



**Report of the Canadian Parliamentary Delegation  
respecting its participation at the 14<sup>th</sup> 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 17 to 20, 2015**

# Report

From 17 to 20 February 2015, a delegation of six Canadian parliamentarians attended the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly's<sup>1</sup> Winter Meeting in Vienna, Austria. **Mr. Dean Allison, M.P.**, led the delegation, which included, from the Senate, the Honourable **Senators David Tkachuk** and **Grant Mitchell** and from the House of Commons, **Mr. David Tilson, M.P.**, and **Mr. Mathieu Ravnignat, M.P.** and the **Honourable Dr. Hedy Fry, M.P.** The delegation was accompanied by David Gagnon, Delegation Secretary, and Erin Shaw, Advisor.

## 2015 WINTER MEETING

From 18 to 20 February 2015, nearly 250 parliamentarians from more than 50 OSCE participating States, together with parliamentarians from the OSCE's Mediterranean Partners for Cooperation, met in Vienna, Austria for the 14<sup>th</sup> OSCE PA Winter Meeting.<sup>2</sup> The program included a meeting of the Mediterranean Forum, opening and closing joint sessions, as well as meetings of each of the three OSCE PA General Committees (Political Affairs and Security; Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and Environment; and Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions). In addition, a meeting of the Standing Committee was held.

### A. Mediterranean Forum

On 18 February 2015, the OSCE PA held a meeting of the Mediterranean Forum.

The Mediterranean Forum began with an address by the Chair of the meeting, Ms. Isabel Pozuelo (Spain), Vice-President of the OSCE and an address by Ambassador Rudiger Ludeking (Germany), Chair of the OSCE Contact Group with the Mediterranean Partners for Cooperation. Parliamentarians and diplomats from Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Morocco and Tunisia also took the floor.

In her remarks, Ms. Pozuelo stressed the inter-connected nature of security issues in the OSCE and the Mediterranean region and the need to overcome conflict and ensure stability. Ambassador Rüdiger Lüdeking, Chairman of the OSCE Contact Group with the Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation and Permanent Representative of Germany to the OSCE, informed delegates that in 2015, the Contact Group would focus on terrorism, asylum seekers, energy security, inter-religious dialogue, control of trade in weapons and cybersecurity.

Representatives from Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia and Egypt stressed the linkage between stability and security on the northern and southern shores of the Mediterranean. They discussed ways to improve collaboration and comprehensive security throughout the Mediterranean region in order to meet the threat posed by the so-called Islamic State of

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<sup>1</sup> Overview of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly Overview of the OSCE Association website.

<sup>2</sup> Some of the remarks and reports presented at the conference are available from the OSCE PA "2015 Winter Meeting" website.

Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), address challenges posed by irregular migration, and work towards a two-state solution involving Israel and the Palestinians. A representative from the Israeli Knesset expressed concern about rising anti-Semitism, emphasized the need to maintain democratic values while countering terrorism, and stressed that anti-terrorist activities must not transform into Islamophobia.

### **Activities of the Canadian Delegation:**

The Mediterranean Forum was attended by all members of the Delegation.

**Mr. Dean Allison, M.P.** led off the open debate with remarks highlighting the ongoing humanitarian crisis in Syria. Mr. Allison recognized the major contribution to humanitarian efforts that was being made by Syria's neighbours and outlined Canada's contributions to the provision of humanitarian assistance related to the Syrian crisis. Mr. Allison argued that the burden of assisting Syrian refugees and the internally displaced must be shared, and also called on OSCE parliamentarians to encourage their governments to push for a political solution that will eventually result in peace, security and freedom for the Syrian people.

**Mr. David Tilson, M.P.** discussed the problem of individuals from the OSCE region who travel to fight with ISIL and other terrorist groups abroad (foreign fighters). In his remarks, Mr. Tilson described how this problem has affected Canada and some of the measures that Canada is taking in response. He also asked other OSCE parliamentarians to share their countries' experience with combatting the phenomenon of foreign fighters.

**Mr. Mathieu Ravignat, M.P.** intervened to highlight the importance of religious freedom in Syria and Iraq, and to condemn the intolerance and violence of ISIL (Daesh). Stressing that ISIL threatens the multi-confessional history of the region, Mr. Ravignat recalled atrocities perpetrated against the Yazidi and Shiite Muslims, the populations of Mosul and Kobane, as well as executions and forced conversions. He stressed the need to focus on the immediate needs of religious minorities in Iraq and Syria and emphasized the importance of efforts to promote religious tolerance in the region.

