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**Report of the Canadian Parliamentary Delegation  
Respecting its Participation to the Eighteenth Annual  
Session of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly**

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

**Vilnius, Lithuania  
June 29 – July 3, 2009**

# Report

From 29 June to 3 July 2009, six Canadian parliamentarians travelled to Vilnius, Lithuania to attend the eighteenth Annual Session of the Parliamentary Assembly of the OSCE. The Honourable Senator Consiglio Di Nino led the delegation, which included the Honourable Senator Jerahmiel Grafstein, the Honourable Senator Percy Downe, the Honourable Hedy Fry, Member of Parliament, Mr. Peter Goldring, Member of Parliament, and Mr. Daniel Petit, Member of Parliament. The delegation was accompanied by François Michaud, Delegation Secretary, and Natalie Mychajlyszyn, 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 56 in number, are “all the European states, the United States and Canada.”<sup>(1)</sup> 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 United Nations 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.”<sup>(2)</sup> However, the OSCE is not an international organization in the strict sense of international law, in that its resolutions are not legally binding on the signatory countries.

The OSCE’s 2009 budget is €158.7 million, a decrease from the 2008 budget which was €164.2 million. Approximately 75% of the OSCE’s budget is dedicated to 25 field missions and other field activities. The OSCE employs approximately 3,450 individuals, the vast majority of whom are assigned to field missions. One-quarter of the OSCE employees are seconded by the participating countries.

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(1) Final Recommendations of the Helsinki Consultations, Helsinki, 3 July 1973, par. 54, [http://www.osce.org/documents/mcs/1973/07/4136\\_en.pdf](http://www.osce.org/documents/mcs/1973/07/4136_en.pdf).

(2) Charter of the United Nations, Chapter VIII, art. 52, par. 2, <http://www.un.org/aboutun/charter/chapter8.htm>. The Security Council may also use such regional arrangements to implement coercive measures it has adopted.

## **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) that 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.”<sup>(3)</sup> 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 56 states have equal status. Decisions are made by consensus rather than majority vote.<sup>(4)</sup>

## **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 almost 75% of the OSCE budget. 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 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.

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<sup>(3)</sup> Charter for European Security, par. 9, in Istanbul Document 1999, Istanbul Summit 1999, [http://www.osce.org/documents/mcs/1999/11/4050\\_en.pdf](http://www.osce.org/documents/mcs/1999/11/4050_en.pdf).

<sup>(4)</sup> 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.

In 2009 Greece succeeded Finland as chair of the organization. The Foreign Minister of Greece, Mrs. Dora Bakoyannis, has been Chairman-in-Office. France's Marc Perrin de Brichambaut has served as OSCE Secretary General since June 2005.

### **C. The OSCE Parliamentary Assembly**

The OSCE Parliamentary Assembly 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, 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. 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.

It is managed by a Bureau and a Standing Committee. The Bureau comprises a President, nine Vice-Presidents, a Treasurer, the Chair, 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 56 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 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, Afghanistan and Mongolia), 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 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 Assembly's budget is approved at the Annual Session; the 2009–2010 budget, approved at the 2009 Annual Session, is €2.86 million, the same amount as in the previous year. In 2009–2010 Canada's budgeted contribution is C\$250,155.

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.

João Soares (Portugal) has been president of the PA since July 2008, succeeding Göran Lennmarker (Sweden). Spencer Oliver (United States) has served as secretary general since January 1993. The Honourable Jerahmiel Grafstein, member of the Canadian Senate, has acted as vice-president since July 2007, having served as treasurer from 2001-2007. The Honourable Senator Consiglio Di Nino, head of the Canadian delegation since February 2005, has been vice-chair of the General Committee on Political Affairs and Security since July 2007.

## **2009 ANNUAL SESSION OF THE PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY**

For five days from 29 June to 3 July 2009, parliamentarians from 50 of the 56 OSCE participating States, together with representatives of the “Partners for Cooperation” states, including Afghanistan, met in Vilnius, Lithuania to discuss the topic, “The OSCE: Addressing New Security Challenges” and a variety of other issues of importance. This was the first Annual Session to be held in a Baltic country.

The programme of the Annual Session consisted of a meeting of the Standing Committee; an Inaugural Plenary Session; three days devoted to the work of the three General Committees; parallel meetings on specific topics, such as the Working Group on Belarus; a meeting between President Soares and representatives of the Afghanistan Delegation; a working lunch on gender issues; a meeting of the Bureau; and a Closing Plenary Session.

On the fifth and last day of the Annual Session, the *Vilnius Declaration*, which contains all of the resolutions adopted by the Parliamentary Assembly at this Annual Session, was adopted. The members then unanimously re-elected Mr. Joao Soares, a member of the Portuguese Parliament, as President of the Assembly to a second one-year term. Senator Jerry Grafstein remained as Vice-President. Senator Consiglio Di Nino was elected Chair of the General Committee on Political Affairs and Security.

### **A. Standing Committee**

The Standing Committee convened on the first day to receive various activity reports and approve the budget for the next year. President Soares, Chair of the Standing Committee, began with an overview of his activities since his last report, including his trip to Central Asia and the Dublin Economic Conference. He also announced that some delegations would not be able to vote at the Annual Session because their contributions were not up to date.

The Standing Committee also heard reports from the Special Representatives of the OSCE PA on a variety of issues of concern. Several members of the Committee described recent election observation missions in Moldova and Montenegro. In addition, Deputy Secretary General Tina Schoen addressed the upcoming observation missions to Kyrgyzstan and Moldova. Uta Zapf (Germany), the Chairperson of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Belarus, discussed the current situation in Belarus and President Emeritus Goran Lenmarker (Sweden), who serves as Special Representative on Nagorno-Karabakh and Special Envoy to Georgia, discussed the situation in the South Caucasus. The Special Representative for Afghanistan, Michel Voisin (France), addressed the current situation on the ground in that country.

The Standing Committee also heard the report of the Assembly’s Treasurer, Mr. Hans Raidel (Germany), who indicated that the 2008/09 finances are in order. Mr. Raidel also noted that the Secretariat would be hiring a part-time accountant to modernize the financial management system of the OSCE PA, and that KPMG would be replaced by another auditing service. The Standing Committee unanimously approved the proposed budget for the 2009/2010 fiscal year which begins 1 October 2009.

OSCE PA Secretary General, Spencer Oliver, gave a brief summary of his activities and work from the past year. He mentioned that the PA had stayed within budget for the

16th consecutive year and was again given a clean audit. He also discussed the Assembly's participation in the recent OSCE Ministerial meeting in Corfu, Greece.

The Chairperson of the Subcommittee on the Rules of Procedure, Pia Christmas-Moeller (Denmark), presented a report on the work of the Subcommittee and amendments to the Rules of Procedure agreed upon by the Subcommittee. The changes include amendments that provide for more gender balance in the OSCE PA, clarify procedures for early voting in Assembly elections, and establish a time frame for circulation of the Treasurer's draft report to the Standing Committee. All proposed changes to the Rules were approved unanimously.

The Secretary General of the OSCE, Ambassador Marc Perrin de Brichambaut, addressed the Standing Committee by discussing the role of the OSCE as a whole during his tenure. He spoke broadly about the many activities and functions of the OSCE Institutions as well as more specifically on the current situation in Moldova and the ending of the OSCE mandate in Georgia.

The Standing Committee voted on the supplementary items to be considered at the Annual Session and approved all of them.

The Standing Committee also planned the Assembly's future tasks, including the Fall Meetings in Athens, Greece, and the 2010 Annual Session, which is to be held in Oslo, Norway.

## **B. Inaugural and Special Plenary Sessions**

At the inaugural plenary session, the participants heard a number of presentations, including those by the President of the Parliamentary Assembly, João Soares (Portugal), the President of Lithuania, Valdas Adamkus, the Speaker of Parliament of Lithuania, Arūnas Valinskas, the Prime Minister of Lithuania, Andrius Kubilius, the Chairman of the Reconstituent Seimas, Vytautas Landsbergis, the President of the European Security and Defence Assembly Parliamentary Assembly, and the European Parliament Vice-President, Manuel Dos Santos. The Special Representative on Gender Issues, Tone Tingsgård (Sweden), also presented her report to the plenary.

