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**Report of the Canadian Parliamentary Delegation
to the 7th Winter Meeting of the OSCE Parliamentary
Assembly**

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

**Vienna, Austria
February 21-22, 2008**

Report

On 21 and 22 February 2008, Senator Jerahmiel Grafstein participated at the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly Winter Meeting. Senator Grafstein was accompanied by Jodi Turner (Delegation Secretary) and James Lee (Advisor), as well as Elizabeth Rody (Protocol), who attended to assist planning for the fall 2008 meeting in Toronto.

OVERVIEW OF THE OSCE

Created in 1975 as the “Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe” (CSCE), the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) received 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.”⁽¹⁾ A further 11 countries from the Mediterranean area and Asia joined as observers under the title “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.”⁽²⁾ 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 2008 budget is €164.2 million, a slight reduction from the previous year. Nearly 70% of the budget is dedicated to 19 missions or field operations in 19 countries. The OSCE employs approximately 3,450 individuals, of whom about 450 works in its various institutions and 3,000 are assigned to field missions. While a significant number of OSCE employees are seconded from participating countries and paid by national administrations, these are outnumbered by some five to one by locally-contracted employees.

A. An Inclusive, Global and Cooperative Approach to Security

The OSCE’s unique character derives from its composition, by which the United States and Canada 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 harmonize

⁽¹⁾ *Final Recommendations of the Helsinki Consultations on the Question of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe*, Helsinki, 3 July 1973, par. 54, <http://wwwserver.law.wits.ac.za/humanrts/osce/basics/fnrech73.htm>.

⁽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.

democratic practices among its member states, the OSCE aims to foster the development of an expansive, conflict-free geographic area – from Vancouver to Vladivostok – regardless of the participating countries' democratic status.

The OSCE's resolutions and activities stem from an originating concept of global 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."⁽³⁾ 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.⁽⁴⁾

B. Operational Capacities

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 70% 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 seven OSCE missions or field operations in southeast Europe account for over 40% of the organization's budget. At €30 million in 2007, the budget for the Kosovo mission alone is roughly equivalent to the allocation for the OSCE Secretariat (€31.6 million).

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. Finland's Minister of Foreign Affairs is the OSCE Chairman-in-Office for 2008; while the minister at the time of the Vienna meeting was Ilkka Kanerva, he was replaced in early April 2008 by Alexander Stubb. . At the 15th OSCE Ministerial Council in Madrid in November 2007, it was decided that the Chairmanships for 2009-11 would be held by the following countries: Greece (2009), Kazakhstan (2010), and Lithuania (2011). France's Marc Perrin de Brichambaut has served as OSCE Secretary General since June 2005.

⁽³⁾ *Charter for European Security*, par. 9, in the *Istanbul Document 1999*, Istanbul Summit 1999, http://www.osce.org/documents/mcs/1999/11/4050_en.pdf.

⁽⁴⁾ 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.

C. The OSCE Parliamentary Assembly

Created by the OSCE (at that time the CSCE) under the 1990 *Charter of Paris for a New Europe*, the Parliamentary Assembly (PA) held its first Annual Meeting in Budapest in July 1992, and its Secretariat began operations at Copenhagen in January 1993.

The PA is an independent, separately funded organization that plays an advisory role in the OSCE's activities. Over 300 parliamentarians appointed by their respective parliaments meet several times a year to debate a number of OSCE matters. The parliamentarians prepare declarations and reports and issue recommendations for their own governments, parliaments and civilians concerning the OSCE's three spheres of action. The PA plays a key role in observing elections in the OSCE member states and regularly dispatches parliamentary delegations on field missions.