**Dr. Hedy Fry, M.P.** spoke at the end of the debate to emphasize the ways in which violence in the Mediterranean region has affected women and girls, who have been particularly targeted by ISIL. She noted that rape has become a strategy of war, that young girls whose families have been displaced by fighting are married off to much older men in order to ensure their protection, and that vulnerable women are forced into survival sex. Stressing that the deliberate targeting of women and girls will only continue a cycle of violence, hatred and intolerance, she urged OSCE parliamentarians to ensure that gender issues remain at the heart of efforts to achieve comprehensive security in the Mediterranean region.

### **B. Opening Joint Session of the Three General Committees**

Delegates were welcomed to the opening Joint Session of the three General Committees by OSCE PA Vice-President Christine Muttonen (Austria) and OSCE PA President Ilkka Kanerva. Mr. Ivica Dačić, the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Serbia, gave a special address.

In his remarks, President Kanerva stressed the OSCE PA's determination to support OSCE efforts to facilitate peace in Ukraine, as well as commitments to reform made by the Ukrainian Parliament (the Verkhovna Rada). He also highlighted the importance of cooperation to counter terrorism.<sup>3</sup> Chairman-in-Office Dačić informed OSCE parliamentarians that supporting efforts that would lead towards a peace process in Ukraine would be the top priority for Serbia's chairmanship of the OSCE. He urged all sides to adhere fully to the *Package of Measures for the implementation of the Minsk agreements* signed on 12 February 2015 (the "Minsk Package") and to cooperate effectively with the OSCE's Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine.<sup>4</sup> The Chairman-in-Office also thanked the OSCE PA for its contribution to OSCE election monitoring missions to Ukraine during 2014. In his remarks, the Chairman-in-Office reviewed Serbia's other priorities for its chairmanship, including combatting the phenomenon of foreign terrorist fighters as well as violent extremism and radicalization that lead to terrorism and strengthening the implementation of all OSCE human dimension commitments.<sup>5</sup> The Chairman-in-Office also responded to questions from OSCE PA delegates.

### **Activities of the Canadian Delegation:**

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

**Dr. Hedy Fry, M.P.** asked the Chairman-in-Office when the appointment of a new Special Representative of the Chairperson-in-Office on Gender Issues would be made. She also asked Mr. Dačić to update parliamentarians on the status of the process to finalize an Addendum to the 2004 Gender Action Plan and requested his thoughts on the vulnerability of women and girls in conflict situations, particularly those who had been displaced. The Chairman-in-Office responded that a task force will be established to work on the Addendum and that the appointment of a new Special Representative of the Chairperson-in-Office on Gender Issues is expected soon.

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

Chair: Roger Wicker (U.S.A.)

Vice-Chair: Azay Guliyev (Azerbaijan)

Rapporteur: Pia Kauma (Finland)

The First General Committee meeting was opened by Vice-Chair Azay Guliyev of Azerbaijan, who remarked on the security challenges posed by the crisis in Ukraine and by terrorism. The Rapporteur of the Committee, Pia Kauma (Finland), provided an overview of the report and draft resolution being prepared for the Committee's next meeting at the

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<sup>3</sup> OSCE PA President Ilkka Kanerva, "Remarks to open the 2015 OSCE Parliamentary Assembly Winter Meeting," 19 February 2015, OSCE PA Winter Meeting, Vienna.

<sup>4</sup> The full text of the *Package of measures for the Implementation of the Minsk Agreements* is appended to UN Security Council Resolution 2202 (2015). More information on the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine is available on the Mission's website.

<sup>5</sup> OSCE Chairman-in-Office Ivica Dačić, "Speech by First Deputy Prime Minister/Minister of Foreign Affairs of Serbia Ivica Dačić, Chairperson-in-Office of the OSCE," 19 February 2015, OSCE PA Winter Meeting, Vienna.

upcoming Annual Session in Helsinki. In her address, Ms. Kauma emphasized the importance of 2015 as the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Helsinki Final Act and highlighted two key security challenges being faced by the organization: the conflict in and around Ukraine and transnational threats.