- The President of the Parliamentary Assembly, João Soares, opened the 18<sup>th</sup> Annual Session. He thanked the Lithuanian government for hosting the event and underlined the significance of holding it for the first time in a Baltic country. Mr. Soares expressed the opinion that the assembled parliamentarians still share the values of the Helsinki Final Act, reaffirmed and symbolized by the value of inclusion that is aimed to build bridges among people and governments. He emphasized in particular the strong commitment of the OSCE in the economic crisis and the August 2008 Russia-Georgia conflict. The President recalled the Economic Conference held in Dublin in May 2009, at which discussions were held regarding the co-ordination of a comprehensive response to the economic crisis. Mr. Soares praised the OSCE PA's President Emeritus Goran Lenmarker for his work in the South Caucasus, and all the national delegations that participated in the Special Debate on the Russia-Georgia conflict during the 2008 Fall Meetings in Toronto. To enhance the relevance of the OSCE, President Soares called on national delegations to more actively publicize OSCE activities

within their countries. He also emphasised the close relationship between the OSCE PA and the OSCE's inter-governmental dimension.

- Lithuanian President Valdas Adamkus welcomed members of the Parliamentary Assembly. In highlighting the significance of the session being held for the first time in a Baltic country, President Adamkus reminded the participants of the significant role of the Helsinki Final Act and the CSCE, which at the height of the Cold War served as a vital multilateral forum for dialogue and negotiation between East and West. Regarding the current role of the OSCE, he went on to praise its involvement in spreading fundamental democratic values. Further, recalling the theme of the Session, *The OSCE: Addressing New Security Challenges*, President Adamkus argued that "security is indivisible." Security, he emphasized, cannot be separated from democracy, the rule of law, human rights, and free markets. He stressed the "significant contribution" that the OSCE can give to the goal of collective security, underlining that Europe must not be divided by artificial boundaries or into special spheres of influence because "we are all seeking the same ultimate goal".
- The Speaker of the Lithuanian Parliament, Arūnas Valinskas, in his welcome remarks to the Assembly, noted his country's commitment to OSCE values. He emphasised that the date for the Annual Session coincided with the 2009 celebration of Vilnius as the European Capital of Culture, an event that underscores Lithuania's commitment to tolerance and international dialogue. Speaker Valinskas pointed to the new challenges facing the OSCE, and emphasized that today's world is more than a union of States, but a union of values to which every participating State should be devoted.
- In welcoming the 18th Annual Session, Prime Minister Andrius Kubilius reaffirmed Lithuania's commitment to OSCE values, highlighting Lithuanian development in the transport and energy sectors. Within the theme of security, Prime Minister Kubilius noted co-operation among the Baltic countries in the development of a political infrastructure that has resulted in increased security and confidence. He argued that on a global level, security is interconnected militarily and economically among all countries. In closing, he highlighted Lithuanian progress in developing democratic institutions and welcomed the appointment of Lithuania to the 2011 Chairmanship of the OSCE.
- Chairman Vytautas Landsbergis addressed the OSCE PA on behalf of the Reconstituent Seimas and thanked the body for hosting the Annual Session in his country. Chairman Landsbergis recalled the long path that brought Lithuania to its independence and noted Lithuania's participation in democratic institutions such as the OSCE, the UN and the European Union, underlines its commitment to playing an effective role in international relations.
- The President of the ESDA Parliamentary Assembly, Robert Walter, opened his address by thanking the OSCE PA and the Lithuanian Delegation for the opportunity to report on the valuable work of the European Security and Defence Assembly (ESDA), stressing the importance of parliamentary oversight over intergovernmental policy. President Walter discussed European strategy in Afghanistan and the EU's various European Security and Defence Policy operations, with special focus on the Balkans and anti-piracy operations in the



Gulf of Aden and off the coast of Somalia. President Walter also highlighted the complementary nature of the OSCE and the ESDA as two bodies that need to work together towards collective security. In closing, Mr. Walter presented his recommendations, highlighting the lack of progress in the northern hemisphere's security field. He concluded by calling for each participating State to "engage in a constructive dialogue" in order to improve existing mechanisms that promote the resolution of remaining conflicts.

- Manuel Dos Santos, Vice-President of the European Parliament, spoke about the historic process that has brought the EU and the OSCE closer together since the Helsinki Final Act of 1975. The EU, the principal contributor to the OSCE budget, favours a renewed cooperation with the OSCE, particularly regarding election observation missions. He also urged that the participating States improve collaboration within new initiatives such as the Eastern Partnership. He highlighted the security challenges of a multi-polar world pointing out new threats, such as those relating to cyber security, energy security, and climate change.
- The Special Representative on Gender Issues, Tone Tingsgård, presented her 2009 Gender Balance Report to the Assembly. In it, she focused on the gender implications of the global economic crisis, including such issues as female labour migration and the gendered nature of remittances. Considering the most recent facts and figures, she noted that 44 per cent of the staff of the OSCE are women, but that only 19 per cent of the higher level positions are occupied by women. Ms. Tingsgaard noted that "this is not impressive, but there has been progress" in recent years. Recalling the commitments agreed to by the Ministerial Council on implementing the 2004 OSCE Gender Action Plan, she called on the participating States to nominate women for high-level positions in the OSCE and support them throughout the recruitment process. She also noted that women comprised only 19.7 per cent of the participants of the 18th Annual Session, which is lower than the average in the national parliaments of participating States. She also pointed out that in 2008 the Bureau elected 6 women out of 21 positions, which makes up 28.5 per cent. Finally, Ms. Tingsgaard emphasized two OSCE publications on gender-related topics. One is the "OSCE Guide on Gender-Sensitive Labour Migration Policies" and the other one "95 Good Practices to Combat Violence Against Women".

In a Special Plenary Session, the Parliamentary Assembly heard presentations by the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office, Dora Bakoyannis (Greece) and the Lithuanian Foreign Minister, Vygaudas Ušackas.

- The OSCE Chairperson-in-Office and Greek Foreign Minister Dora Bakoyannis spoke about the importance of the Parliamentary Assembly's role in generating fresh ideas and debating current issues. She discussed the recent ministerial in Corfu and the discussions there on the future of European security. She discussed three priorities that had been outlined in the supplementary items, reports, and resolutions of the Corfu ministerial which include the need to take the OSCE forward in the economic and environmental dimensions, and the launch of new high-level dialogue on European security. Speaking about the

economic dimension of the OSCE in the current crisis, Ms Bakoyannis commented that it is essential to mitigate any issues originating from the security impact of the economic challenges. She highlighted the intermingling of the economic crisis with rising energy security problems as an issue that should be carefully followed. Ms Bakoyannis also described the situation in Georgia and the efforts of the OSCE in the country, reporting that the OSCE has not given up on returning a mission to Georgia.

- The Foreign Minister of the Republic of Lithuania, Vygaudas Ušackas, discussed the importance of the OSCE's unique comprehensive approach to security, asserting that Euro- Atlantic security is a common interest for all. The Minister referred to the OSCE's 1999 Istanbul Document as a relevant guide for future European security challenges. The key principles of the Document, Mr. Ušackas reminded the delegates, include the right to equal security and the right of a country to choose its own alliances. He said that this document firmly rejects spheres of influence. He asked delegates to investigate whether the OSCE has done enough regarding protracted conflicts in the region and why some of the OSCE mechanisms have failed. He closed by talking about energy security and the importance of security for the transport of energy.

The Assembly also discussed and adopted a resolution sponsored by President Soares on Strengthening the OSCE, which calls for more transparency in the OSCE in order to enhance its legitimacy and relevance. Another resolution discussed and adopted by the Assembly in Plenary and presented by Mr. Christian Miesch (Switzerland) on election observation emphasizes the importance of OSCE election observation and calls on participating States to fully implement the 1990 Copenhagen Commitments for democratic elections.

### **C. General Committee on Political Affairs and Security**

Chair: Mr. Jean-Charles Gardetto (Monaco)

Vice-Chair: Senator Consiglio Di Nino (Canada)

Rapporteur: Mr. Riccardo Migliori (Italy)

The General Committee was addressed by Ambassador Knut Vollebaek, OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities. He stressed the relevance of the OSCE in the prevention of ethnic conflict, which has been the root of most tension in the OSCE area. He gave an overview of the three themes that according to his experience have an impact on inter-ethnic relations across the OSCE area: education, participation by minorities in public life, and relations between States and their kin- minorities in neighbouring States. The High Commissioner explained that integration involves a balance of rights and responsibilities on both sides. On the one hand, the State must respect the right of the minorities to maintain their identity and, on the other hand, members of the minority must pursue their objectives through democratic means and refrain from challenging the territorial integrity of the State. He cited education as an excellent tool for integration and expressed his concern regarding the trend towards increased separation along ethnic lines in education. He added that segregated education has far-reaching and long-term repercussions on security, and expressed his strong support for multicultural education. The High Commissioner highlighted the

importance of providing national minorities a meaningful role in political decision-making as the best method of preventing discontent and conflict.