The PA convenes at an Annual Meeting in July, a Fall Meeting in November, a Winter Meeting in February, and every two years at an Economic Forum in May. At the Annual Meeting, the Assembly adopts a final declaration and a number of resolutions in a plenary session. The Assembly elects 11 parliamentarians to the Bureau of the Assembly (comprised of a president, 9 vice-presidents and a treasurer), as well as a chair, vice-chair and rapporteur for each of the three general committees. Together, the Bureau members, general committee chairs and the heads of the participating state delegations make up the Standing Committee. At the Annual Meeting, decisions are made by majority vote, whereas the Standing Committee applies the "consensus minus one" rule, except in the appointment of the secretary general, which requires a majority vote. The PA's 2007-2008 budget is €2.66 million, of which Canada has contributed €141,699.

Göran Lennmarker (Sweden) has been president of the PA since July 2006, succeeding Alcee L. Hastings (United States). Spencer Oliver (United States) has served as secretary general since January 1993. Senator Jerahmiel Grafstein is a Vice-President of the Assembly. Senator Consiglio Di Nino is the Vice-Chair of the First General Committee on Political Affairs and Security, and has led the Canadian delegation since February 2005.

2008 OSCE PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY WINTER MEETING

On 21 and 22 February, over 200 parliamentarians from the OSCE participating countries and representatives from the "Partners for Cooperation" met in Vienna. The program included a meeting of the Standing Committee, made up of the heads of the delegations in attendance, an opening plenary session and a closing plenary session that brought together the three general commissions, separate meetings for the three commissions, and a special debate on current political issues: Kosovo, Missile Defence and the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE Treaty).

A. Standing Committee

At the meeting of the Standing Committee, the Bureau members, the three general committee chairs and the delegation heads heard a number of presentations. ⁽⁵⁾

OSCE Parliamentary Assembly President Goran Lenmarker opened the meeting by informing members about his activities since their last meeting. Treasurer Hans Raidel then gave a positive report on the Assembly's finances.

OSCE Secretary General Mr Marc Perrin de Brichambaut briefed the Committee about the Madrid Ministerial Council. While there was no final Ministerial Declaration, decisions were made in different dimensions, including environmental security. In terms of current priorities, the OSCE's field work in Kosovo was of great importance. On the implementation of democratic standards, he stressed the OSCE's role as a forum for dialogue and exchange. Discussion followed on a number of issues, including budgetary challenges, possible reforms – notably with regards to the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) mandate – and the future of the mission in Kosovo.

Assembly Secretary General Spencer Oliver outlined upcoming events. He then discussed the work of the International Secretariat, including the Research Fellowship Program and such publications as *News from Copenhagen*.

In terms of election observation, the Secretary General reported that almost 250 parliamentarians have led the observation missions since the last Winter Meeting.

The Standing Committee was then given short reports on the last five election observation missions, those in: Ukraine, Russia, Kyrgyzstan, Georgia and Armenia. President Lenmarker concluded by stating that election observation is a valuable experience. Given that it will increase, he advised members to make sure they had budgets for this activity.

The Committee then heard about the activities of the Ad Hoc Committees on Moldova and Belarus, as well as the reports of the Special Representatives on South-East Europe, Guantanamo, Mediterranean, OSCE budget, and the fight against organized crime.

In terms of upcoming meetings, the Head of the Kazakh delegation reported on preparations for the Seventeenth Annual Session, to be held in Astana from 29 June to 3 July 2008. Senator Grafstein then reported on preparations for the Fall Meetings in Toronto from 18 to 21 September.

Finally, the Standing Committee agreed to hold the Eighteenth Annual Session in Vilnius, Lithuania from 29 June to 3 July 2009, and also accepted the Norwegian invitation to hold the Nineteenth Annual Session in Oslo in July 2010.

