

Canada - Europe
Parliamentary Association



Association parlementaire
Canada - Europe

OSCE PA

AP OSCE

**Report of the Canadian Parliamentary Delegation
respecting its participation to the 12th 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 21-22, 2013

Report

From 21 to 22 February 2013, a delegation of six Canadian parliamentarians attended the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly's Winter Meeting in Vienna, Austria. Mr. Dean Allison, M.P., led the delegation, which included from the Senate the Honourable Senators Percy E. Downe and Ghislain Maltais and from the House of Commons the Honourable Hedy Fry, P.C., M.P., Mr. Gerald Keddy, M.P., and Mr. Glenn Thibeault, M.P. The delegation was accompanied by Alexandre Roger, Delegation Secretary, and Erin Shaw, Advisor.

OVERVIEW OF THE OSCE

Established in 1975 as the "Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe" (CSCE), the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) was given its current name at the Budapest Summit in December 1994. The OSCE participating countries, currently 57 in number, are "all the European states, the United States and Canada."¹ Eleven other states from the Mediterranean area and Asia joined as observers and are known as "Partners for Cooperation." The organization is defined as a primary instrument for early warning, conflict prevention and crisis management. It is also recognized as a regional arrangement under chapter VIII of the *United Nations Charter*, which requires that participating UN Member States "make every effort to achieve pacific settlement of local disputes through such regional arrangements or by such regional agencies before referring them to the Security Council."² However, the OSCE is not an international organization in the strict sense of international law and its resolutions are not legally binding on the signatory countries.

The OSCE's 2013 budget is €144,822,600 million, a decrease from the 012 budget of €3.23 million. Approximately 62% of the OSCE's budget is dedicated to 17 field missions and other field activities in South-Eastern Europe, Eastern Europe, the South Caucasus and Central Asia. The OSCE employs approximately 2570 individuals, the vast majority of whom are assigned to field missions. Approximately 20% of the OSCE employees are seconded by the participating countries.³

A. An Inclusive, Global and Cooperative Approach to Security

The OSCE's unique character derives from its composition, which enables the United States and Canada to participate as full members in an organization that addresses European issues. The OSCE favours inclusive dialogue over selective admission. This enables it to keep communication channels open on key security issues between Western democracies and countries with less exemplary democratic records. It also promotes exchanges between the European Union and Central Asian states (Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan) and Mongolia that

¹ *Final Recommendations of the Helsinki Consultations*, para. 54, Helsinki, 3 July 1973,

² *Charter of the United Nations*, c. VIII, art. 52, para. 2. The Security Council may also use such regional arrangements to implement coercive measures it has adopted.

³ *2013 Unified Budget*, Annex I to *Ministerial Council Decision No. 1073, Approval of the 2013 Unified Budget*, PC.DEC/1073, adopted at the 940th Plenary Meeting, 7 February 2013.

are not members of the Council of Europe. Whereas the foremost goal of the Council of Europe is to promote and defend democratic development and human rights, and to hold member governments accountable for their performance in these areas, the OSCE aims to foster the development of an expansive, conflict-free geographic area – from Vancouver to Vladivostok – regardless of the democratic characteristics of the participating states.

The OSCE's resolutions 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.”⁴ All forms of peaceful cooperation between the participating countries are considered as having the potential to reduce the risks of conflict in the region. The OSCE's cooperative approach is confirmed by the fact that all 57 states have equal status. Decisions are made by consensus rather than majority vote.⁵

B. Operational Capacity

After the end of the Cold War, the OSCE developed its institutions and operational capacities in response to particular and often urgent needs, and not as a long-term strategic plan. The 1990 *Charter of Paris for a New Europe* laid the foundations for the OSCE's institutional framework.

Field activities account for roughly 62% of the OSCE budget.⁶ The fact that it has no missions in Western Europe or North America is a point frequently raised by the Commonwealth of Independent States to argue that, although it claims to be cooperative and egalitarian, the OSCE applies a double standard in its relations with the participating countries. The OSCE's reply is that its operations stem from commitments made in a consensual manner and at the invitation of the countries themselves. The six OSCE missions in southeast Europe account for half of the organization's budget.

The OSCE is led by a rotating “chairman-in-office” selected to serve a one-year term from among the foreign ministers of the participating countries. As the organization's senior diplomat, the chairman-in-office is supported by the Secretariat and its Secretary General who are based in Vienna.