## **1. Report and Principal Resolution**

The Committee, chaired by Mr. Jean-Charles Gardetto (Monaco), considered the report submitted by its Rapporteur, Mr. Riccardo Migliori (Italy) which dealt with the promotion of food security as part of the OSCE's comprehensive approach to security. Accordingly, the OSCE has an important role to play in addressing the food crisis which is associated with decreased food self-sufficiency and sovereignty, the growing food needs of countries such as China and India, the impact on food crops of agricultural lands being used to generate energy, and the increased use of bio-fuels.

The Committee debated Mr. Migliori's draft resolution on this topic and amendments proposed by Committee members. The amended and adopted resolution calls on parliaments to adopt food security laws and policies that permit the establishment of adequate instruments, regulations, and tools in order to prevent hunger and malnutrition among the population. It urges participating States to take a co-ordinated and consistent approach and requests parliaments to commit themselves to measures to help curb increases in the price of agricultural commodities. In addition, it urges parliaments to adopt legislation to encourage balanced agricultural use of land to meet both food and energy demands. The resolution is included in the *Lithuania Declaration*.

## **2. Supplementary Items**

The Committee also debated the following Supplementary Items and any proposed amendments. The amended and adopted supplementary items are included in the *Lithuania Declaration*.

- *Security Sector Stabilization and Compliance with UN Black Lists*. The resolution, sponsored by Asa Lindestam (Sweden), stresses the need to learn from the Yugoslavia, Iraq and Sudan experiences, with regard to security sector stabilization.
- *Afghanistan*. The resolution, sponsored by Mike McIntyre (United States), underlines the importance of a comprehensive approach to challenges facing Afghanistan and urges the International Security Assistance Force to do everything to minimise civilian casualties.
- *Small Arms and Light Weapons*. This resolution, sponsored by François-Xavier de Donnea (Belgium), welcomes the progress made within the OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC) and especially the adoptions of FSC Decisions introducing a guide to good practice to prevent destabilising shipments by air of small arms and light weapons.
- *Renewed Discussion on Arms Control and Disarmament in Europe*. This resolution, sponsored by Hans Widmer (Switzerland), stresses the importance of maintaining and improving collective security and calls on participating States to act in the spirit of the Conventional Forces in Europe Treaty.
- *The Role of the OSCE in Strengthening Security in its Region*. Sponsored by Oleh Bilorus (Ukraine), this resolution addresses the important role of the OSCE in bolstering security across the Euro-Atlantic area and urges the participating

States to implement fully and in good faith their OSCE commitments in all three dimensions.

- *Labour Migration in Central Asia*. Sponsored by the Special Representative for Central Asia, Kimmo Kiljunen (Finland), this resolution focuses on the promotion of regional co-operation through the participation from Central Asian parliaments in OSCE activities.

At the end of its meetings, Committee members elected Senator Consiglio Di Nino (Canada) Chair, Ms. Canan Kalsin (Turkey) Vice-Chair and Mr. Riccardo Migliori (Italy) Rapporteur.

## **D. General Committee on Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and Environment**

Chair: Mr. Petros Efthymiou (Greece)  
Vice-Chair: Mr. Roland Blum (France)  
Rapporteur: Mr. Ivor Callely (Ireland)

### **1. Report and Principal Resolution**

The Committee, chaired by Mr. Petros Efthymiou (Greece), considered the report submitted by its Rapporteur, Mr. Ivor Callely (Ireland). The report dealt with effects of the global economic crisis, specifically the impact of the crisis across the OSCE area, including the related economic and humanitarian concerns, as well as its political and security ramifications. The report focused considerable attention on the need for national governments to avoid protectionism and economic nationalism when addressing the decline in world trade. The report also reviewed responses to the financial crisis that many countries and organizations have initiated including job creation and monetary adjustments. It touched on economic stimulus plans of various countries as well as on the growing call for stronger financial regulation. Finally, the report emphasised that the financial crisis is an international problem that requires an international solution.

The Committee debated Mr. Callely's draft resolution on this topic and any amendments proposed by Committee members. Among other recommendations, the amended and adopted resolution calls on participating States to refrain from protectionist and economic nationalist measures and rescind those that have been implemented. The resolution is included in the *Lithuania Declaration*.

### **2. Supplementary Items**

The Committee also debated the following Supplementary Items and any proposed validated amendments. The amended and adopted supplementary items are included in the *Lithuania Declaration*.

- *Mediterranean Free Trade*. Sponsored by Senator Jerry Grafstein (Canada), the resolution welcomes the initiatives of participating States in the promotion of free trade and investment in the Mediterranean area in order to help promote peace in the region.
- *Water Management in the OSCE Area*. Sponsored by Senator Jerry Grafstein (Canada), the resolution supports ongoing regional and international initiatives on

the issue and calls on participating states to address the question of sustainable access to clean water and sanitation.

- *European Union Seal Products Ban*. Sponsored by Senator Consiglio Di Nino (Canada), this resolution welcomes and supports an active dialogue for identifying and pursuing internationally-recognised and scientifically-based humane standards employed in sealing.
- *Energy Security*. Sponsored by Vilija Aleknaite-Abramikene (Lithuania), this resolution stresses the importance of developing new energy supply corridors and diversifying energy security sources to enhance competition.
- *Tax Havens*. Sponsored by Jean-Pierre Placade (France), this resolution calls for greater cooperation between participating States and the international financial institutions on the matter of tax evasion.
- *Energy Co-operation*. Sponsored by Marieluise Beck (Germany), this resolution calls on participating States to develop measures to inform and educate about renewable energies, energy efficiency and energy savings.
- *Climate Change*. Sponsored by Jeppe Kofod (Denmark), this resolution calls on countries and governments to agree to binding targets for greenhouse gas reductions at the upcoming United Nations Copenhagen Conference on Climate Change.
- *Freedom of Expression on the Internet*. Sponsored by Chris Smith (United States), this resolution in part addresses concerns about government actions aimed at censoring, blocking or surveilling the free flow of information and ideas relating to political, religious or ideological opinion or belief on the internet.

At the end of the meetings, Committee members elected Mr. Roland Blum (France) Chair, Mr. Ivor Callely (Ireland) Vice-Chair, and Mr. Serhiy Shevchuk (Ukraine) Rapporteur.

## **E. General Committee on Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions**

Chair: vacant (the previous chair, Ms Hilda Solis (USA) is no longer a member of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly)

Vice-Chair: Ms Walburga Habsburg-Douglas (Sweden)

Rapporteur: Ms Natalia Karpovich (Russian Federation) Rapporteur.

### **1. Report and Principal Resolution**

The Committee, chaired by Ms Walburga Habsburg-Douglas (Sweden), considered the report submitted by its Rapporteur, Ms Natalia Karpovich (Russian Federation) Rapporteur. The report dealt with the consequences of the economic crisis, particularly on women, youth, and children. Along with the main problems stemming from the recession such as growing unemployment and lower real income of households, the crisis has also exacerbated social and human rights issues.

The Committee debated Ms Karpovich's draft resolution on this topic and any amendments proposed by Committee members. The amended and adopted resolution among other recommendations calls for equitable access to education for all young people to facilitate their entry into the labour market and to vigorously combat child

labour through national legislation. It also calls on participating States to redouble efforts to combat human trafficking and to fight intolerance against persons belonging to national minorities and other vulnerable groups. The resolution is included in the *Lithuania Declaration*.

## 2. Supplementary Items

The Committee also debated the following Supplementary Items sponsored by and any proposed amendments. The adopted supplementary items are included in the *Lithuania Declaration*.

- *Anti-Semitism*. Sponsored by Senator Jerry Grafstein (Canada), this resolution refers to the declaration at the London Conference on Combating Anti-Semitism and other relevant documents, and reaffirms the importance of anti-Semitism programs, education, training and public awareness campaigns aimed at combating anti-Semitism.
- *Protecting Unaccompanied Minors and Combating the Phenomenon of Child Begging*. Sponsored by Laura Allegrini (Italy), this resolution urges participating States to ratify the UN Convention and relevant Protocols and the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings.
- *Divided Europe Reunited: Promoting Human Rights and Civil Liberties in the OSCE Region in the 21st Century*. Sponsored by Roberto Battelli (Slovenia), this resolution was strongly debated. It reconfirms the OSCE PA's opposition to all totalitarian rule no matter the ideological basis, and expresses deep concern at the glorification of the totalitarian regimes, including Nazism and Stalinism.
- *A Moratorium on the Death Penalty and Towards its Abolition*. Sponsored by Matteo Mecacci (Italy), this resolution calls for the abolition of the death penalty in Belarus, Kazakhstan, Latvia and United States and condemns all executions wherever they take place.
- *Guidelines on Aid and Assistance to Refugees*. Sponsored by Claudio D'Amico (Italy), this resolution invites participating States to lend economic and material support to UN intervention missions to ensure the prompt distribution of aid to refugees.
- *Co-operation for the Enforcement of Criminal Sentences*. Sponsored by Claudio D'Amico (Italy), this resolution urges participating States to take action to draft and ratify international measures that accommodate principles of mutual recognition of criminal sentences and the enforcement of a sentence in the country of origin.
- *Strengthening OSCE Engagement on Freedom of Opinion and Expression*. Sponsored by Tony Lloyd (UK), this resolution urges participating States to address the remaining challenges in the area of freedom of expression, to refrain from imposing restrictions incompatible with OSCE standards, to fully investigate remedies against journalists as well as to review relevant procedures, practices and legislation.
- *Maternal Mortality*. Sponsored by Gwen Moore (USA), this resolution aims to ensure access to quality healthcare and education for vulnerable girls and women and calls upon participating States to strengthen the efforts to reduce

maternal mortality through financial investment and participation in global initiatives.