OSCE parliamentarians had the opportunity to hear from Ambassador Cristian Istrate, Chairperson of the Security Committee of the OSCE Permanent Council and Permanent Representative of Romania to the OSCE. He outlined the priorities of the Security Committee for 2015, which include action on the issue of foreign terrorist fighters, as well as countering violent extremism and the financing of terrorism in connection with kidnapping for ransom. He discussed terrorist threats facing the OSCE and the need to counter these threats in a manner that is consistent with the organization's underlying values and principles. Mr. Istrate also highlighted the important role that the OSCE PA plays in ensuring that the views and interests of the citizens of OSCE countries are reflected in the agenda and priorities of the OSCE itself.

Ms. Astrid Thors, OSCE High Commissioner for National Minorities also addressed delegates. She explained that her office is one of the OSCE's conflict prevention mechanisms and therefore welcomed the opportunity to address the First General Committee. In her remarks, Ms. Thors discussed the appropriate framework for inter-state discussion and cooperation on minority issues, which respects sovereignty, territorial integrity and good relations between states. Amongst other matters, Ms. Thors expressed concern about increasing aggressive nationalism and polarizing political discourse opposing "us" and "them" that can lead to systematic discrimination against national minorities and marginalization of minority communities. Discrimination and marginalization, in turn, increase prospects for instability and vulnerability to radicalization. She also criticized the misuse of the concept of protection of national minorities in the OSCE region to further other agendas of participating States. Ms. Thors explained that the real victims of this practice are the minorities who remain in real need of protection.

The First Committee then held a Special Debate on "Transnational Security in the OSCE Area: Confronting Terrorism."

### **Activities of the Canadian Delegation:**

The meeting of the First General Committee was attended by Senator David Tkachuk, Mr. David Tilson, M.P., Mr. Mathieu Ravnat, M.P. and Dr. Hedy Fry, M.P.

In his remarks, Senator David Tkachuk noted that although the war against ISIL occurs in Syria and Iraq, the movement continues to advocate terrorist attacks against Western targets such as those that took place in St-Jean-sur-Richelieu and Ottawa in October 2014. He emphasized the threat posed to Canada and Canadians by violent jihadism, in light of the rapid growth of social media. Senator Tkachuk also discussed Canada's recent policy responses, which are intended to limit ISIL and other terrorist groups' ability to incite attacks on Canadian soil.

Mr. David Tilson, M.P. stressed that the threat of terrorism is very real, recalling recent terrorist attacks in France, Copenhagen and Libya. He drew delegates' attention to the terrorist attacks on Canadian soldiers and on Canada's parliament in October 2014 and urged OSCE parliamentarians to work domestically and collectively to combat terrorist

threats in a manner that complies with human rights obligations. He also explained to OSCE PA delegates some of the key provisions in recent and proposed Canadian anti-terrorism legislation that provides new tools to Canadian police and intelligence services to combat terrorism in Canada and abroad.

Mr. Mathieu Ravnignat, M.P. highlighted the importance of preserving the balance between liberty and security in counter-terrorism activities, of ensuring respect for the separation of powers between the executive and the legislative branches of government and of the ability of judges to interpret and apply the law without political interference. Mr. Ravnignat stressed that countering terrorism cannot be used to justify disproportionate restrictions on media freedom, the freedom of individuals to criticize their government, freedom of association, privacy or other political rights. He also argued that OSCE PA participating States should see diversity as a strength and invest in it.

In her remarks, Dr. Hedy Fry, M.P. emphasized that radicalized individuals who have committed acts of terrorism inspired by ISIL are not necessarily immigrants, foreigners or even people born into the Muslim faith; converts to Islam from a wide variety of backgrounds have adopted violent, extremist views. She also highlighted the issue of radicalization of women by violent extremist groups. Dr. Fry asked OSCE parliamentarians to think about ways to use social media to counter terrorist propaganda, particularly amongst young women and girls, and to design gender-sensitive responses to terrorist radicalization.

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

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

Chair: Roza Aknazarova (Kyrgyzstan)

Vice-Chair: Nilza Sena (Portugal)

Rapporteur: Marietta Tidei (Italy)

Chair Roza Aknazarova (Kyrgyzstan) opened the meeting. The Committee then heard presentations from Presentation by Ambassador Tomislav Leko, Chair of the OSCE Economic and Environmental Committee and Permanent Representative of Bosnia and Herzegovina to the International Organizations in Vienna, and from Mr. Halil Yurdakul Yigitgüden, Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities, and Mr. Janez Kopac, Director of the Energy Community Secretariat. Parliamentarians held a special debate on “Co-operation in enhancing energy security and reducing environmental and economic challenges in the OSCE Area.”