On 1 January 2013, Ukraine succeeded Ireland as the chair of the organization. Mr. Leonid Kozhara, Ukraine's Minister for Foreign Affairs, is serving as Chairman-in-Office. Switzerland will succeed Ukraine as chair of the organization on 1 January 2014, followed by Serbia in 2015.

⁴ “*Charter for European Security*,” para. 9, in *Istanbul Document 1999*, Istanbul Summit 1999.

⁵ In extreme cases, the “consensus minus one” rule may be invoked, for instance when a serious violation of the Organization's principles occurs. However, this rule has been used only once, in 1992, against the former Yugoslavia, which was readmitted as Serbia and Montenegro after the elections in the fall of 2000.

⁶ *2013 Unified Budget*, Annex I to *Ministerial Council Decision No. 1073*, *Approval of the 2013 Unified Budget*, PC.DEC/1073, adopted at the 940th Plenary Meeting, 7 February 2013.

Italy's Lamberto Zannier has served as OSCE Secretary General since 1 July 2011. He succeeds France's Marc Perrin de Brichambaut who served as OSCE Secretary General from 2005 until 2011.

C. The OSCE Parliamentary Assembly

The OSCE Parliamentary Assembly (OSCE PA) is the parliamentary dimension of the OSCE. It was created by the OSCE (at that time the CSCE) in 1991 following the call set out by the participating States in the 1990 *Charter of Paris for a New Europe*. Its primary purpose is to facilitate inter-parliamentary dialogue on issues facing the participating states and to issue recommendations for their own governments, parliaments and citizens concerning the OSCE's three spheres of action. Among its objectives are:

- to assess the implementation of OSCE objectives by participating states;
- to discuss subjects addressed during meetings of the OSCE;
- to develop and promote mechanisms for the prevention and resolution of conflicts;
- to support the strengthening and consolidation of democratic institutions in OSCE participating States; and
- to contribute to the development of OSCE institutional structures and of relations between existing OSCE Institutions.

The OSCE Parliamentary Assembly is organised according to three General Committees representing the three "baskets" of the 1975 *Helsinki Final Act* and the areas of focus of the OSCE: the First General Committee on Political Affairs and Security, the Second General Committee on Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and Environment, and the Third General Committee on Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions.⁷ Its work is also carried out by way of ad hoc committees, working groups, and special representatives and envoys. The Parliamentary Assembly also plays a key role in observing elections in the OSCE region and regularly sends parliamentary delegations on field missions.

The Parliamentary Assembly is managed by a Bureau and a Standing Committee. The Bureau comprises a president, nine vice-presidents, a treasurer, the chair, the vice-chair and rapporteur for each of the three General Committees, and the president emeritus. The Bureau is responsible for ensuring that the decisions of the Standing Committee are carried out and takes decisions by majority vote. The Standing Committee of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly comprises the members of the Bureau and the 57 heads of delegation of the participating states. The Standing Committee guides the work of the Assembly, approves its budget and appoints the Secretary General. It uses the "consensus minus one" rule when voting on decisions, except in the case of the appointment of the Secretary General, which is done by a majority vote.

The OSCE Parliamentary Assembly is administratively supported by the Secretary-General and the Secretariat who are located in Copenhagen. These were established

⁷ Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe Final Act, Helsinki, 1975 ["Helsinki Final Act"].

and became operational in January 1993 soon after the creation of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly.

Today the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly comprises more than 300 parliamentarians who are appointed by their respective parliaments. Observers of the Assembly include parliamentarians from the OSCE's Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation (Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia) and Asian Partners for Cooperation (Japan, Korea, Thailand, and Afghanistan), and representatives from other parliamentary assemblies and security organizations, such as NATO.

Since its first Annual Meeting in Budapest in July 1992, members of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and representatives of the Partners for Co-operation have convened several times a year to carry out the mandate of the Assembly. The Assembly itself meets in plenary at the Annual Session held in July and hosted by the parliament of a participating State. The Annual Session is the most important event in the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly calendar where the Assembly debates a number of OSCE matters and resolutions, receives reports, adopts the Session's declaration, and elects its officers. At the Fall Meetings in September, also hosted by the parliament of a participating State, the Assembly in plenary holds a conference on a topical issue.