At the end of the meetings, Committee members elected Ms. Walburga Habsburg-Douglas (Sweden) Chair, Mr. Robert Aderholt (United States) Vice-Chair, and Matteo Mecacci (Italy) Rapporteur.

#### **F. Working Lunch on Gender Issues**

A working lunch on gender issues, co-hosted by the Head of the Lithuanian Delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly, Vilija Aleknaite Abramikiene and the Assembly's Special Representative on Gender Issues, Vice-President Tone Tingsgaard, featured presentations by the Lithuanian Ombudsman, Ms Ausrine Burneikiene, the OSCE Senior Advisor on Gender Issues, Ms Jamila Seftaoui, and discussions about the challenges met by women in view of the current economic crisis. Several participants expressed views on how to improve gender equality in national and international institutions. Vice-President Tingsgaard concluded the gender lunch by calling on women to run for leadership positions within the OSCE PA.

#### **G. Closing Plenary Session**

The Closing Plenary Session began with the OSCE PA Treasurer's Report by Hans Raidel (Germany). He reported that for the 16th year in a row the Assembly has remained within the approved budget for the financial year 2007/2008, and again received a positive assessment from its external auditors. Mr. Raidel said he found it remarkable that the Assembly continues to operate in such an efficient way on such a low budget. With by far the smallest staff and budget of all similar parliamentary organizations in Europe, the OSCE PA continues to expand its activities, and remain within budget, he said. The budget for 2009/2010 complies with and reflects the efforts of the national legislatures to minimize expenses, considering the ongoing economic crisis. Therefore, the budget contains no increases and freezes the national contributions to the Assembly. The Treasurer mentioned that some categories have been modified in order to better reflect the real needs of the Assembly. The importance of election observation and the increasing number of such missions required a budget increase of 24 per cent from the previous budget's allocation.

Mr. Spencer Oliver, Secretary General of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, delivered his report on the activities of the Assembly over the past year to the delegates. He emphasized that the annual gathering of elected parliamentarians helps to underpin the OSCE and give it a democratic platform. The Secretary General thanked all Parliamentarians who have taken the time to participate in election observation missions during the past year, stressing that it is a vital endeavour for the Assembly. In December 2008, the Bureau members held an extensive discussion of OSCE election observation activities and noted the necessity of leadership by elected Members of Parliament from the OSCE PA. He also recounted the main activities during the past year, such as the debate on the crisis in Georgia during the Fall Meetings in Toronto 2008. A record number of parliamentarians, representing 49 OSCE countries, attended the conference, which was hosted by the Parliament of Canada. The year was also marked by a lively debate at the PA's Winter Meeting on proposals for a new European

security architecture. The Secretary General also reported on the 2009 Spring Bureau Meeting, which was hosted by the Portuguese Parliament, and the Economic Conference, hosted by the Irish Parliament in May. Mr. Oliver ended by thanking the Parliament of Lithuania for the tremendous work that it had done in preparation for the Vilnius session, the Members of the OSCE PA for their active participation in the work of the Assembly, and the national parliaments for hosting the meetings and conferences the past year. Several members of the Assembly briefly addressed the plenary during the time allotted on a wide variety of issues.

The Chairs of the three General Committees, Mr. Jean-Charles Gardetto, Mr. Petros Efthymiou and Ms. Walburga Hapsburg-Douglas, presented the work of each Committee.

The *Lithuania Declaration*, which consists of the final resolutions from each of the three General Committees and the 25 supplementary items referred to the General Committees, was then adopted. Specifically, the *Declaration* deals with food security, the financial crisis, vulnerable groups affected by the financial crisis, security sector stabilisation, Afghanistan, small arms and light weapons, arms control and disarmament in Europe, the OSCE's role in strengthening security in the region, labour migration in Central Asia, energy security, energy co-operation, climate change, tax havens, Mediterranean free trade, freedom of expression on the internet, water management in the OSCE area, the European Union seal products ban, protecting unaccompanied minors and combating child begging, promoting human rights and civil liberties, moratorium on the death penalty, maternal mortality, aid and assistance to refugees, enforcing criminal sentences, anti-Semitism, freedom of opinion and expression, and arrests in Iran.

The Assembly then re-elected João Soares (Portugal) to a second one-year term as President, Ben Cardin (United States) as Vice-President, and elected three new Vice-Presidents, Petros Efthymiou (Greece), Jean-Charles Gardetto (Monaco), and Isabel Pozuelo (Spain). Roberto Battelli (Slovenia) was elected Treasurer.

The next Annual Session will be held in July 2010 in Oslo, Norway.

## **ACTIVITIES OF THE CANADIAN DELEGATION**

Every member of the Canadian delegation attended the Plenary sessions and the General Committee meetings of the Annual Session. Every member also made statements at the Plenary and/or General Committee meetings:

- Senator Consiglio Di Nino, Head of the Delegation:
  - In addition to attending the Plenary Sessions, Senator Di Nino carried out his duties as Vice-Chair of the meetings of the General Committee on Political Affairs and Security and attended a meeting of the General Committee on Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and Environment. He was also elected Chair of the General Committee on Political Affairs and Security.
  - Senator Di Nino presented a supplementary item on the European Union Seal Products Ban to the General Committee on Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and Environment, which was adopted by the Committee and by the



- Plenary Assembly by a majority. Senator Di Nino issued a press release on the adoption of the resolution by the OSCE PA (see attached).
- During the time allocated for additional points at the Closing Plenary, Senator Di Nino addressed the Assembly about the upcoming OSCE PA Election Observation Mission (EOM) to Kyrgyzstan of which he was appointed Special Co-ordinator of the OSCE short-term observers and Head of the Delegation of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly.
  - Senator Di Nino had a bilateral meeting with Mr. Janez Lenarcic, Director of the OSCE's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) to discuss the relationship between the OSCE PA and ODIHR regarding election observation missions.
  - Senator Di Nino participated in a coordination meeting with the OSCE PA Secretariat regarding the EOM to Kyrgyzstan.
  - He attended the Bureau Meeting.
- Senator Jerry Grafstein:
- In addition to attending the Plenary Sessions, Senator Grafstein carried out his duties as Vice-President of the OSCE PA, and oversaw the election of officers to the OSCE PA during the Closing Session. During the Gender Balance Report at the Plenary, Senator Grafstein noted the female representation on the Canadian delegation, the Hon. Hedy Fry, who was also former Secretary of State for Multiculturalism and the Status of Women.
  - Senator Grafstein participated in the meetings of the General Committee on Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and Environment and the General Committee on Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions. With respect to the former, he participated in the debate on the Rapporteur's report and draft resolution, emphasising that it is through open trade and job creation that societies can continue to guarantee the social, political and economic rights envisioned at the end of the last crisis and the need for greater awareness of the effects of protectionism in international trade.
  - He presented two supplementary items to the General Committee on Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and Environment, which were both adopted:
    - Water Management in the OSCE Area; and
    - Mediterranean Free Trade Area.
  - Senator Grafstein presented a supplementary item on Anti-Semitism to the General Committee on Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions, which was unanimously adopted.
  - He attended the Working Lunch on Gender Issues.
  - Senator Grafstein participated in the meeting of the Standing Committee, during which he commented on the OSCE and OSCE PA's efforts concerning Georgia.
  - He attended the Bureau Meeting.
  - During the Closing Session, on the occasion of the Annual Session in Lithuania being his last one due to his upcoming retirement, Senator Grafstein was lauded by Secretary General Oliver for his longstanding service and commitment to the OSCE PA.

- Senator Percy Downe:
  - In addition to the Plenary Sessions, Senator Downe attended the meetings of the General Committee on Political Affairs and Security and the General Committee on Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and Environment.
  - He made statements on the following supplementary items:
    - on Afghanistan (United States – Mike McIntyre) during the General Committee on Political Affairs and Security, emphasising Canada’s sacrifice and the importance of Afghan ownership over their future;
    - on Tax Havens (France – Jean-Pierre Placade) during the General Committee on Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and Environment, stressing the importance of financial transparency under conditions of an economic downturn; and,
    - on the European Union Seal Products Ban (Canada – Senator Consiglio Di Nino) during the General Committee on Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and Environment, emphasising the need to better appreciate the economic benefits derived from the seal industry.