In his address, Ambassador Leko discussed the Serbian Chairmanship’s priorities for the Second dimension: good water governance and countering corruption in the OSCE area. He also briefed parliamentarians on the Environmental and Economic Committee’s 2015 workplan, which includes thematic meetings on migration, anti-corruption and money laundering, disaster risk reduction, energy security, transport, and climate change. The Committee will also try to increase engagement with the heads of the OSCE field missions

and integrate gender perspectives into its activities with a view to eliminating discrimination against women in the economic and environmental sphere. The committee also plans to present a report on combatting corruption and to work collaboratively with the OSCE's other committees on issues related to migration and terrorism.<sup>6</sup>

In his remarks, Mr. Yigitgüden presented the OSCE's upcoming activities in the area of water management in more detail, focusing on the 23<sup>rd</sup> OSCE Economic and Environment Forum process. He also announced the expected launch of an *OSCE Guide on Combatting Corruption* and discussed the organization's planned anti-corruption activities in Central Asia, Eastern Europe and the South Caucasus. Other areas of work for 2015 include customs and border security, labour migration management, disaster risk reduction, climate change, hazardous waste and substances, sustainable energy, protection of nuclear critical infrastructure, strengthening civil society and good governance, and improving access to justice.<sup>7</sup>

In opening the special debate on energy security, Mr. Kopac introduced OSCE parliamentarians to the work of the Energy Community. The Energy Community is an international organization dealing with energy policy that was established by treaty in Athens Greece in 2005. The organization is comprised of countries from South East Europe and the Black Sea regions, as well as member states of the European Union.<sup>8</sup> Mr. Kopac reviewed the common legal framework of the Energy Community and discussed the Energy Community's role in relation to energy supply networks and security, market integration, environmental management and regional competition, focusing in particular on natural gas.<sup>9</sup>

### **Activities of the Canadian Delegation:**

The meeting of the Committee on Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and the Environment was attended by **Senator Grant Mitchell and Mr. Dean Allison M.P.**

**Mr. Dean Allison, M.P.** intervened to draw delegates' attention to the issue of maternal and child health as a component of sustainable development and its relationship to comprehensive security. Mr. Allison stressed the need to ensure that maternal and child health remain a priority matter in international discussions regarding the post-2015 development goals and stressed that OSCE parliamentarians are well-placed to raise the profile of this critical issue. Finally, he suggested that the Rapporteur examine and include ways that OSCE parliaments – and the OSCE itself – can contribute to global efforts to

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<sup>6</sup> Remarks of Ambassador Tomislav Leko, Permanent Representative of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Chair of the EEC, General Committee on Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and Environment, 14<sup>th</sup> Winter Meeting of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, 19 February 2015, Vienna.

<sup>7</sup> "Statement by Dr. Halil Yurdakul Yigitgüden, Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities," General Committee on Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and Environment, 14<sup>th</sup> Winter Meeting of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, 19 February 2015, Vienna.

<sup>8</sup> Energy Community, "Who Are We".

<sup>9</sup> Janez Kopac, "Importance of international cooperation to ensure energy security – case of the gas in the Energy Community," General Committee on Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and Environment, 14<sup>th</sup> Winter Meeting of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, 19 February 2015, Vienna.

improve maternal and child health in her report and proposed resolution at the 2015 Annual Session in Helsinki.

**Senator Grant Mitchell** spoke during the special debate on energy security. He emphasized that fossil fuels will remain an important part of the energy mix needed to support economic growth for some time to come, stressing the importance of the oil industry to both Canada and Alberta. Senator Mitchell indicated that Canadians are nevertheless concerned about climate change. He highlighted a number of renewable energy and carbon-tax initiatives being undertaken in Canadian provinces. The Senator argued that wealth from today's traditional energy sources should be used to create a renewable energy and conservation future. He also stressed that Canada can play an important role in global energy security, in particular by diversifying export markets to Europe, at a time when other OSCE countries are also looking at ways to diversify their import markets.