OPENING JOINT SESSION OF THE GENERAL COMMITTEES

President Lenmarker opened the Joint Session of the three General Committees by noting that there were three reasons for Assembly winter meetings: interaction between

⁽⁵⁾ The following draws significantly on the official 2008 Winter Meeting Summary Report, available at <http://www.oscepa.org/Activities/Winter%20Meetings/38-Winter%20Meetings/237-2008%20Winter%20Meeting,%20Vienna>.

the Assembly and governments (the OSCE is in Vienna); as a follow-up mechanism for reporting back; and in order to provide the possibility to debate developments. He emphasised the importance of common values and an effective follow-up mechanism on Assembly recommendations. He also underlined the importance of ongoing dialogue among parliamentarians.

Mr. Lennmarker outlined the priority areas he had set for himself upon taking office. In terms of expanding partnership with the Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation, he noted and welcomed the presence of a larger Algerian delegation, and said that he hoped Palestine would eventually become an OSCE partner state. On election observation, while all OSCE States must be held accountable to the same set of standards, avoiding double-standards must not lead to a lowering of standards. At the same time, election observation must take place across the whole OSCE region, and he argued that the Assembly should make every effort to observe the US elections in the fall of 2008.

Mr. Lennmarker called upon Central Asian delegations to participate actively in the Assembly. He noted the importance of ratifying the Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE) Treaty. He also stressed the importance of the OSCE's engagement in Kosovo, which was now needed more than ever. Further dialogue was also required to help overcome the so-called 'frozen' conflicts in the OSCE region.

Barbara Prammer, President of the Austrian Parliament, discussed the recent reform of the Austrian electoral code, which opens up the system to observation. She argued that the solution to almost any problem in the OSCE region can be found in the documents of the organization. On the question of Kosovo, Austria recognizes its independence, but at the same time understands some of the concerns of Serbia.

In terms of following up on the recommendations in the 2007 Kyiv Declaration, she reported that Austria had developed a ban on cluster munitions. Progress has also been made on democracy education, specifically a new democracy workshop for children which is connected to the lowering of the voting age to 16 years.

State Secretary Teija Tiilikainen outlined the priorities of the Finnish Chairmanship on behalf of the OSCE Chairman-in-Office, who at that time was Finnish Foreign Minister Ilkka Kanerva. Finland was striving to maintain continuity in OSCE work, including in terms of conflict prevention, crisis management and reconstruction. The Chairmanship was also making use of the Madrid decision on upcoming Chairmanships to form a "Quintet" of states, which will allow long-term-planning.

The Chairmanship was focused on dealing with protracted conflicts in the OSCE region, and Mr. Kanerva would personally engage in these areas to promote dialogue and trust between parties. Finland will also intensify the focus on controlling the illicit flow of small arms and light weapons.

In the economic and environmental dimension, the Chairmanship has given priority to discussions on inland-waterways and land-locked countries. It was also focusing on issues related to trafficking in human beings, tolerance and non-discrimination, and gender mainstreaming.

It was important for the OSCE to continue its engagement in Kosovo. Ms. Tiilkainen noted that the OSCE is a forum to discuss both politics and principle. She thanked the Assembly for providing the parliamentary dimension to election observation by the OSCE, and said that the Chairmanship intends to conduct a structured dialogue on the issue. Continued dialogue was necessary to resolve outstanding differences regarding the CFE Treaty, and the OSCE has important role in these areas, since it is the sole organization where all security questions and major actors are bound together.

The presentation was followed by questions from parliamentarians. Means to improve election observation were discussed, including the establishment of an internal working group. Relations between the OSCE PA and the OSCE/Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) were also discussed.

FIRST GENERAL COMMITTEE ON POLITICAL AFFAIRS AND SECURITY

The Chair of the Committee welcomed the Members and announced that Wolfgang Grossruck (Austria) was appointed new Rapporteur of the Committee by the Standing Committee.

The Chair argued that the committee needed more focus in its work. In order to produce better follow-up, more focus and discipline should be applied in the drafting phase and the amendment process before and during the Annual Session.

Senator Grafstein presented the Report on follow-up to the political recommendations adopted by the Committee at the 2007 Annual Session in Kyiv on behalf of the Committee's Vice-Chair, Senator Di Nino. While a number of recommendations have been considered and implemented by the OSCE structures and participating States, much more work needs to be done.