The General Committees meet at the Annual Session to debate and adopt resolutions, and elect Committee officers; they also convene jointly and separately at the Winter Meeting in February in Vienna, where the OSCE's headquarters are located, to discuss and debate issues of importance, receive briefings by senior OSCE officials, and hear presentations by the Rapporteurs on their draft resolutions for the upcoming Annual Session. The Bureau meets at the Annual Session as well as in April and December. The Standing Committee meets at the Annual Session, the Fall Meetings, and at the Winter Meeting.

The OSCE PA also convenes to discuss more specific topics either on the margins of these regular annual meetings or at other times. For instance, the Parliamentary Forum on the Mediterranean is held during the Fall Meetings of the OSCE PA, and the Economic Conference is hosted by the parliament of a participating State every second spring.

The OSCE PA is highly active in election monitoring, having observed over one hundred presidential and parliamentary elections in the OSCE region since 1993. It cooperates with the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, the European Parliament, the NATO Parliamentary Assembly and the OSCE's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights in its election observation missions. Canadian parliamentarians have participated in many of the OSCE PA election observation missions, including most recently the 2012 parliamentary election in Ukraine, the 2010 presidential election in Ukraine, the 2010 parliamentary election in Azerbaijan, the 2009 parliamentary election in Moldova, and the 2009 presidential election in Kyrgyzstan.

The Assembly's budget covers most of the organizational expenses related to the Annual Session, Winter Meeting, Fall Meetings, Standing Committee and Bureau Meetings, official visits, the election observation programme, as well as the costs of the International Secretariat. Host parliaments of the Annual Sessions contribute

significantly by providing considerable support. The Secretariat's office facilities are provided free of charge by the Danish Folketing.

The PA's budget is approved at the Annual Session; the 2012-2013 budget, approved at the 2012 Annual Session, is €2.86 million, the same amount as in the previous year. For 2012–2013, Canada's budgeted contribution is C\$201,984 (€157,936).

Former OSCE PA President Riccardo Migliori (Italy), elected as president of the PA in July 2012, was not re-elected to Italy's parliament in the 2013 Italian elections. As a result, Wolfgang Grossruck (Austria) assumed the leadership of the PA on 15 March 2013, in accordance with the PA's rules of procedure, and will serve until new elections are held in July 2013 at the Annual Session in Istanbul. Spencer Oliver (United States) has served as secretary general since January 1993. Dr. Hedy Fry (Canada) was appointed by the OSCE PA President in October 2010 as the Special Representative on Gender Issues.

2013 WINTER MEETING⁸

From 21 to 22 February 2013, over 200 parliamentarians from OSCE participating States, together with parliamentarians from several Mediterranean Partners for Cooperation states, met in Vienna, Austria for the 12th OSCE Parliamentary Assembly Winter Meeting. The program comprised an opening plenary session, meetings of each of the three OSCE PA General Committees (Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions; Political Affairs and Security; and Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and Environment). In addition, a meeting of the Standing Committee was held, and the closing plenary session featured a special debate on the situation in Syria, the Sahel, and North Africa.

A. OPENING PLENARY

At the first joint session of the three General Committees, the OSCE PA heard the following presentations:

- Ms. Barbara Prammer, President of the Austrian Parliament, welcomed the OSCE parliamentarians to the Assembly.
- The President of the OSCE PA, Mr. Riccardo Migliori, stressed the need for the OSCE and its parliamentarians to recommit to building a strong and peaceful OSCE security community that includes respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. He highlighted the importance of collective engagement to fight threats such as cyber-crime and the use of new technologies to promote hatred, intolerance, racism and violence, as well as human trafficking and child exploitation. President Migliori also emphasized the need for continued cooperation amongst OSCE participating states in the areas of defence and border security, in particular in light of instability in countries such as Afghanistan, Iran and Syria that border on OSCE participating states.
- OSCE Secretary General Lamberto Zannier highlighted the achievements of the OSCE Ministerial Council during 2012, which included a commitment by all participating

⁸ Some of the remarks and reports presented at the conference are available from the OSCE PA "2013 Winter Meeting" website.

states to take steps to strengthen the security community by 2015, the 40th anniversary of the *Helsinki Final Act*. Secretary General Zannier recognized the vital role played by the PA in promoting OSCE principles, values and commitments. He informed parliamentarians that he intended to explore areas where a greater parliamentary dimension could be incorporated into OSCE debates in the future. He shared his concern about divisions between the PA and the OSCE's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights regarding the conduct of election observations and the PA's criticism of the increased proportion of the OSCE budget allocated to the Secretariat, rather than to field missions.