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

Chair: Isabel Santos (Portugal)

Vice-Chair: Mehmet Sevki Kulkuloglu (Turkey)

Rapporteur: Gordana Comic (Serbia)

The Chair of the Third General Committee, Ms. Isabel Santos, opened the meeting.<sup>10</sup> Her remarks were followed by the presentations of Dunja Mijatovic, OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, Mr. Michael Georg Link, Director of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) and Ambassador Robert Kvile, Chair of the Human Dimension Committee of the OSCE Permanent Council and the Permanent Representative of Norway to the OSCE. Following these presentations, OSCE parliamentarians engaged in a special debate on the human rights of migrants and refugees.

In her remarks, Special Representative Mijatovic drew delegates' attention to persistent violations of freedom of expression and the media in the OSCE area. She indicated that respect for these fundamental freedoms had continued to decline over the last year and expressed concern regarding continued attacks on human rights generally in OSCE participating states. As part of her presentation, Ms. Mijatovic gave an overview of her work in Ukraine, expressing concern that journalists and journalistic ethics had been shown contempt on a massive scale. She indicated that since the beginning of the Ukraine crisis in November 2013, seven media workers have been killed; at least 170 journalists have been attacked and injured; approximately 30 media offices and television stations have been vandalized; about 80 journalists have been abducted and detained; and, at least two journalists remain captive. In Crimea, all 15 independent stations were shut-down overnight, there is no Ukrainian print media, journalists cannot report independently, and the Special Representative has been denied entry to the region.

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<sup>10</sup> "Remarks by Isabel Santos, Chairperson of the General Committee on Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions," General Committee on Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions, 14<sup>th</sup> Winter Meeting of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, 19 February 2015, Vienna.



Mr. Link, Director of ODIHR, reminded parliamentarians of the importance of OSCE human dimension commitments and of the role of the OSCE's independent institutions (ODIHR, the Special Representatives on Freedom of the Media and the High Commissioner on National Minorities) in defending these commitments. Mr. Link reviewed ODIHR – OSCE PA cooperation on election observation missions over the last year and thanked the PA for its contributions. He discussed ODIHR's efforts to promote tolerance and non-discrimination, including through the promotion of hate crime reporting and activities aimed at fighting anti-Semitism, Islamophobia and intolerance against Christians in the OSCE area. Other priorities for ODIHR in 2015 include trial monitoring, reporting on human rights defenders, presenting guidelines on freedom of association, and reporting on the US detention facility at Guantanamo Bay. Director Link also discussed the possibility of monitoring upcoming local elections in Ukraine and the security guarantees that would be required for such a mission to be undertaken.

Ambassador Kvile provided OSCE parliamentarians with an overview of the themes of the Human Dimension Committee meetings for 2015, which include freedom of religion or belief; freedom of opinion and expression; freedom of peaceful assembly and association; tolerance and non-discrimination; national minorities; national human rights institutions; the administration of justice; gender; torture; enforced disappearances; extrajudicial killings; the death penalty; and human trafficking. He indicated that a joint second and third dimension committee meeting would also be organized on the topic of business and human rights. Ambassador Kvile encouraged all OSCE participating states to report voluntarily on their implementation of OSCE human dimension commitments and emphasized his determination to ensure that civil society representatives continue to contribute to the discussions of the Human Dimension Committee.<sup>11</sup>

As part of the special debate on the human rights of migrants, parliamentarians also heard from Ambassador Laura Thompson (Costa Rica), Deputy Director-General of the International Organization for Migration,<sup>12</sup> Mr. Mustafa Dzhemilev, member of the Ukrainian parliament and former Chairman of the Mejlis of the Crimean Tatar People,<sup>13</sup> who has been prevented from returning to Crimea by Russian authorities, and Dr. Saad Fandi, a Syrian refugee now living in Germany.

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<sup>11</sup> "Presentation of program and priorities of the Human Dimension Committee by Ambassador of Norway, Mr. Robert Kvile, Chairman of the Human Dimension Committee," General Committee on Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions, 14<sup>th</sup> Winter Meeting of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, 19 February 2015, Vienna.

<sup>12</sup> Remarks of Laura Thompson at a Special Panel Discussion, The Human Rights of Migrants and Refugees, General Committee on Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions, 14<sup>th</sup> Winter Meeting of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, 19 February 2015, Vienna, International Organization for Migration.