- Hon. Hedy Fry, P.C., M.P.:
  - In addition to the Plenary Sessions, Hon. Fry attended the meetings of the General Committee on Political Affairs and Security, the General Committee on Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and Environment, and the General Committee on Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions.
  - She responded to the address by the HCNM during the meeting of the General Committee on Political Affairs and Security, emphasising Canada's positive experience with multiculturalism.
  - She participated in the debate on the Rapporteur's report and draft resolution during the meeting of the General Committee on Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions, emphasising Canada's experience with open borders for refugees and the importance of integrating refugees and immigrants.
  - She made statements on the following supplementary items during the meeting of the General Committee on Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions:
    - on The Moratorium of the Death Penalty and Towards its Abolition (Italy – Matteo Mecacci), highlighting Canada's evolution in abolishing the death penalty;
    - on Maternal Mortality (United States – Gwen Moore), emphasising her experience in the medical field;
    - on Anti-Semitism (Canada – Senator Jerry Grafstein).
  - She attended the Working Lunch on Gender Issues.
  - During the time allocated for additional points at the Closing Plenary, Hon. Fry made a statement regarding the rights of gays and lesbians.
  
- Mr. Peter Goldring, M.P.:
  - In addition to the Plenary Sessions, Mr. Goldring attended the meetings of the General Committee on Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and Environment and the General Committee on Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions.
  - He made statements on the following supplementary items:
    - on Divided Europe Reunited: Promoting Human Rights and Civil Liberties in the OSCE Region in the 21st Century (Slovenia – Roberto Bottelli) during the General Committee on Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions, emphasising the need to continue the effort to solve protracted conflicts in the region, such as in South Ossetia;
    - on Climate Change (Denmark – Jeppe Kofod) during the General Committee on Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and Environment, emphasising the impact on the Arctic;
    - on the European Union Seal Products Ban (Canada – Senator Consiglio Di Nino) during the General Committee on Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and Environment, emphasising the negative impact of such a ban on local economies without alternative sources of livelihood.
  - He raised a question during the General Committee on Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and Environment concerning the supplementary item on Freedom of Expression on the Internet (United States – Christopher Smith).

- Mr. Daniel Petit, M.P.:
  - In addition to the Plenary Sessions, Mr. Petit attended the meetings of the General Committee on Political Affairs and Security, the General Committee on Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and Environment and the General Committee on Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions.
  - He made statements on the European Union Seal Products Ban (Canada – Senator Consiglio Di Nino) during the General Committee on Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and Environment, emphasising the negative impact of such a ban on the ecological balance in the regions where seals are hunted.

As a delegation, the parliamentarians were also very active:

- On Tuesday, 30 June, the delegation attended a Canada Day celebration hosted by the Canadian Ambassador to Lithuania, His Excellency Scott Heatherington.
- On Wednesday, 1 July, the delegation met with the Georgian delegation to the OSCE PA, who wanted to discuss recent developments concerning South Ossetia.
- On Thursday, 2 July, the delegation co-hosted with the Special Representative on Central Asia, Kimmo Kiljunen (Finland), a working lunch with delegations from Central Asia and the Caucasus, including Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, and Afghanistan, to discuss regional security developments.

The Annual Session addressed many interesting topics, several of which resonate with Canadians. The Canadian delegation distinguished itself with its high quality and frequent participation by all members; this was acknowledged by many other delegations. The Canadian delegation to the OSCE PA is certainly respected by its fellow delegates.

Respectfully submitted,

The Honourable Senator Consiglio Di Nino,  
Director  
Canadian Delegation to the Organization for Security and Co-operation  
in Europe Parliamentary Assembly (OSCE PA)

## Travel Costs

<b>ASSOCIATION</b>	Canadian Delegation to the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe Parliamentary Assembly (OSCE PA)
<b>ACTIVITY</b>	Eighteenth Annual Session of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly
<b>DESTINATION</b>	Vilnius, Lithuania
<b>DATES</b>	June 29 – July 3, 2009
<b>DELEGATION</b>	
SENATE	Senator Consiglio Di Nino, Senator Jerahmiel Grafstein and Senator Percy Downe
HOUSE OF COMMONS	Hon. Hedy Fry, M.P., Mr. Peter Goldring, M.P. and Mr. Daniel Petit, M.P.
STAFF	Mr. François Michaud, Delegation Secretary and Mrs. Natalie Mychajlyszyn, Advisor
<b>TRANSPORTATION</b>	<b>\$23,244.13</b>
<b>ACCOMMODATION</b>	<b>\$8,335.18</b>
<b>HOSPITALITY</b>	<b>\$722.63</b>
<b>PER DIEMS</b>	<b>\$2,952.81</b>
<b>OFFICIAL GIFTS</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>
<b>MISCELLANEOUS / REGISTRATION FEES</b>	<b>\$103.57</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$35,358.32</b>

## **Appendices**

- 1.** Speaking Notes for Senator Di Nino on European Union Ban on Seal Products
- 2.** Press release by Senator Di Nino on the OSCE PA's adoption of the resolution on the European Union on Seal Products
- 3.** Speaking Notes for Senator Grafstein on Water Management in the OSCE Area
- 4.** Speaking Notes for Senator Grafstein on a Mediterranean Free Trade Area
- 5.** Speaking Notes for Senator Grafstein on Anti-Semitism
- 6.** Speaking Notes for Senator Grafstein on the Draft Report and Resolution, General Committee on Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and Environment
- 7.** Speaking Notes for Senator Downe on Afghanistan
- 8.** Speaking Notes for Senator Downe on Tax Havens
- 9.** Speaking Notes for Mr. Goldring on Divided Europe Reunited
- 10.** Speaking Notes for Mr. Goldring on Climate Change
- 11.** Speaking Notes for Mr. Goldring on European Union Ban on Seal Products
- 12.** Speaking Notes for Mr. Petit on European Union Ban on Seal Products

# Appendix 1

Speaking Notes for Senator Consiglio Di Nino  
European Union Ban on Seal Products

Fellow Colleagues,

I would like to start by thanking the Parliamentary Assembly for the opportunity to raise this issue. Indeed, my decision to bring this supplementary item before you was not taken lightly. But I was encouraged by the support many of you have shown me, and I am grateful to you.

I stand before you today asking for your support in adopting this supplementary item as part of the 2009 Vilnius Declaration. I want to assure you that my petition is made in the spirit of mutual respect and collegiality. My purpose is not to lecture or admonish, but instead I want to share some of my concerns with the EU seal products ban and which relate to key OSCE principles and commitments. These concerns are at the heart of this proposed supplementary item.

One particular concern I have is that this ban on trade in seal products runs counter to the principle reiterated in various OSCE documents of the importance of liberalized trade. Indeed, the participating States reiterated their commitment to this end in the December 2003 Maastricht Ministerial Council document, specifically the "OSCE Strategy Document for the Economic and Environmental Dimension." Here at the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, just last year we adopted the Astana Declaration according to which we supported the initiative of our colleague, Jerry Grafstein, to promote trade between Europe and North America.

In other words, ladies and gentlemen, we have a legacy to uphold of trade liberalization and the elimination of barriers limiting market access. And when we as delegates of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly are witness to action that undermines these principles, whether it is only a sector specific ban such as this one concerning seal products, or whether it affects only a limited number of countries, in this case namely sealing nations, it behooves us to bring attention to their missteps. This is the intent of the proposed supplementary item.

We are also obligated to speak out against action that restricts trade, even in a limited sense, when that action is based on information representing only one point of view and, if a food product, unrelated to consumer safety. Before I go on, I want to be clear that I am a strong opponent of avoidable pain or suffering of animals, particularly food-producing animals. As a result, I make every effort to better inform myself about the food industry as best as possible, to ask questions, and to make my food choices accordingly. Some may agree with these choices, some may not. But in the end, these are choices made according to sound knowledge and information.

Unfortunately, the information on which the EU seal products ban is based represents only one point of view and has led to the ban in seal products for reasons unrelated to consumer safety. Specifically, at the heart of the ban is the view that the seal hunt is carried out under inhumane conditions. In the process of adopting the ban, the opinions of independent international veterinarian groups and government regulatory agencies,

among others, that the seal hunt is carried out under as humane as the conditions of hunting in open sea, of moving ice floes, of high risk to human life, can possibly allow, -- these opinions that are based on scientific method and knowledge and evidence, were not as persuasive as those that appeal to our emotions. Indeed, perhaps because of its high profile, sealing today might even be considered to be more humane than other farming and fur practices. But the consumption of meat and other seal products is not detrimental to human health.

