processes, including as lead negotiators. It also called on the OSCE PA to lead by example, and to add the promotion of gender mainstreaming to the mandate of the OSCE PA Special Representative on Mediation.

Mr. John Aldag, M.P. spoke in support of Dr. Fry's gender report. Mr. Aldag focused his remarks on the importance of integration of refugees and migrants into host

⁷ OSCE PA, "[Report of the OSCE PA Special Representative on Gender Issues: Gender and the Integration of Refugees and Migrants](#)," 26th Annual Session of the OSCE PA, Minsk, Belarus, 8 July 2017.

societies, and the need to develop supportive communities. He also expressed disappointment with the report's statistics concerning gender in OSCE countries as well as the OSCE PA, and commented that it is unacceptable that women continue to be underrepresented in management positions.

Senator René Cormier supported Dr. Fry's SI on the topic of "Promoting Gender Inclusive and Responsive Mediation." He highlighted the growing body of research that demonstrates that women's full participation in peace-making can strengthen the legitimacy of peace processes, that women's perspectives provide different understandings of the causes and consequences of conflict, and that peace agreements that respond to the specific needs of women and girls, as well as men and boys, contribute to sustainable peace. Senator Cormier expressed concern that, despite the research, the current level of women's participation in mediation and negotiation remains dismally low. He called on OSCE participating States and institutions to take steps to ensure women's equal and effective participation in peace processes.

Mr. Luc Berthold, M.P. participated in the open debate held during the second Plenary Session. His remarks focused on Russian aggression in Ukraine, particularly Russia's violation of Ukrainian sovereignty in contravention of international law. He referred to Canada's long history of support for Ukraine at the OSCE PA, and outlined some examples of Canada's recent commitments to Ukraine, such as support for security sector reforms and military training. Mr. Berthold also noted that Canada has supplied 50 monitors to the OSCE's Special Monitoring Mission, and provided election observation monitors in 2014 and 2015.

Senator Percy Downe participated in the question-and-answer session with the OSCE PA's Secretary General during the third and closing Plenary Session. He asked Secretary General Montella about the outcomes of the OSCE PA's Annual Session, and about the extent to which the Final Declaration influences both the work of the governmental side of the OSCE and the national policies of OSCE participating States. Secretary General Montella responded by saying that Final Declarations are sent to the parliaments and foreign ministers of OSCE participating States, and are also presented to national Ambassadors to the OSCE in Vienna to serve as policy advice to governments and the international community. He also indicated that he participates in the OSCE Ministerial Council meetings, where he raises the issues discussed within the Final Declarations.

D. General Committee Meetings

1. 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 considered and debated a draft report and draft resolution submitted by the Rapporteur. They focused mainly on cybersecurity, transnational terrorism, recent incidents in Turkey, women in peacebuilding, Russian aggression

against Ukraine and the frozen conflicts in the OSCE. Following the presentation of the draft report and draft resolution by the Rapporteur, 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 First General Committee then debated, amended and adopted two SIs proposed by OSCE parliamentarians:

- Resolution on Restoration of the Sovereignty and Territorial Integrity of Ukraine, sponsored by Artur Gerasymov (Ukraine); and
- Resolution on Strengthening the Role of OSCE in Countering Terrorism, sponsored by Nikolay Kovalev (Russian Federation).

The following committee officers were elected for 2017–2018:

Chair:	Filippo	Lombardi	(Switzerland)
Vice-Chair:	Guglielmo	Picchi	(Italy)
Rapporteur:	Kristian Vigenin (Bulgaria)		

Canadian Participation:

The **Honourable Hedy Fry, P.C., Senator Percy Downe, Senator René Cormier, Mr. Angelo Iacono, M.P., Mr. Majid Jowhari, M.P., Mr. Dean Allison, M.P., Mr. Luc Berthold, M.P.** and **Ms. Christine Moore, M.P.** attended the meetings of the First General Committee. Because meetings were held concurrently, not all delegates were there at all times.