Delegates in the Permanent Council in Vienna have increasingly acknowledged the status of the Parliamentary Assembly as an integral part of the OSCE since Kyiv, and underlined the role of the OSCE PA in election observation. Nevertheless, the Assembly's recommendations on reform of the OSCE have still not been formally discussed by the Permanent Council.

The OSCE has failed to adopt a *Draft Convention on the Legal Personality, Capacity, Privileges, and Immunities of the OSCE* at the Madrid Ministerial Council, which would have helped in election observation activities. On energy security, participating States have undertaken a number of initiatives. The Report also discussed the role of women in conflict resolution and listed several examples of progress at the national level.

In the debate that followed Members highlighted the need to find solutions to unresolved conflicts as well as the nature of the OSCE commitments in this area.

Wolfgang Grossruck outlined ideas for preparing the report and draft resolution for the next Annual Session. Under the theme of *Transparency in the OSCE*, he suggested focusing the Committee's work on parliamentary oversight of armed forces in the OSCE area. The Committee then discussed privatizing armies, the influence of the economy, the need to enhance OSCE Anti-Terrorism efforts and the fight against trans-national organized crime.

Mr. Knut Vollebaek, the High Commissioner on National Minorities, outlined security issues involving minorities. Parliaments and inter-parliamentary bodies can play an important role, and they must be more than simply spectators. Damage caused by inter-ethnic conflict has a long-lasting impact on societies, and often requires tremendous reconciliation efforts. He attempts to identify ways to accommodate “legitimate concerns” of majorities and minorities and to ensure that states are a common home for all, with no “second class” citizens. The discussion that followed focused on the future of the OSCE Mission in Kosovo.

Finland’s Ambassador Antti Turunen, the Chairman of the Permanent Council, again outlined the priorities of the Finnish Chairmanship. Following the recent political leadership decision for 2009-11, Finland will engage the three next Chairs in office and Spain in quintet discussions to ensure continuity. Finland values cooperation with the Assembly. In terms of election observation, the Finnish Chairmanship will conduct a seminar to discuss the issue later in the year. Finland also believes the OSCE must remain actively engaged in Kosovo. In the debate that followed Members discussed Afghanistan, in particular the issue of the role the OSCE and how the Chairmanship would deal with the possibility of involvement in elections there.

SECOND GENERAL COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC AFFAIRS, SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND THE ENVIRONMENT

After the Vice-Chair of the Committee welcomed the Members to the Second Committee, the Committee’s Rapporteur, Roland Blum (France) enumerated topics to be discussed during the upcoming Annual Session in Astana. His announcement that his report would focus on Environmental Security and Climate Change was well received by Members.

Congresswoman Hilda Solis (USA), the Special Representative on Migration, reported on progress in the US Congress in terms of promoting green energy.

In terms of the implementation of matters relevant to the Committee’s mandate as adopted by the Assembly in Kyiv, the Vice-Chair reported that much progress had been achieved at national and international levels regarding Migration Management, the Transport of Small Arms and Light Weapons, and Environmental Security Strategy.

The Committee then held a special debate on Migration, and the Assembly’s role in this issue was welcomed and applauded. Migration has both positive and negative aspects. It was also necessary to improve the situation of migrants in their areas of origin.

The former Portuguese European Union Chairmanship had spoken of a “Global approach to Migration,” which emphasized the need to intensify partnerships between the countries of transit, origin and destination of migratory flows. In the future, the Committee will discuss the promotion of legal migration channels, the integration of migrants, health and the links to be drawn between development policy, readmission and circular migration.

The Head of the International Organization for Migration’s (IOM) Special Liaison Office in Vienna, Peter von Bethlenfalvy, addressed the Committee. The IOM is willing to collaborate with the OSCE participating states and the parliamentary assembly to harness the potential of migration for all.