- Mr. Viacheslav Yatsiuk, Special Envoy of the Chairperson-in-Office of the OSCE Mr. Leonid Kozhara, presented the Ukrainian Chairmanship's priorities to the OSCE parliamentarians.⁹

Activities of the Canadian Delegation:

The inaugural session was attended by all members of the Delegation.

Mr. Dean Allison, M.P., congratulated Ukraine on assuming the 2013 Chairmanship-in-Office of the OSCE. He highlighted the close bilateral relationship enjoyed by Canada and Ukraine and the importance of the one-million strong Ukrainian-Canadian community in this context. He noted that Canada's House of Commons Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development had visited Ukraine in May 2012 and that twelve Canadian parliamentarians had participated in the OSCE PA's mission to observe Ukraine's 2012 parliamentary elections. These visits left Canadian parliamentarians with concerns about the level of respect for democracy, human rights and the rule of law in Ukraine. Mr. Allison, therefore, welcomed Ukraine's decision to focus on a number of OSCE human dimension commitments during its Chairmanship, including inter-religious dialogue, democratic elections, gender equality and media freedom. Recalling the commitments made by OSCE participating states regarding democracy, human rights and the rule of law, Mr. Allison asked Ukraine's Foreign Minister to explain to the PA how Ukraine planned to lead by example during its Chairmanship-in-Office.

B. General Committee on Political Affairs and Security

Chair: Ms. Åsa Lindestam (Sweden)

Vice-Chair: Susan Bratli (Norway)

Rapporteur: Viliija Aleknaite Abramikiene (Lithuania)

The Vice-Chair of the Committee, Ms Bratli, provided an interim report on the follow-up to the Monaco Declaration. The report focused on activities undertaken by the OSCE, its institutions and field missions, as they pertain to the First Committee resolutions,

⁹ Ukraine's priorities for its Chairmanship in Office are set out in an "Address by H.E. Mr. Leonid Kozhara, the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ukraine to the OSCE Permanent Council," Doc. CIO.GAL/7/13, Vienna, 17 January 2013.

including arms control, conflict resolution, deepening contact and cooperation with Afghanistan, cybersecurity and reform of the OSCE.¹⁰

The Rapporteur of the Committee, Ms. Abramkiene, provided an overview of the report and draft resolution being prepared for the Committee's next meeting at the upcoming Annual Session in Monaco. In keeping with the Annual Session's theme of "Helsinki +40," the report and draft resolution will focus on ways that the OSCE PA can contribute to strengthening the OSCE security community in the lead-up to the 40th Anniversary of the *Helsinki Final Act* in 2015.

Ambassador Knut Vollebæk, OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities, gave parliamentarians an overview of the "Helsinki +40 process." He argued that a strong belief in multilateral cooperation and a focus on human interest as the core element of international politics should animate the Helsinki +40 process. Ambassador Vollebæk stressed that even if the implementation of OSCE commitments is imperfect, the fact that the validity of these commitments are no longer questioned by any of the organizations 57 participating state represents a significant achievement.

The Committee also held a discussion on "Building a Security Community," which was led by presentations by the following officials:

- Ambassador Tacan Ildem, Permanent Representative of Turkey to the OSCE and Chair of the OSCE First Committee;
- Ambassador Ian Kelly, Permanent Representative of the USA to the OSCE;
- Muran Yildiz, OSCE Strategic Police Matters Unit; and
- Ambassador Andrey Kelin, Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the OSCE.

Presentations and the debate which followed focused on ways to strengthen the OSCE security community over the next three years and to set clear goals for the OSCE as it faces the challenges of the 21st Century. Speakers addressed issues related to deeper military cooperation within the EU and the need for EU-NATO cooperation in a time of fiscal austerity; confidence and security building measures in the defence field; protracted conflicts in the OSCE region; cooperation to combat and identify transnational threats; and greater cooperation with other international organizations. Speakers noted that a key issue in the Helsinki +40 process will be achieving consensus in respect of the ways that existing OSCE commitments and tools can be used to address these issues in ways that strengthen the security community. The need to take incremental steps to build trust in the OSCE region was also stressed by some speakers.