The **Honourable Hedy Fry, P.C., M.P.** sponsored a gender-related amendment to the First General Committee's draft resolution to reflect the need to enhance women's political, social and economic empowerment throughout all stages of the conflict cycle. The amendment was adopted without contest.

Mr. Dean Allison, M.P. spoke about the First General Committee's draft report, specifically its examination of cybersecurity. He noted that when communication networks are compromised, misused or attacked, people's lives are affected and, in some instances, livelihoods are put at risk. He also argued that confidence-building measures, such as increased information sharing and agreed upon rules of behaviour, can help states to navigate the complexities of the cyber domain and can reduce tensions by increasing transparency. He provided some examples of Canadian cooperation with its allies to leverage cybersecurity capabilities.

Mr. Luc Berthold, M.P. spoke in response to the Rapporteur's draft report, focusing his remarks on counter-radicalization. He referred to Canada's national strategy to counter radicalization and violent extremism, and stressed that international cooperation to fight terrorism in all of its forms should continue to be a priority.

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

Chair: Nilza Sena (Portugal)
Vice-Chair: Artur Gerasymov (Ukraine)
Rapporteur: Marietta Tidei (Italy)

The Second General Committee considered and debated a draft report and draft resolution submitted by the Rapporteur. They covered a range of issues, including the Paris Climate Change Agreement, green growth, the links between energy and the environment, the impact of environmental degradation on migration flows, income disparity between developed and developing nations, corruption, and scientific and academic freedom. Following the Rapporteur's presentation, delegates debated issues identified in the draft report, proposed and adopted amendments to the draft resolution, and adopted the draft resolution as amended.

In addition, the Second General Committee debated, amended and adopted the following three supplementary items proposed by OSCE parliamentarians:

- Resolution on Strengthening Energy Security in the OSCE Region, sponsored by Olga Bielkova (Ukraine);
- Resolution on Drinking Water: Fostering Co-operation to Protect a Scarce Resource, sponsored by Godfrey Farrugia (Malta); and
- Resolution on Observation of New Voting Technologies, sponsored by Bjorn Soder (Sweden).

The following individuals were elected as committee officers for 2017–2018:

Chair: Nilza Sena (Portugal)
Vice-Chair: Artur Gerasymov (Ukraine)
Rapporteur: Sofio Katsarava (Georgia)

Canadian Participation:

The **Honourable Hedy Fry, P.C., M.P.** sponsored an amendment to the Second General Committee's draft report to include a reference to the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Sustainable Development Goal 5, which recognizes that gender equality is a necessary foundation for long-term peace, prosperity and sustainability. The amendment was adopted.

Mr. John Aldag, M.P.'s response to the Rapporteur's draft report focused on climate change and green growth. He told the members of the Second General Committee that temperatures in Canada are rising at twice the global average, and that Canada's Arctic temperatures are rising at three times that rate, causing ice roads to melt sooner, growing seasons and migratory patterns to shift, and the frequency and severity of disasters – such as floods and wildfires – to increase. Mr. Aldag also outlined some of Canada's efforts to build resilience to climate change, invest in green infrastructure and contribute to international climate financing arrangements.

Mr. Dean Allison, M.P. spoke in support of the SI on the topic of "Strengthening Energy Security in the OSCE Region." He stated that energy security can be guaranteed only when energy supplies are reliable, affordable, and resilient enough to withstand shocks

and disruptions. He also expressed regret that some OSCE participating States, such as Turkey and Ukraine, had experienced the vulnerability of critical energy infrastructure to the damaging effects of terrorism and cyber-attacks. He noted that Russia's use of coercive tactics, such as cutting off energy supplies to consumers in winter, deepens distrust and exacerbates conflicts.