<sup>13</sup> The Mejlis represents the Crimean Tatar people to the government of Ukraine, the government of Crimea and international organizations. It was created in 1991 and legalized by a Ukrainian government decree in 1999. The 33 members are chosen by the Crimean Tatar Kurultai (or Qurultay), which is the elected representative counsel of the Crimean Tatars (Mejlis of the Crimean Tatar People, "Mejlis, General Information"; Mejlis of the Crimean Tatar People, "Qurultay"; Radio Free Europe Radio Liberty, "Explainer: What is the Crimean Tatar Mejlis?").

## **Activities of the Canadian Delegation:**

This Committee meeting was attended by Senators David Tkachuk and Grant Mitchell, as well as Mr. Dean Allison, M.P., Mr. David Tilson M.P., Mr. Mathieu Ravnat, M.P. and Dr. Hedy Fry, M.P.

Mr. Dean Allison, M.P. drew delegates' attention to the fact that the Winter Meeting was being held less than a month after the 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the liberation of the Nazi death camps at Auschwitz-Birknau. Noting that fewer and fewer survivors of the Holocaust remain, Mr. Allison emphasized the need to take concrete steps to promote Holocaust remembrance, education and research. Condemning terrorist attacks in Paris and Copenhagen — including the specific targeting of Jews — he called upon parliamentarians to play a leadership role in building societies based on respect for human dignity. Mr. Allison then asked Director Link to elaborate on ODIHR's efforts to implement the OSCE's 2004 *Berlin Declaration on Anti-Semitism* and to combat other forms of hatred. He also invited the Director to make suggestions as to ways in which the OSCE PA and OSCE parliamentarians could support ODIHR's work in this regard.

Mr. David Tilson, M.P. focused his remarks on two opposite values: extremism and tolerance. He stressed to his fellow delegates that Canada is a nation of immigrants where tolerance and diversity are valued, noting that in 2015, Canada is increasing its immigration targets, which will include welcoming 13,000 refugees. Discussing Canada's approach to immigration, Mr. Tilson emphasized that Canadians see newcomers as a source of strength and strive to provide opportunities for all regardless of ethnicity, religion or gender. Turning to discuss the impact of extremism, Mr. Tilson indicated that violent extremists around the world threaten core Canadian values like equality, democracy and the rule of law. He stressed that national governments and international organizations like the OSCE can play an important role in challenging such extremism.

Mr. Mathieu Ravnat, M.P. noted that in the face of economic hardship in the OSCE region, there has been a rise in anti-immigrant, anti-Semitic and anti-Muslim sentiment in many countries and pointed out that even a tolerant, multi-cultural, and multi-faith country like Canada has not been sheltered from this phenomenon. Mr. Ravnat urged OSCE parliamentarians to stop the politically opportunistic exploitation of ethnic, linguistic and religious prejudices, arguing that parliamentarians should bring people together, not divide them. Mr. Ravnat argued that legislation and policies that promote tolerance and inclusion provide the most effective means of combatting the propaganda of radicalism, extremism and intolerant nationalism. He also urged parliamentarians to work in partnership with civil society to ensure inclusion and tolerance.

## **F. Standing Committee**

The Standing Committee, comprised of OSCE heads of delegation, was opened by OSCE President Ilkka Kanerva. The Standing Committee was briefed on the decision by the OSCE PA Bureau not to accredit Ms. Olga Kovitidi of the Russian Federation as a member of the OSCE PA, based on the recommendations of the PA's Credentials Committee. Ms. Kovitidi was designated by the Delegation of the Russian Federation as a Russian parliamentarian based solely on her function as part of the *de facto* Russian authorities governing occupied Crimea. The Credentials Committee concluded that "what

Ms. Kovitidi represents in the Russian Federation Council is not a Russian territorial entity, but an illegal de-facto authority on Ukrainian territory. She therefore cannot be accepted as a member of the OSCE PA ...”<sup>14</sup>

In addition, the Standing Committee considered a proposed amendment to the PA’s rules of procedure regarding oral amendments to the resolutions debated at the Annual Session. A decision was deferred until the Standing Committee’s next meeting at the upcoming Annual Session in Helsinki. The Standing Committee also had an opportunity to discuss the positive results of the OSCE PA’s most recent audit, the decision of Mr. Spencer Oliver not to seek re-appointment as the PA’s Secretary General, and the progress of the PA’s Helsinki +40 Project. It also heard reports from several of the PA’s Special Representatives and Heads of Election Observation missions.