Activities of the Canadian Delegation:

Mr. Glenn Thibeault, M.P., participated in the discussion about strengthening the security community in the OSCE region, stressing in particular the importance of making

¹⁰ See General Committee on Political Affairs and Security, "Follow-Up on Recommendations in the OSCE PA's Monaco Declaration - Interim Report for the 2013 Winter Meeting," available in the 2013 Winter Meeting Electronic Folder on the OSCE PA website.

progress towards resolving protracted conflicts in the region and combatting transnational organized crime. He welcomed the progress made in the Transdniestrian settlement talks and the attention of the Ukrainian Chairmanship-in-office to this issue. Mr. Thibeault noted the inter-connected nature of conflict, criminality and governance and stressed Canada's commitment to combatting transnational organized crime. **Dr. Fry** also attended the meeting.

The meeting of this Committee was held concurrently with that of the General Committee on Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and the Environment, which was attended by other members of the delegation.

C. General Committee on Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and the Environment

Chair: Vacant

Vice-Chair: Ms. Roza Aknazarova (Kyrgyzstan)

Rapporteur: Mr. Christos Stylianides (Cyprus)

Ms. Aknazarova, the Vice-Chair of the Committee, provided an interim report on the follow-up to the Monaco Declaration. The report focused on activities undertaken by the OSCE, its institutions and field missions related to the Second Committee's resolutions, including the OSCE's leadership role in fostering economic cooperation, the long-term effects of fiscal austerity measures in participating states, green growth and renewable energy, and the so-called "Tobin Tax" on financial transactions.¹¹

The Rapporteur of the Committee, Mr. Stylianides, provided an overview of the report and draft resolution being prepared for the Committee's next meeting at the upcoming Annual Session in Monaco. In keeping with the Annual Session's theme of "Helsinki +40," the report and draft resolution will focus on increasing the importance of the Economic and Environmental Dimension as part of efforts to strengthen and consolidate the organization in the lead-up to 2015. The report will also highlight the importance of parliamentary input in the Helsinki +40 process. The Rapporteur announced that he will focus on the effects of continued economic instability in OSCE participating states and on ways to address this issue.

In addition, the Committee heard presentations by Michael C. Camuñez, U.S. Assistant Secretary of Commerce, Ambassador Olga Algayerova, Chair of the OSCE Economic and Environmental Committee and Permanent Representative of the Slovak Republic to the OSCE, and Mr. Yurdakul Yigitguden, Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities.¹²

¹¹ See General Committee on Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and Environment, "Follow-Up on Recommendations in the OSCE PA's Monaco Declaration - Interim Report for the 2013 Winter Meeting," available in the 2013 Winter Meeting Electronic Folder on the OSCE PA website.

¹² See the "Remarks of Assistant Secretary of Commerce Michael C. Camuñez Before the General Committee on Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and Environment to the 12th Winter Meeting of the Parliamentary Assembly," Vienna, 22 February 2013; "Presentation by Ambassador Ol'ga Algayerová to the Chairperson of the Economic and Environmental Committee to the Parliamentary Assembly of the OSCE," Vienna, 21 February 2013.

The Committee held a special debate on border cooperation in the OSCE Area.

The presentations and the ensuing debate considered the importance of economic growth and trade to ensuring stability and prosperity; highlighted the importance of border security and the need to ensure the safe and efficient movement of goods and people throughout the OSCE region; discussed continued austerity measures in Europe; and pointed to linkages between intolerance, extremism and economic crisis. Speakers remarked on the importance of combatting corruption, money laundering and terrorist financing in order to achieve economic prosperity. Other speakers emphasized the interconnected relationship between the economy and the environment. Several participants focused their remarks on issues related to the development and consumption of energy resources, as well as energy and water security issues in the OSCE region. Overall, presenters and speakers stressed the importance of economic issues as part of the OSCE's approach to comprehensive security.

Activities of the Canadian Delegation:

The meeting of the Committee on Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and the Environment was attended by **Senator Maltais, Senator Downe, Mr. Allison and Mr. Keddy.**

Mr. Keddy commented on the rapporteur's presentation, noting the importance of free trade as a driver of economic growth and prosperity. He highlighted the importance that Canada places on the conclusion of a comprehensive economic and trade agreement with the European Union and remarked on the need for dialogue amongst parliamentarians in relation to trade and investment matters. Finally, he noted the role that economic ties can play in ensuring peace and stability in the OSCE region.