Ms. Christine Moore, M.P.'s response to the Rapporteur's draft report focused on rural access to technology. She argued that, as a result of Canada's low population density, access to technology continues to be an issue that affects many Canadians. She noted that access to technology can improve standards of living, and that affordable and reliable Internet access can enable distance learning, remote diagnostics for health care, participation in e-commerce and innovation more broadly. She urged OSCE participating States to focus on developing solutions to address the rural–urban digital divide. Ms. Moore also spoke in support of the SI on the topic of "Observation of New Voting Technologies. She stated that, increasingly, many jurisdictions around the world – including Canada – rely on digital technologies to play a role in electoral systems, and that such technologies could make voting more accessible and increase voter turnout. She urged OSCE parliamentarians to learn more about new technologies and their associated risks in order to uphold the security and integrity of electoral systems.

3. 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-Hadjijanni (Cyprus)

The Third General Committee considered and debated a draft report and draft resolution submitted by the Rapporteur. The draft report mainly focused on protecting the human dimension of security amidst rising instability in the OSCE region stemming from conflict, violent extremism, breaches of sovereignty, mass displacement and migration, and existential threats, such as climate change.

The draft report called on OSCE participating States to return to the OSCE's landmark comprehensive approach to security and to not allow the human dimension to erode. The Rapporteur expressed concern about the extent to which OSCE participating States increasingly place limits on the ability of their citizens to enjoy their human rights and fundamental freedoms, and reiterated that the enjoyment of civil liberties is not at odds with security. The draft report also urged a greater focus by OSCE participating States on reinvigorating their human dimension commitments, including freedom of expression, and freedom of thought, conscience or belief. In the context of the migration crisis, the draft report called for greater protection of the human rights of the most vulnerable, and noted that large numbers of migrants and refugees are fleeing targeted violence and persecution in their home countries. The draft report also addressed the rights of people with disabilities, and the Rapporteur encouraged political parties to ensure that the needs of people with disabilities are addressed within their platforms. The Rapporteur also discussed the issue of adequately resourcing OSCE field officers.

In addition, the Third General Committee debated, amended and adopted the following five SIs proposed by OSCE parliamentarians:

- Resolution on Preventing Child Sexual Exploitation Online through Advances in Technology, sponsored by Christopher Smith (United States);
- Resolution on Abolition of the Death Penalty, sponsored by Isabel Santos (Portugal);
- Resolution on the Situation in Eastern Europe, sponsored by Christian Holm Barenfled (Sweden);
- Resolution on Multiculturalism – The Role of Cultural Values in the Development of Democracy in the Context of Globalization, Tahir Mikishili (Azerbaijan); and
- Resolution on Unacceptability of Discrimination and Intolerance Against Christians, Muslims and Adherents of Other Religions, sponsored by Liudmila Narusova (Russian Federation).

The following committee officers were elected for 2017–2018:

Chair:	Nilza	Sena	(Portugal)
Vice-Chair:	Artur	Gerasymov	(Ukraine)
Rapporteur:	Sofio Katsarava (Georgia)		

Canadian Participation:

All members of the Canadian delegation attended the meetings of the Third General Committee. They voted on the amendments to the draft resolution prepared by the Rapporteur and on the SIs, although meetings were held concurrently and not all delegates were there at all times.

The **Honourable Hedy Fry, P.C., M.P.** proposed amendments to the Rapporteur's draft report, including to add discrimination against Muslims and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) persons to a paragraph on tolerance, and to strengthen calls for OSCE participating States to provide social workers to help refugees and migrants report instances of human trafficking, sexual exploitation and gender-based violence. Dr. Fry also spoke in support of the SI on the topic of "Resolution on the Abolition of the Death Penalty." She commented that Canada does not believe that the death penalty is an effective deterrent, and that Canada's advocacy of the abolition of the death penalty in all countries is an expression of sound criminal justice policy.