### **Activities of the Canadian Delegation:**

**Mr. Dean Allison, M.P.** participated in the meeting of the Standing Committee as Head of the Canadian Delegation. Other Canadian parliamentarians also observed the meeting.

### **G. Joint Session of the Three Committees and Special Debate on the situation in Ukraine.**

The closing joint session was chaired by OSCE PA President Ilkka Kanerva. **Dr. Hedy Fry, M.P.**, in her capacity as OSCE PA Special Representative on Gender Issues, addressed the Joint Session. Her presentation was followed by a debate on gender issues. The second part of the joint session was devoted to a high-level panel discussion and open debate on the OSCE’s response to the crisis in and around Ukraine.

President Kanerva opened the special debate and introduced the High Level Panellists: Ambassador Adam Kobieracki, Director of the OSCE Conflict Prevention Centre, Ambassador Ertugrul Apakan, Chief Monitor of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine, and Heidi Tagliavini, Special Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office in Ukraine and the Trilateral Contact Group.<sup>15</sup>

The panelists discussed the challenges that the crisis in and around Ukraine poses for the OSCE, the linkages between the crisis and broader security challenges in the OSCE region, and the humanitarian impact of the fighting. In addition, the panelists stressed the need for adherence to the 2014 and 2015 Minsk Agreements and the need to generate the political will to reach a longer-term diplomatic solution.<sup>16</sup> Ambassador Koberacki and Ambassador Apakan explained the role and activities of the OSCE’s Special Monitoring

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<sup>14</sup> OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, “Report and Recommendation of the Credentials Committee Regarding the Russian Federation’s Designation of Ms. Olga Kovitidi as a Member of the OSCE PA,” 14<sup>th</sup> Winter Meeting of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, 18 February 2015, Vienna..

<sup>15</sup> Ilkka Kanerva, “Remarks to open to the Special Debate: ‘The OSCE’s Response to the Crisis in and Around Ukraine,’” 14<sup>th</sup> Winter Meeting of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, 20 February 2015, Vienna.

<sup>16</sup> The 2014 Minsk Agreements refer to the *Protocol on the results of consultations of the Trilateral Contact Group*, Minsk, 5 September 2014 [Minsk Protocol] and the *Memorandum of 19 September 2014 outlining the parameters for the implementation of commitments of the Minsk Protocol of 5 September 2014*, Minsk, 19 September 2014 [Minsk Memorandum]. The 2015 Minsk Agreement is the *Package of measures for the Implementation of the Minsk Agreements*, which is appended to UN Security Council Resolution 2202 (2015).

mission to Ukraine, while Ambassador Tagliavini provided an update on the work of the Trilateral Contact Group on the Implementation of the Peace Plan in the East of Ukraine.<sup>17</sup>

Due to the high level of interest in the special debate from OSCE parliamentarians, the Secretariat limited the speakers list in order to ensure that at least one speaker from each participating state had the opportunity to make remarks.

### **Activities of the Canadian Delegation:**

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

In her gender address, **Dr. Hedy Fry, M.P.** noted that almost a generation after the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action was adopted,<sup>18</sup> reaching the goal of gender equality remains elusive. Progress in some areas has been off-set by regression in others. She discussed the 2014 OSCE Ministerial Council's failure to achieve consensus regarding an Addendum to the gender action plan in the face of opposition from some OSCE participating states, and urged the Serbian chairmanship to move forward with efforts to draft an addendum for presentation to the Permanent Council in 2015. Dr. Fry also provided an overview of the Ministerial Council's 2014 Decision on Violence Against Women and discussed the impact of conflict, crisis and organized crime on the prevalence of violence against women. She argued for the development of measureable goals and tools as part of a strategy and a structure for promoting gender equality in all three of the OSCE's dimensions and emphasized the important leadership role that parliamentarians can play in overcoming discrimination.<sup>19</sup> Dr. Fry also responded to comments made during the debate on her report.

**Senator Grant Mitchell** responded to Dr. Fry's report, emphasizing the importance of educating women and girls. In his remarks, Senator Mitchell noted that failing to educate girls restricts the access of girls and women to economic opportunities and to participation in political and public life and highlighted the additional, intersecting barriers to education faced by girls from minority communities. He argued that educating girls is one of the best investments that can be made to accelerate development and ensure comprehensive security. The Senator urged his fellow parliamentarians to adopt clear strategies for women and girls' education, increase public support for women in scientific activities, and support efforts to collect data needed to assess progress and formulate policy on equality of access to education.