Senator Downe also participated in the discussion. In his comments, he stated that good governance and the provision of state services requires all citizens to pay their fair share of taxes. At a time when governments must exercise fiscal restraint and are struggling with the need to continue to provide services to their citizens, cracking down on tax evasion represents an important way to increase state revenues. Senator Downe also stressed the importance of international cooperation in combatting tax evasion.

D. General Committee on Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions

Chair: Mr. Matteo Mecacci (Italy)

Vice-Chair: Ms. Isabel Santos (Portugal)

Rapporteur: Ms. Anne Phelan (Ireland)

The Vice-Chair of the Committee, Ms. Santos, provided an interim report on the follow-up to the Monaco Declaration. The report focused on activities undertaken by the OSCE, its institutions and field presences, as they pertain to the Third Committee's resolutions, including reform of the OSCE's human dimension and increasing civil society participation, freedom of the media, political prisoners in the OSCE region, ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture, mandates for

OSCE field operations, especially in Belarus and Georgia, and establishing closer contacts between the PA and parliaments in Central Asia.¹³

The Rapporteur of the Committee, Ms. Phelan, provided an overview of the report and draft resolution being prepared for the Committee's next meeting at the upcoming Annual Session in Istanbul. The report and draft resolution will focus on improving women's access to education, particularly women from national minorities, as a means to reduce vulnerability to human trafficking.

The Committee also heard from the following speakers:

- Ambassador Vuk Žugić, Chair of the OSCE Human Dimension Committee, briefed the parliamentarians about the activities of the Committee and about the expected work of the Committee in 2013. Ukraine's priorities for the Human Dimension Committee in 2013 include, among other issues: freedom of religion and belief, combatting trafficking in human beings, freedom of the media, democratic elections and follow-up to election observations, freedom of assembly and association, and gender equality. Ambassador Žugić expressed his appreciation for the value of the OSCE's expert and peer-review mechanisms, as well as the work of the PA in the area of the human dimension. His Excellency also discussed proposals to make the OSCE's Human Dimension Committee more effective.

- Janez Lenarcic, Director of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), summarized some of the key aspects of the work of office since his last report to the Parliamentary Assembly in 2012. He discussed a comparative study of women's parliamentary bodies in the OSCE region that has been undertaken by ODIHR. In respect of this study, Mr. Lenarcic thanked especially **Dr. Hedy Fry**, the OSCE PA's Special Representative on Gender Issues, for her cooperation and assistance with the survey. Mr. Lenarcic also highlighted, among other issues, ODIHR's efforts to assist some of the OSCE's Mediterranean partners in making democratic reforms in the wake of the Arab Spring, as well as activities promoting judicial independence, the right to freedom of religion and belief, and the protection and support of human rights defenders. He also provided the PA with an overview of ODIHR's follow-up visit to Ukraine following the OSCE's election observation mission in the autumn of 2012. Mr. Lenarcic stressed that ODIHR remains committed to working together with the PA in election observations in the future.

- Dunja Mijatovic, OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, gave an overview the work of her office over the last year. She stressed that the commitments of OSCE participating states regarding freedom of the media and freedom of expression remain the same both on-line and off. Ms. Mijatovic discussed the results of a study on internet regulation, which found that many OSCE participating states were improperly limiting access and free use of the internet. Second, she reviewed her efforts to combat harassment, intimidation and violence against journalists and to push for investigations and prosecutions of criminal attacks on media personnel.

¹³ See General Committee on Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions, "Follow-Up on Recommendations in the OSCE PA's Monaco Declaration - Interim Report for the 2013 Winter Meeting," available in the 2013 Winter Meeting Electronic Folder on the OSCE PA website.