Mr. Dean Allison, M.P., on behalf of Corey Gardner (United States), proposed an amendment to the SI on the topic of "Unacceptability of Discrimination and Intolerance Against Christians, Muslims and Adherents of Other Religions"; the proposed amendment was designed to clarify the language relating to acts of intolerance and discrimination. Mr. Allison also spoke in support of the SI on the topic of "Preventing Child Sexual Exploitation Online Through Advances in Technology," and commended the SI's sponsor for bringing forward the issue of online child sexual exploitation; he noted that Canadian parliamentarians remain seized of this issue as well. He urged

collaboration among OSCE participating States to combat child sex trafficking and to develop best practices in this area.

Mr. Majid Jowhari, M.P. spoke about the Rapporteur's draft report, calling for tolerance and respect for diversity in the face of resurgent nationalism. He noted that some countries have responded to increased immigration by spreading fear-based messages suggesting that instability, terrorism, and job loss will inevitably result. He said that reactions that promote "fear of the other" lead to policies that ostracize, rather than integrate, immigrants and visible minorities. He also stated that Canada encourages immigration, and that Canadian parliamentarians recognize that newcomers enhance Canada's diverse society, culture and economy.

E. Elections

During the closing Plenary Session, incumbent President Muttonen and incumbent Treasurer Barnett were re-elected by acclamation. Election results were also announced for four Vice-President positions. The four Vice-Presidents elected were: Victor Paul Dobre (Romania); Margareta Cederfelt (Sweden); Roger Wicker (United States); and Marietta Tidei (Italy).

F. Additional Activities of the Canadian Delegation

The **Honourable Hedy Fry, P.C., M.P.** and the Parliament of Belarus co-hosted the OSCE PA's annual gender luncheon, which had "Women's Leadership" as its theme. Ms. Marianna Shchetkina, Deputy Chairperson of the Council of the Republic of the National Assembly of the Republic of Belarus, gave the keynote address. ODIHR First Deputy Director Katarzyna Gardapkhadze also delivered remarks, and announced the release of a new ODIHR publication that provides guidance on the development and implementation of gender-sensitive legislation. President Muttonen also spoke at the luncheon, and thanked Dr. Fry for her work as Special Representative on Gender Issues. As well, Dr. Fry addressed the delegate, stating that gender-based analysis must be incorporated into both the long-term thinking and daily work of parliamentarians if representation of women in politics is to increase. She then moderated a discussion among the delegates that was focused on the following question: "What concrete steps can be taken to promote women's leadership in political processes and structures?"

Members of the Canadian delegation attended the gender luncheon, as well as side events hosted by:

- Parliamentarians for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament;
- the Swedish delegation on human rights in Belarus;
- the Government of Georgia on the Open Government Partnership;
- the delegation of Belarus on responses to the emergence of new psychoactive substances; and
- the delegation of Belarus on combating human trafficking.

Two bilateral side meetings were also held: between the **Honourable Hedy Fry, P.C., M.P.** and the Head of Delegation for the Montenegrin delegation to the OSCE PA; and between the Canadian delegation and the delegation of Belarus.

Respectfully submitted,

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

Director

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

Travel Costs

ASSOCIATION	Canadian Delegation to the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe Parliamentary Assembly (OSCE PA)
ACTIVITY	26th Annual Session of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly
DESTINATION	Minsk, Belarus
DATES	5-9 July 2017
DELEGATION	
SENATE	Hon. René Cormier, Senator Hon. Percy Downe, Senator Hon. Hedy Fry, P.C., M.P. Mr. John Aldag, M.P. Mr. Dean Allison, M.P.
HOUSE OF COMMONS	Mr. Luc Berthold, M.P. Mr. Angelo Iacono, M.P. Mr. Majid Jowhari, M.P. Ms. Christine Moore, M.P.
STAFF	Ms. Katherine Simonds, Advisor Ms. Josée Thérien, Secretary
TRANSPORTATION	\$ 54,825.08
ACCOMMODATION	\$ 12,637.27
HOSPITALITY	\$ 396.65
PER DIEMS	\$ 7,119.67
OFFICIAL GIFTS	0
MISCELLANEOUS	\$ 80.98
TOTAL	\$ 75,059.65