Bernard Snoy, Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities, briefed the Committee on developments in three areas:

- the follow-up to the 15th Economic and Environmental Forum (EEF) on “environmental security and sustainable development” and the decisions taken in this connection at the Madrid Ministerial Meeting;
- the ongoing process of the 16th EEF that focuses on the maritime and inland waterways co-operation in the OSCE area; and
- the recently approved Action Plan for 2008 that includes activities in the areas of governance, environmental security, transport dialogue, labour migration and energy security dialogue.

THIRD GENERAL COMMITTEE ON DEMOCRACY, HUMAN RIGHTS AND HUMANITARIAN QUESTIONS

The Chair of the Committee, Jesus Lopez-Medel (Spain), welcomed members and reminded them of the purpose of the Winter Meeting, which provided an opportunity to follow-up on previous work by the Committee, to prepare for the upcoming Annual Session in July 2008, and to interact with OSCE governmental representatives.

Congresswoman Hilda Solis (United States), the Vice-Chair of the Committee, presented her report outlining some of the follow-up actions that have been taken in relation to Third Committee recommendations. She thanked those parliaments which had responded to a questionnaire, and encouraged all participants to study the responses provided.

In the field of tolerance and non-discrimination, she discussed efforts by the three Personal Representatives of the OSCE Chairman-in-Office, by ODIHR, and by national delegations of the Assembly. On gender issues Ms. Solis applauded the Finnish OSCE Chairmanship for prioritising this issue. On election-related issues, OSCE commitments are not being met in all participating States, and democracy is still “a work in progress.” Co-operation with the OSCE/ODIHR in this field had made little progress.

In terms of trafficking in human beings, she highlighted President Lennmarker’s appointment of a Special Representative, who should have close collaboration and dialogue with other Special Representatives. While the OSCE Ministerial Council had been unable to come to agreement on a decision supporting human rights defenders, individual countries continued their strong support for human rights institutions.

Walburga Habsburg Douglas (Sweden), the Committee Rapporteur, briefly explained her plans regarding her upcoming Report for the Annual Session. Following the Second World War there had been serious conscious efforts to come to terms with the past through an open process and studying of archives and history. Yet the same open process has not been sufficiently conducted following the collapse of Communism, when people were hurried into a new political reality and some have had trouble adapting.

The OSCE area is therefore lacking some transparency, mainly in terms of legislative, administrative, and election processes as well as in the work of the parliament and the

rule of law. Improved transparency through opening of archives and greater freedom of the media would contribute to the promotion of fundamental rights.

She argued that this was the opportunity for both the OSCE and the Parliamentary Assembly to act in order to improve transparency, open archives and improve governmental co-operation.

The Director of the OSCE/ODIHR, Ambassador Christian Strohal, argued that there is a natural partnership between the OSCE PA and the ODIHR. While Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights assisted States in fulfilling commitments, the responsibility for implementation lies with the States. Election observation is a useful tool to bring their elections in line with OSCE standards, but also to illustrate trends. He called on assembly Members to encourage State authorities to follow-up on recommendations. He regretted that one State had imposed restrictions on observation mission, making ODIHR unable to conduct its full mandate of observation “before, during and after elections.” The assembly had been a source of inspiration for major initiatives within the Human Dimension, and its Kyiv Declaration had led the ODIHR to launch a report on the situation of human rights defenders in the OSCE region. The participation of parliamentarians and NGOs at human dimension events is very valuable.

Miklos Haraszti, OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, discussed the work of his office and the ways he has been attempting to support commitments to media pluralism and transparency. Special reports by his office that focus on early warning of violations are a valuable tool for parliaments. Mr. Haraszti outlined a number of recent reports, and said his office had conducted 45 specific interventions to participating States regarding decriminalisation issues during the last year. He was concerned about hasty legal provisions on religious tolerance following the cartoon crisis, and of hate speech restrictions. These issues should be addressed through public dialogue and not through punitive laws. A similar approach should be taken regarding speech bans about historical events. He argued that denying an event should not result in legal punishment. Finally, he called upon parliamentarians to decriminalise libel in their home countries.