-The Committee held a special debate on media freedom in the OSCE area, which was led by Ms. Karen Deutsch Karlekar, the Director of the Freedom of the Press Project at Freedom House, a non-governmental organization. Ms. Deutsch Karlekar gave an overview of the state of media freedom in OSCE participating states. Tamara Kaleyeva, from the Adil Soz Freedom of Speech Foundation in Kazakstan and Zhanna Litvina, Chairperson of the Belarusian Association of Journalists, gave presentations highlighting the severe restrictions on media freedom in their countries. Andrei Kolesnikov, Deputy Editor and Columnist for the independent investigative newspaper *Novaya Gazeta* in Russia, and Christian Mihr, Executive Director, Reporters without Borders, Germany, also provided overviews of the state of media freedom and regulation in Russia and Germany.¹⁴

Activities of the Canadian Delegation:

This Committee meeting was attended by all six members of the Canadian delegation.

Dr. Fry made a statement stressing the importance of media freedom in Canada, including free expression on social media. She remarked on the need for parliamentarians to work to support a robust and independent press, while noting that illegal activities by journalists in the United Kingdom had focused attention on the need to ensure that a free press behaves responsibly. Dr. Fry asked the panelists for their thoughts on ways to create a responsible media without criminalizing or overly-restricting free expression.

E. Standing Committee

At the meeting of the Standing Committee, the Bureau members and the heads of delegation debated the decision of the President and Bureau of the OSCE PA to declare inoperative the agreement governing cooperation between ODIHR and the PA in respect of election observations. As a result of this decision, the PA conducted its recent election observation missions independently and issued findings and conclusions separately from those reached by ODIHR. Some speakers and delegations expressed concern regarding actions of ODIHR towards the PA's observation missions during certain past observation missions. Some delegations were of the opinion that the PA's decision to cease working with ODIHR had the potential to undermine one of the OSCE's most important human dimension activities. Many delegations expressed support for the need to enter into dialogue with ODIHR with a view to repairing the relationship between the two bodies and finding ways to cooperate productively in the future.

Activities of the Canadian Delegation:

Mr. Allison attended the meeting of the Standing Committee as Head of the Canadian Delegation. The five other Canadian parliamentarians also attended the meeting.

¹⁴ See the Presentation of Karen Deutsch Karlekar of Freedom House, "Media Freedom: Trends in the OSCE," 21 February 2013 and Presentation of Christian Mihr, Reporters without Borders – Germany, "Media Freedom in Germany," 21 February 2013.

F. Joint Session of the Three Committees and Special Debate on how OSCE participating states should respond to crises in Syria, the Sahel and North Africa.

OSCE Secretary General Lamberto Zannier addressed the Joint Session. He discussed the results of the Dublin Ministerial Council meeting in December 2012 and highlighted areas where consensus had not been reached, noting especially the failure to agree on commitments in the area of media freedom. The Secretary General expressed the view that there was a deficit of trust and a divergence in strategic priorities between participating states, as well as differences of opinion on the role that the OSCE should play in addressing security concerns in the region. He also briefed parliamentarians on OSCE work to develop new partnerships with other organizations to combat emerging security threats (for example, with Interpol). Finally, the Secretary General discussed mechanisms to enhance budgetary accountability and transparency in the OSCE. Secretary General Zannier answered questions posed by Parliamentarians.

Dr. Hedy Fry addressed the Assembly in her capacity as OSCE PA Special Representative on Gender Issues. Dr. Fry provided the Assembly with an overview of the progress that the OSCE PA and the OSCE had made towards improving the representation of women in the organization. She discussed her ideas for her upcoming report to the 2013 Annual Session in Istanbul, highlighting in particular opportunities to work on issues related to women, peace and security and the relationship between armed conflict and human trafficking.¹⁵ Dr. Fry responded to questions from parliamentarians.

The Special Debate was led off with addresses by:

- OSCE PA Special Representative for Mediterranean Affairs Alcee Hastings (United States) discussed atrocities being perpetrated in the Syrian civil war, with a particular focus on allegations of crimes committed against children and the high number of civilian deaths. He also briefed parliamentarians on the efforts being made by the Turkish government to assist refugees fleeing violence in Syria and on the humanitarian needs of the Syrian refugee populations in Turkey, Jordan and Lebanon. Finally, he called for OSCE parliamentarians and participating states to do more to support people in North Africa, the Sahel and the Middle East to produce meaningful, democratic change.
- Marcela Villareal from the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization discussed the desperate humanitarian situation faced by people inside Syria. She noted that many refugees cited fear of sexual violence as a reason for fleeing their homes. Ms. Villareal discussed the long and short-term impacts of armed conflict on agricultural production and food security, and briefed parliamentarians on the work of her organization in Syria.
- OSCE PA President Migliori discussed his recent visit to Syrian refugee camps in Turkey.