Above all, the proposed supplementary item does not call for the EU ban to be reversed.

Instead, the supplementary item asks that stakeholders, including the Inuit communities affected, come together and cooperate, that they engage in active dialogue in order to arrive at international standards for sealing that include full consideration of scientific advice and government regulations in place.

Ladies and gentlemen, as an institution representing 56 participating parliaments, we are no doubt all very familiar with the diversity of views that are expressed on any particular issue. Indeed, we pride ourselves in encouraging debate and consultations, in giving voice to those with whom we may not necessarily agree. By this same token, let us encourage such behavior in all issues that concern us, whether in this institution or others. Opposing the seal hunt is of course entirely legitimate, as campaigning for animal welfare is generally. What I would like you to consider is that where the principle of trade liberalization is at play, that we do justice to the issue and ensure that all voices are duly heard and that consultation is fully respected. In the process of such dialogue, the foundation of mutual consultation and principle of trade liberalization on which the OSCE is based will be strengthened.

In closing, I appeal to your trust in mutual dialogue, value in liberalised trade and economic development, and, absolutely, concern for animal welfare in calling for your support for my proposed supplementary item.

Thank you for your attention.



## Appendix 2

Press Release by Senator Consiglio Di Nino  
OSCE PA's adoption of the resolution on the European Union on Seal Products  
Canadian Resolution on EU Parliament Seal Products Ban Adopted at OSCE PA  
Annual Session

VILNIUS, Friday, July 03, 2009: The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe Parliamentary Assembly (OSCE PA) adopted a resolution at its Annual Session held in Vilnius, Lithuania from 29 June to 3 July 2009 on the European Union Parliament's ban on seal products.

The resolution was sponsored by the head of the Canadian delegation, Senator Consiglio Di Nino. It calls on the European Union and its individual member states to cooperate with governments of sealing nations and to engage with them in honest and respectful dialogue on a common resolution to this issue.

In making his statement on the resolution, Senator Di Nino noted that the EU seal products ban is counter to OSCE trade liberalization commitments and disregards the opinions of government and independent international veterinarian groups that the seal hunt is carried out according to rigorous scientific advice and government regulation.

A number of Parliamentarians, including Senator Percy Downe (Prince Edward Island), Peter Goldring, M.P. (Edmonton East), and Daniel Petit, M.P. (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles), spoke in favour of the resolution.

The OSCE PA consists of 300 delegates from 56 participating parliaments from Europe and Central Asia, as well as Canada and the United States. It is the second largest parliamentary assembly in the world.

## Appendix 3

### Speaking Notes for Senator Grafstein Water Management in the OSCE Area

Fellow Colleagues,

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of you who supported my supplementary item and permitted it to be considered at this Annual Session.

As you know, this is not the first time that I have brought forward a supplementary item on Water Management. But I can assure you it will be my last.

I want to use my time to share with you some updates relating to water management and to highlight the reasons why I am proposing another supplementary item on the topic.

I was pleased to read in the Astana Follow-up Report for this committee which we considered at our winter meeting in Vienna about the initiatives undertaken by Belarus, Hungary, Italy, Lithuania, the Russian Federation, and the United States to improve water management practices. These initiatives include legislation governing agriculture practices; regulation of integrated water services and awarding of related contracts; integrated international water management, whether it is the Great Lakes or the Danube River; and the construction of needed pumping stations.

I especially want to single out the achievements of our host for this year's Annual Session. For instance, in the past fifteen years, Lithuania has reduced the amount of water used by nearly three times, and waste water by 1.5 times. It has also constructed a number of new water treatment plants and modernized existing ones; as a result, 99 per cent of waste water produced by households and industry is now treated.

I am also happy to share with you that I moved in the Canadian Senate that it endorse my resolution on water management in the OSCE area that we adopted at Astana last year. I look forward to the debate on my motion in the near future.

As well, I am pleased to announce that I have sponsored in the Canadian Senate draft legislation that would require the federal Minister of the Environment to establish, in co-operation with Canada's provinces, an agency with the power to identify and protect Canada's watersheds that will be sources of drinking water in the future. This legislation is following the normal course of our legislative process and just a few weeks ago was referred to the Committee for Legal and Constitutional Affairs for study.

We have made some progress, but we do not have the luxury of time to rest on our laurels. According to the 2008 UN Millennium Development Goals Report, 2.8 billion people, representing more than 40 per cent of the world's population, still live in river basins with some form of water scarcity. Moreover, nearly one billion people continue to lack safe sources of drinking water. The CIS countries are just 3 percentages short of meeting the target by 2015 of 97% of the population using an improved drinking water source.

I am confident that with continued scrutiny and legislative support that the goals can be reached.

Thank you for your attention, and thank you in advance for your support.

## Appendix 4

Speaking Notes for Senator Grafstein  
Mediterranean Free Trade Area

Fellow Colleagues,

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of you who supported my supplementary item and permitted it to be considered at this Annual Session.

As you know, this is not the first time that I have brought forward a supplementary item on free trade in the Mediterranean Area.

I want to explain why I sponsored a supplementary item on this topic again. Most importantly, I wanted to reiterate my firm belief in the necessity of promoting economic development and ties among countries in the Mediterranean space as a critical ingredient in the promotion of peace in the region.

This necessity is all the more worthy of our conviction and action in this climate of global economic instability and uncertainty which has not bypassed the Mediterranean region. These economies have had to contend with lower commodity prices, weakening export demands, strained finances, and even declining tourism.

Now more than ever does the Mediterranean region need initiatives that will strengthen its economic development and ties. We know what some of these initiatives are: the Middle East Free Trade Area Initiative (MEFTA), and the Barcelona Process.

And I am happy to add to Canada's recently concluded negotiations for a Free Trade Agreement with the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, and its exploratory discussions with Morocco towards a possible Free Trade Agreement.

I am also happy to share with you that I moved in the Canadian Senate that endorsed my resolution on Mediterranean Free Trade that we adopted at Astana last year.

But we must not let these initiatives succumb to the temptations of inertia or, even worse, protectionism. We must continue to gather together our efforts to continue this ambitious yet not impossible agenda. We must work to hasten the arrival of economic stability and, subsequently, facilitate progress towards freer trade and peace in the region. The nations of the Mediterranean region are no less worthy of such aspirations than those of the OSCE.

I am confident that with continued scrutiny and legislative support that the goals can be reached.

Thank you for your attention, and thank you in advance for your support.

## Appendix 5

Speaking Notes for Senator Grafstein  
Anti-Semitism

Fellow Colleagues,

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of you who supported my supplementary item and permitted it to be considered at this Annual Session.

It is with a heavy heart that I sponsored such a supplementary item for our meeting, the topic of which has appeared at several of our past sessions.

Friends, anti-Semitism continues to plague our societies. It manifests itself in a variety of ways, implicitly or explicitly. I was encouraged to hear in the Astana follow-up report about the progress made in several OSCE participating states in combating anti-Semitism in the media and in academia. In this regard, I want to personally acknowledge the efforts of Romania, Germany, Ukraine, Poland, the United States, Sweden, Belgium and Hungary.

I want to single out the efforts made by our host country, Lithuania. In particular, the Lithuanian Ministry of Social Security and Labor, together with other institutions, has prepared a National Anti-Discrimination Program for 2009-2011. This represents a continuation of previous programs, but whose objectives are to examine even more extensively the manifestation of discrimination and its causes. It has also recently amended its Criminal Code to tighten the criminal liability for hate crimes, such as for the establishment of organizations that incite national, racial or religious discord, for the participation in such organizations, storage and dissemination of information products along these lines.

My own country, Canada, has implemented strict measures, including prosecution, to deter against propaganda and hate crimes. Advocating or promoting genocide is an indictable offence punishable by five years imprisonment. Offences of inciting or willfully promoting hatred against identifiable groups are dual procedure offences, punishable by two years imprisonment on indictment and/or up to \$2,000 fine.

Some of us also participated in the London Conference on Anti-Semitism which took place in February. We heard from a variety of impressive speakers. I was especially moved by a number of them who spoke about the challenges that our societies continue to face.

I also moved in the Canadian Senate that it endorse the resolution on anti-Semitism that was adopted at that London Conference. Admittedly, that resolution forms the basis for my proposed supplementary item before you.

The challenge remains before us. As parliamentarians we play a particularly critical role. I am confident that with continued scrutiny and legislative support that anti-Semitism can be overcome.

Thank you for your attention, and thank you in advance for your support.