A general discussion followed which included discussion of elections in the OSCE area, OSCE standards and institutional co-operation and election observation, particularly with regard to the Russian Federation.

CLOSING JOINT SESSION OF THE THREE GENERAL COMMITTEES AND SPECIAL DEBATES

President Goran Lennmarker underlined the importance of the topics of the special debate: Kosovo, the Treaty on Conventional Forces in Europe and missile defence.

A. Kosovo

On Kosovo, which had declared independence five days earlier, the first presentation was by Ambassador Albert Rohan, the Deputy Special Envoy of the UN Secretary General for the Kosovo Status Process. He said that Kosovo’s declaration of independence committed it to fully implementing the comprehensive proposal presented by Special Envoy Martti Ahtisaari. It therefore included internationally supervised

independence, a continued international civilian and military presence and guarantees for the protection of the Serbian community and other minorities in Kosovo.

The dilemma was that Serbian sovereignty and the independence of Kosovo could not be combined. The *status quo* was unsustainable, and the parties would not be able to reach agreement even with further negotiations. The Office of the Special Envoy would therefore find acceptable a solution that included both Kosovo's independence and strong guarantees for Kosovo Serbs' rights and identity. The leadership of Kosovo and the Kosovo Serbs should co-operate to maintain a peaceful approach. While he was unsure what the future would bring, he hoped cooperation would replace confrontation.

A debate then ensued among delegates that demonstrated strong opinions on both sides of the argument. A Serbian delegate began by arguing that Kosovo's declaration of independence violated both UN Security Council Resolution 1244 and the Helsinki Final Act, which protects the territorial integrity of internationally recognized states. She argued that this was a direct and unprovoked attack on sovereignty, and the principles of the OSCE will be shaken to their foundation. There is nothing unique about the case of Kosovo, and there were good reasons to oppose the irresponsible decision made by its leaders.

An Albanian delegate followed and argued that it was time to unblock the uncertainties. The Kosovo case was unique in light of both ethnic cleansing and a decade of international administration. An independent and democratic Kosovo was the best solution, and the Albanian delegation was sure that the Kosovar leaders would honour their commitments. Continued international engagement was necessary.

Other delegates made similar arguments. Some argued that the special nature of Kosovo justified recent actions and did not constitute a precedent. Others argued that Kosovo was not unique and did constitute a precedent for others who might desire independence, and that the general principles being violated were more important than the specific case.

Senator Grafstein explained the Canadian reaction to events in Kosovo, which presented great and complex questions of *de facto* and *de jure* law. He said that both the Government and the Official Opposition in Canada agreed that the case of Kosovo was unique and did not constitute a precedent for other regions. While the Official Opposition argued that the Canada should recognize Kosovo, the Government of Canada had not done so at the time of the Vienna meeting. (It did grant diplomatic recognition to Kosovo several weeks later). Senator Grafstein argued that the OSCE had a powerful and direct responsibility in this area. He noted that the assembly already had an experienced Special Representative for the region in the person of Roberto Batelli from Slovenia, as well as a number of other parliamentarians with deep and practical experience in this region over recent years. He argued that Mr. Batelli should be allowed to gather a small team of experienced parliamentarians, with the approval of President Lennmarker, to meet with all participants in the region and ensure the OSCE mandate of protecting rights was fulfilled. This group could hopefully meet in the region and report back in Astana, with the possibility of a follow-up meeting later.

Debate continued with many delegations expressing strong and divergent opinions. In summarizing, President Lennmarker noted that while the debate had been "disciplined,"

it was difficult to draw conclusions. While the UN had been responsible for negotiations, he noted that several speakers had urged the Assembly to take initiatives. While he could not make promises, he said that the possibilities would be thought through in cooperation with Roberto Batelli, and results would be reported back in Astana.