¹⁵ "Address by Dr. Hedy Fry, Special Representative on Gender Issues, to the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly," 12th Winter Meeting, 22 February 2013, Vienna, Austria.

- More than 20 parliamentarians participated in the debate that followed. Delegations expressed views on the humanitarian situation inside Syria and the needs of refugees in neighbouring countries. Speakers also raised concerns and made comments on topics including military intervention, women's human rights, terrorism, refugee protection, human trafficking, and trafficking in narcotics and arms in Syria, North Africa and Mali.

Activities of the Canadian Delegation:

All members of the delegation attended the Joint Session and the Special Debate.

Dr. Fry participated in the debate, noting in her remarks the seriousness of the atrocities being perpetrated in Syria, the enormous humanitarian toll of the conflict, and the problems of food insecurity faced by the population. She discussed the importance of looking at the particular impact of conflict on women and girls, and the need to ensure that the perpetrators of atrocities do not enjoy impunity for their acts. Dr. Fry called for international cooperation to address all of these issues, which, she stressed, are not only issues of national concern, but are of concern to the entire international community.

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES OF THE CANADIAN DELEGATION

On arrival in Vienna on Wednesday, 20 February, the delegation met with the Canadian Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the OSCE, Her Excellency Fredericka Gregory, and other members of Canada's diplomatic delegation to the OSCE for a briefing session on the main issues in Canada-OSCE relations. The briefing focused on Canada's activities and priorities in each of the three dimensions of the OSCE. The failure of participating states to achieve consensus on human dimension decisions for the second year in a row was discussed, as were ways to increase the organization's relevance to Canada's regional security priorities. Members of the parliamentary delegation greatly appreciated the briefing and strongly supported the value of such briefings by the Canadian embassy. The delegation was of the view that such briefings should continue to be part of future programs related to the Winter Meeting.

Ambassador Gregory presented the delegation with the opportunity to meet with the OSCE Special Representative and Coordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings (Maria Grazia Giammarinaro), representatives from the OSCE Secretariat, and representatives from other national delegations to discuss matters relating to the OSCE and Canada's activities.

It should also be noted that Ambassador Gregory and members of the staff attended the sessions of the OSCE PA's winter meeting.

Mr. Allison and **Dr. Fry** had a separate meeting with the head of the British delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly, representatives from the British and Turkish missions to the OSCE and representatives of the OSCE Secretariat. A representative from Canada's mission to the OSCE also attended the meeting. In this meeting, Mr. Allison and Dr. Fry were briefed on the Prevention of Sexual Violence Initiative of the U.K. Foreign Secretary, William Haig. The participants discussed ways to raise awareness within the OSCE PA of the problem of conflict-related and other forms of sexual violence, as well as opportunities for collaboration aimed at strengthening OSCE

mechanisms for preventing sexual violence and increasing women's active participation in such efforts at every stage of the conflict cycle.

Dr. Fry met with the OSCE Senior Advisor on Gender Issues, Ambassador Miroslava Beham, to identify avenues for collaboration and cooperation between the OSCE Secretariat and the Parliamentary Assembly on gender issues.

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

Respectfully submitted,

Mr. Dean Allison, 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 | 12 th Winter Meeting of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly |
| DESTINATION | Vienna, Austria |
| DATES | February 21-22, 2013 |
| DELEGATION | |
| SENATE | Hon. Percy E. Downe, Senator Hon. Ghislain Maltais, Senator |
| HOUSE OF COMMONS | Mr. Dean Allison, M.P. Hon. Hedy Fry, P.C., M.P. Mr. Gerald Keddy, M.P. Mr. Glenn Thibeault, M.P. |
| STAFF | Mr. Alexandre Roger, Secretary of Delegation Ms. Erin Shaw, Advisor |
| TRANSPORTATION | \$45,741.83 |
| ACCOMMODATION | \$10,233.41 |
| HOSPITALITY | \$0.00 |
| PER DIEMS | \$3,797.39 |
| OFFICIAL GIFTS | \$0.00 |
| MISCELLANEOUS / REGISTRATION FEES | \$193.16 |
| TOTAL | \$59,965.79 |