## Appendix 6

Speaking Notes for Senator Grafstein  
Draft Report on Resolution, General Committee on Economic Affairs, Science,  
Technology and Environment

Colleagues,

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the Rapporteur of the Committee on Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and the Environment, Mr. Ivor Callely, on his excellent report and for proposing this draft resolution. I want to say a few words in support of it.

In the current economic downturn which has accompanied the recent financial crisis, it is of paramount importance that we turn to lessons of history for guidance. In response to the Great Depression of the 1930s, policy makers turned to great protectionist policies, which served to deepen and prolong the global recession. In response to the crisis of today, world leaders have pledged to resist all temptation to impose protectionist policies. However, actions speak louder than words. The World Trade Organization has counted 137 instances around the world of increased tariffs or new non-tariff barriers, as well as new procurement restrictions which were enabled since the G-20 leaders committed in November 2008 not to do those very things. Moreover, according to a World Bank news release from March 2009, 17 of the G-20 countries have implemented trade restricting measures.

The return to inward looking protectionist policies is troublesome. The resolution before us condemns the “attempts of some governments to introduce protectionist and economic nationalist measures in response to the crises,” action I strongly support.

In addition, we must learn from the lessons of our recent history to steer clear of the negative consequences of and human reactions to economic crises. For better or worse, the world got out of the last great recession through the manufacturing demands created by the Second World War.

The end of the war provided a clean slate, enabling much of the western world to begin to think about how to build a better global trading system and society. Leaders learned the lesson that policies of protectionism did not work. They crafted the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights, while many national governments developed their own legislation to protect political, civil, social and economic rights. New priorities were focused on strengthening vibrant democracies, economies, citizenship, rights and freedoms.

In his last Presidential address to the American people, US President Roosevelt argued in favour of an *Economic Bill of Rights*, arguing that political and civil rights were inadequate in assuring equality in the pursuit of happiness. He stated:

We have come to a clear realization of the fact that true individual freedom cannot exist without economic security and independence. “Necessitous men are not free men.” People who are hungry and out of a job are the stuff of which dictatorships are made.

In our day these economic truths have become accepted as self-evident. We have accepted, so to speak, a second Bill of Rights under which a new basis of security and prosperity can be established for all—regardless of station, race, or creed.

These ideals are affirmed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which states that “everyone has the right to work” and to “protection from unemployment.”

As our nations respond to the widespread effects of the current financial crisis, we must not forget the lessons of our recent history. Times of downturn and recession lead to opportunities; opportunities to create a more stable, equal and peaceful society compared to what had been in place leading up to the crisis. It is through open trade and job creation that our societies can continue to guarantee the social, political and economic rights envisioned at the end of the last crisis.

In closing, I would like to reiterate my support for this resolution, and encourage my fellow delegates to do likewise.

Thank you for your attention.

## Appendix 7

Speaking Notes for Senator Downe  
Afghanistan

Fellow Colleagues,

I want to take this opportunity to say a few words about the situation in Afghanistan, specifically about recent developments and future challenges.

As you may know, Canada recently suffered its 121st fatality in Afghanistan. These are 121 men and women representing all regions of Canada, including many from my own region of Atlantic Canada. All total, coalition forces have suffered almost 1200 fatalities since operations began in 2001, with each year bringing more and more fatalities. The latest three months saw more combat deaths among Canadian and other coalition forces than in any previous winter quarter since the removal of the Taliban regime in 2001. Many more Afghan civilians have died: in 2008 alone the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan reported a total of 2118 civilian deaths, an almost 40% increase from 2007.

Let's be frank. These statistics are sobering. But these are the statistics that we need to bear in mind as we press on toward our common objective: to assist the Afghan people rebuild their country as a stable, democratic and self-sufficient society. To emphasise, we are there to create the conditions in which Afghans can govern their own country in more security and advance their own political, economic and social development.

The Afghans have taken a tremendous step forward in this respect by leading the electoral process for the August 20, 2009 presidential elections themselves. They realised a tremendous accomplishment by updating their voter registry with an additional 4.4 million names (38 per cent of them women) that otherwise may not have been allowed to vote. During the registration exercise in Kandahar, the Afghan National Security Force played a leading role in providing security, a role they could not have undertaken a year ago.

As it did for the 2004 presidential and 2005 parliamentary elections, the OSCE is sending an election support team for the 2009 presidential election. Its mandate is important to strengthening Afghanistan's governance: to report on the electoral process and provide recommendations to the Government of Afghanistan which enhance the conduct of future elections and improve Afghanistan's legal framework and procedure.

Such initiatives as these, specifically those that empower the men and women of Afghanistan to decide its own future, are what are needed to face the challenges of the future. The election campaign will end on Election Day, but the aftermath is uncertain. Continued assistance with the development of the Afghan National Police, building trust with this and other security and rule of law institutions, is critical to Afghan ownership of its future. The stakes are high. But we must be prepared to stay the course so that Afghanistan can face its future.

Thank you for your attention.



## Appendix 8

Speaking Notes for Senator Downe  
Tax Havens

Fellow Colleagues,

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate our fellow delegate, Mr. Jean-Pierre Plancade, on proposing this supplementary item and to speak in support of it.

I would like to focus on the significance of this resolution for addressing financial transparency as the world recovers from the current economic downturn. A stronger global economy will require greater collaboration between states and international financial institutions to eliminate tax havens and the damages they impose on economies around the world.

The principles by which we will work to eliminate tax havens, developed by the OECD's Global Forum on Transparency and Exchange of Information have been endorsed by the UN and the G20 and accepted by 84 jurisdictions around the world including Canada, are principles I fully endorse. I am pleased by the progress made under the leadership of the OECD, whereby in May 2009, the remaining three jurisdictions were removed from the list of un-cooperative tax havens as such countries have agreed to implement these principles. However, much work remains: enforcing such standards is not easy and their viability depends upon widespread acceptance and our support.

The financial crisis makes this initiative all the more important. It remains unclear whether, under the existing global framework, we can raise the revenues necessary to cover the unprecedented projected deficits for the next four to five years in many countries around the world. We must address the losses in tax revenue due to tax evasion and fraud.

Tax havens further pose a threat to global security, as they provide opportunities for terrorist financing, money laundering and other related financial crimes. These are concerns that the OSCE has been addressing. The OSCE, in cooperation with the UN and the World Bank, among others, continues to develop, implement and enforce financial legislation and regulations preventing and criminalizing money laundering, corruption and the financing of terrorism. Combatting tax havens remains an integral part of the global fight against terrorism and, by extension, supports UN and NATO missions currently in operation around the world.

The initiatives designed to counter tax havens can help to rebuild the post-crisis global economy. They are aimed at guaranteeing integrity, transparency, fairness and predictability in the global financial framework.

In closing, I would like to emphasise my support for this resolution and to encourage my fellow delegates to do likewise.

Thank you for your attention.

## Appendix 9

Speaking Notes for Mr. Goldring  
Divided Europe Reunited

Fellow Colleagues,

In this context of our consideration of this supplementary item, I want to take this opportunity to remind all of us that, as far as we may have travelled since the atrocities perpetrated by Stalinism and World War Two, we still have some distance to go. I am especially concerned that the structures we have built to enhance our security, the principles to which we have committed ourselves to build peace and stability, are not equally respected among us. The institutions we have built over the last 60 years may not be perfect, but they are sound, efficient and available for engaging a wide range of concerns and issues that time has shown to be in good stead. Rather than dismantle them, let us renew our commitment to them, let us re-engage our endeavours to implement existing principles that are comprehensive, that encompass the Euro-Atlantic region, and that enshrine the principles of territorial integrity and the peaceful settlement of disputes.

In doing so, let us turn to the conflicts that remain unsettled and resolve to settle them in a manner that strengthens, not weakens, all that we have built over the decades. In particular, I am concerned with the state of affairs concerning Georgia and the continued violation of its territorial integrity and sovereignty. While some progress has been made in a series of meetings held in Geneva over the last five months, international humanitarian access to the regions of South Ossetia and Abkhazia continues to be denied. The renewal of the mandate of the OSCE Mission in Georgia was blocked, and just two weeks ago so was the renewal of the mandate of the UN mission to Abkhazia, because the independence of these regions was not recognized.

These developments undermine efforts to stabilize the situation in Georgia. They do not send a positive signal or build the much-needed trust and confidence needed to address European security challenges. Georgia, as the host state, wants an OSCE presence in its territory. Moreover, Georgia has requested OSCE assistance as there is still much that needs to be addressed there, especially in the wake of the armed conflict last August. Canada regrets that the OSCE was prevented from fulfilling Georgia's wish and from continuing its long-standing role in that country, including its important conflict prevention and resolution work.

In closing, let us work together, the entire international community, but most especially us as parliamentarians, to find a lasting, peaceful solution.

Thank you for your attention.