B. CFE Treaty – Missile Defence

Members then engaged in a debate on missile defence and the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE). A number of delegates argued that the CFE treaty was a “cornerstone” of Euro-Atlantic security. Some argued that the decision by the Russian Federation to suspend the implementation of CFE Treaty obligations threatened the existence and value of the OSCE’s politico-military dimension. Others argued that the Russian Federation was compelled to suspend the implementation of the Treaty because of its provisions, and that Russia’s future attitude would depend on the readiness of its partners and neighbours to show restraint.

Some delegates underlined the progress achieved under the CFE regime in terms of destruction and removal of military arsenals, and called for renewed efforts to identify solutions acceptable to both Russia and other CFE States.

Some delegates dismissed the alleged links between the CFE Treaty and plans by the United States to deploy elements of the ground-based missile defence in Central Europe. They argued that this was part of a commitment to enhancing Europe’s common security structure. It was also argued that discussion of actual deployment of missile defence in Central Europe was premature given the need for parliamentary approval by those countries involved.

Gender Report

Tone Tingsgaard, OSCE PA Vice-President and Special Representative on Gender Issues, (Sweden), informed the Assembly about her activities and invited all Members to participate more actively in raising the profile of gender issues.

She noted that representation of women in the Assembly’s delegations is less than 25%. While progress has been made in the overall representation of women in the Organization, there is still gender gap and women remain under-represented at senior levels.

In other parliamentary assemblies, such as the Council of Europe, a delegation’s right to vote is conditioned by the presence of having both sexes represented among its members. In addition, gender must be mainstreamed in Assembly work and documents, and both genders must participate and be visible in the activities of the Assembly.

In the discussion that followed some delegates urged analysis of the situation of equal opportunity in the OSCE area in terms of job access and equal pay. A number of delegations expressed their interest in setting up a working group on gender equality. The concept of establishing a minimum percentage of representation for national OSCE PA delegations was also discussed.

Finally, Members heard short reports on work conducted in each of the three General Committees.

PARTICIPATION OF THE CANADIAN DELEGATION

As the sole member of the Canadian delegation, Senator Grafstein participated in the meeting of the Standing Committee, making an enthusiastic presentation on the upcoming fall 2008 meeting in Toronto. In the First General Committee on Political

Affairs and Security he presented a report on follow-up to the Kyiv recommendations on behalf of Senator Di Nino. In the special debate on Kosovo he made a statement outlining the debate in Canada on the situation, and recommending specific assembly action. Finally, throughout the Winter Meeting Senator Grafstein and staff held a number of meetings with parliamentarians and International Secretariat staff in order to advance planning for the Fall Meeting in Toronto in September 2008. (For further details on the Toronto meeting, see <http://www.oscepa-aposce.ca/Welcome-e.asp?Sub=No>).

Respectfully submitted,

Mr. David Tilson, M.P.
Canadian Delegation to the Organization for Security and Co-operation
in Europe Parliamentary Assembly (OSCE PA)

Travel Costs

ASSOCIATION	Canadian Delegation to the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe Parliamentary Assembly (OSCE PA)	
ACTIVITY	7 th Winter Meeting	
DESTINATION	Vienna, Austria	
DATES	February 21-22, 2008	
DELEGATION		
SENATE	Senator Jerahmiel Grafstein	
HOUSE OF COMMONS		
STAFF	Ms. Jodi Turner Mr. James Lee Mrs. Elizabeth Rody	
TRANSPORTATION		\$15,588.84
ACCOMMODATION		\$4,312.86
HOSPITALITY		\$0.00
PER DIEMS		\$1,682.54
OFFICIAL GIFTS		\$0.00
MISCELLANEOUS / REGISTRATION FEES		\$15.67
TOTAL		\$21,599.91