## Appendix 10

Speaking Notes for Mr. Goldring  
Climate Change

Fellow Colleagues,

I want to take this opportunity to speak on a matter, or a region to be more precise that is especially affected by climate change. I have in mind the Arctic, a region that directly encompasses eight participating parliaments of our Assembly that is Denmark (including Greenland and the Faeroe islands), Iceland, Finland, Norway, Russia, Sweden, the United States and Canada, but whose influence on climate affects all of us.

Global warming, for instance, is leading to the retreat of Arctic sea ice. On the one hand, significant and potentially highly lucrative development opportunities are presenting themselves. On the other, the retreating sea ice is adversely affecting established economic activities and ice-dependent marine mammals. The Arctic's rich biodiversity would be altered, from the movement northwards of the tree line, to the migratory patterns of caribou, which are already in decline, to the hunting practices of polar bears.

At the same time, changes in the Arctic will contribute to further global warming and climate change. Specifically, as ice cover is diminished, areas of darker open water will increase in size, thereby absorbing more sun light and increase the temperature of the water. As the oceans warm up, ocean circulation patterns will change. As a result, global warming is accelerated, and the fundamental relationship that our northern populations have with the Arctic and its resources, one that is based on respect and stewardship, threatens to be forever changed.

My own government has placed the Arctic on its list of priorities and has developed a Northern Strategy. This Strategy integrates many policy areas, including the protection of the region's environmental heritage. Accordingly, my government has:

- Set aside land for the expansion of conservation areas, national parks and marine protected areas;
- Supported International Polar Year research which focuses on climate change impacts, especially the human dimension;
- Committed to the establishment of a world class Arctic research station to be on the cutting edge of environmental science and resource development; and
- Established northern research as a priority of university granting councils.

As many of you know, the Arctic is the focus of several cooperative initiatives and international bodies, including indigenous organizations, such as the Inuit Circumpolar Council, and inter-governmental institutions such as the Arctic Council and the Nordic Council of Ministers. At the most recent Arctic Council meeting in April 2009, Canada played a leading role in the Arctic Marine Shipping Assessment and the Arctic Oil and Gas Assessment. These assessments inform and complement Canada's actions to protect the Arctic environment and its peoples and to enhance Arctic marine safety, as

well as help us to best manage the environmental, social, economic and human health impacts of current and future oil and gas activities in the Arctic.

I recently participated in the meeting of the Standing Committee of Parliamentarians of the Arctic Region which took place in Ilulissat, Greenland on 27 May 2009. I was impressed by the commitment expressed by my fellow parliamentarians to the issues we discussed. All of these organizations reinforce the value of cooperation on Arctic issues, a value that is all the more appreciated because mitigating climate change also requires cooperation.

In closing, therefore, I ask that we keep the Arctic in mind when we engage in our own discussions and debates about climate change here at the OSCE PA.

Thank you for your attention.

## Appendix 11

Speaking Notes for Mr. Goldring  
European Union Ban on Seal Products

Fellow Colleagues,

I am pleased to speak in support of my colleague's proposed supplementary item on the EU Seal Products Ban. In doing so, I want to follow-up on the point raised by Senator Di Nino about making choices that are based on as complete information as possible. Specifically, I want to draw your attention to the important cultural, social and commercial dimensions of sealing to the remote coastal and Inuit communities not only of Canada but also of other northern nations.

People in these communities have been sealing for hundreds, and in some cases, thousands of years. Resources there are limited, and economic opportunities are scarce. Yet, for these people, and I strenuously include here the Inuit communities, sealing is not – I repeat – not only a subsistence activity, as is otherwise perceived, but a vital source of income. A ban in trade in seal products deprives essentially self-employed small businessmen and women of the only option available in these small, isolated areas for gainful economic opportunity. Because, despite the inclusion of an exemption for products of Aboriginal hunts, the exclusion of other products from the market will mean that the critical mass necessary to sustain that market will not be reached.

Moreover, the seal ban undermines the integrity and hence the value of the sealing industry for these communities because it erodes the principle of full utilization. In effect, because of closed markets, the entire seal will be less utilized, the integrity of the sealing industry will collapse, and its economic value will fall. Indeed, the closed markets will now encourage inflated prices for high value selected body parts and wastefulness, a serious offence in these remote communities. Let me be clear: for Inuit, the goal of the hunt is meat. For them, the skin is a byproduct which they sometimes use themselves, but often the skins are sold to generate cash income. Thus, open markets are essential to the principle of full utilization.

I have been participating in the Annual Sessions of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly for several years now. I am a firm believer in the value of consultation, of dialogue, which we practice to a fault perhaps at our meetings. If the heart of this matter is animal welfare, then let us as participating parliaments of 56 states renew our commitment to the principles of consultation and dialogue and work together to encourage our governments to find mutually acceptable standards, and not hide behind trade barriers.

Thank you for your attention.

## Appendix 12

Speaking Notes for Mr. Petit  
European Union Ban on Seal Products

Fellow Colleagues,

I am pleased to take this opportunity to participate in this debate and offer my support to my colleague, Senator Di Nino. Specifically, I want to bring attention to some aspects that I feel are important in order to appreciate the full scope of the issues involved.

To begin, let us consider the size of the seal populations in question. In Canada, the latest estimate of the harp seal population is estimated at between 4.1 to 7.6 million animals, a threefold increase since Canada first set quotas on sealing in the early 1970s. Regarding grey seals, whereas they were estimated to number about 20,000 in all of Atlantic Canada in the 1970s, today their population has increased to between 250,000 and 260,000.<sup>(5)</sup> Off of Greenland, the estimated size of the ringed seal population is 1.2 million animals. There are also an estimated number of 600,000 hooded seals in the North Atlantic.<sup>(6)</sup>

Now, allow me to speak to the legal and regulatory dimensions of the seal industry, which are vital tools in ensuring a sustainable and humane hunt. These regulations exist nationally in the different sealing nations. They govern the time period for a hunt, in what areas sealing is permitted based on a concentration of animals, confirmation of death, and, in some cases, even training in humane hunting practices. Indeed, in February 2009 Canada amended its Marine Mammals Regulations in order to set out in clearer terms what constitutes humane hunting methods and to confirm practices to be followed by the sealer. Notably, these regulations are consistent with many of the European Food Safety Authority's conclusions about seal hunting methods.

The concern is valid that these regulatory regimes differ across sealing nations. However, the answer is not to set a ban. In the past, the European ban on harp seals of the 1980s contributed to the increase in the size of the population. But it also resulted in an increase in harp seal quotas from 20,000 in 1985 to over 200,000 since 1996. In 2005, reported catches of the harp seal in the Gulf of St. Lawrence and in the waters east of Newfoundland were at 324, 000 and total catches for the Northwest Atlantic (including Greenland) were at almost 395,000.<sup>(7)</sup> In 2008, the quota for grey seals was 12,000, and for hooded seals 8,200.

A ban is also not the answer if we consider its possible impact on marine ecosystems. Let us remember that the best fisherman is the seal. It is not limited to artificial hunting seasons or license requirements. A single harp seal is estimated to consume one tonne of fish per year. The northwest Atlantic harp population thus consumes 5 to 6 times

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(5) Ensuring A Sustainable And Humane Seal Harvest, Report of the Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans, April 2007, 39th Parliament, 1st Session, p. 21.

(6) Management and Utilization of Seals in Greenland, The Greenland Home Rule, Department of Fisheries, Hunting and Agriculture, November 2006.

(7) Ensuring A Sustainable And Humane Seal Harvest, Report of the Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans, April 2007, 39th Parliament, 1st Session, p. 9.

more marine resources than what alone is landed by Canadian commercial fishing fleets in the Atlantic.

A ban could also have serious implications for the fishing industry, nationally and globally, which is already confronting the challenges of overfishing. In particular, national economies of such fishing countries as Spain, Portugal, and France, that are not even sealing nations but which fish in waters inhabited by seals will be affected. While these and other countries might no longer be able to fish, the seal will still be there, eating fish as always. To manage the fish resources, seals are already being hunted beyond the limits established. For instance, during the 3 day harvesting season in April 2006 harp seals on the Quebec North Shore in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, sealers harvested 25,806 animals, 3.5 times their limit of 7,387 animals.<sup>(8)</sup>

A ban is not the answer. Instead, we should strive to build international standards on sealing regulations through dialogue and on the basis of sound information in order to ensure a sustainable and humane hunt.

We must ensure that we fulfil our obligation as parliamentarians to be responsible stewards of our natural resources, but not at the risk of creating new problems.

Thank you for your attention.

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<sup>(8)</sup> Ensuring A Sustainable And Humane Seal Harvest, Report of the Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans, April 2007, 39th Parliament, 1st Session, p. 10.