**Mr. Dean Allison, M.P.**, intervened in the special debate on the OSCE's response to the crisis in and around Ukraine. In his remarks, Mr. Allison stressed that the crisis threatens the foundational values of the OSCE. He also emphasized Canada's close relationship with Ukraine, as well as Canada's support for the democratic aspirations of the Ukrainian

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<sup>17</sup> Remarks of Heidi Tagliavini, Special Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office in Ukraine and in the Trilateral Contact Group on the Implementation of the Peace Plan in the East of Ukraine, 14<sup>th</sup> Winter Meeting of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, 20 February 2015, Vienna.

<sup>18</sup> *Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action*, Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, China, September 1995.

<sup>19</sup> See the report of Hedy Fry, *Address by Dr. Hedy Fry, Special Representative on Gender Issues to the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly*, 14<sup>th</sup> Winter Meeting of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, 20 February 2015, Vienna.

people, Ukraine's resistance to Russian military aggression and the Ukrainian government's important, ongoing reform efforts. Recalling the statement of Canada's Minister of Foreign Affairs, who said that Canada will never, ever recognize Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea, Mr. Allison indicated that Russia must de-escalate the crisis and respect Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity. He expressed support for the Minsk Package as a way forward to achieving a peaceful resolution to the crisis, but voiced concern regarding ceasefire violations by Russia and its proxies. Mr. Allison also highlighted Canada's financial contributions to Ukraine's reform efforts, Canada's ongoing development assistance to Ukraine and the imposition of a new round of Canadian sanctions against Russia on 17 February 2015 in response to ceasefire violations. Noting that the cost to Russia would continue to rise if Russia persisted in its failure to respect its international obligations and commitments, Mr. Allison concluded by reiterating what Canada's Prime Minister, Steven Harper, recently said to Russian President Vladimir Putin: "get out of Ukraine".

**Dr. Hedy Fry, M.P.** also participated in the debate, noting that Canadian parliamentarians were united in support for Ukraine. She reminded delegates that Russia had violated the commitments it made in the 1994 *Budapest Memorandum on Security Assurances in Connection with Ukraine's Accession to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons*<sup>20</sup> and that Russian actions in Ukraine also represented a violation of Article 2(4) of the *Charter of the United Nations*. Dr. Fry emphasized the importance of de-escalating the crisis and ending the fighting in eastern Ukraine, as well as the need to provide economic support to Ukraine.

## **ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES OF THE CANADIAN DELEGATION**

On Wednesday, 18 February 2015, the delegation met with the Canadian Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the OSCE, Her Excellency Isabelle Poupart, for a briefing session on the main issues in Canada-OSCE relations. The briefing focused on Canada's activities and priorities in each of the three dimensions of the OSCE. The delegation also met with His Excellency Mark Bailey, Canada's Ambassador to Austria and the Slovak Republic. As in previous years, members of the parliamentary delegation greatly appreciated the value of the briefings. The delegation was of the view that such briefings should continue to be part of future programs related to the Winter Meeting.

On 17 February 2015, Ambassador Isabelle Poupart provided the delegation with the opportunity to meet with senior OSCE officials, other Ambassadors and diplomatic representatives to the OSCE, representatives from the OSCE Secretariat and PA Secretariat to discuss matters relating to the OSCE and Canada's activities.

It should also be noted that Ambassador Poupart and members of the mission's staff also attended the sessions of the OSCE PA's Winter Meeting.

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<sup>20</sup> The text of the Budapest Memorandum on Security Assurances in Connection with Ukraine's Accession to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons of 5 December 1994 and the text of the Joint Declaration of the same date is appended to a *Letter dated 7 December 1994 from the Permanent Representatives of the Russian Federation, Ukraine, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, United Nations General Assembly and Security Council, 19 December 1994, UN Doc. A/49/765 and UN Doc. S/1994/1399.*

**Mr. Dean Allison, M.P.** met with representatives from the Open Dialogue Foundation and **Dr. Hedy Fry, M.P.** had a side meeting with ODIHR Director Link.

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

Respectfully submitted,

Hon. Hedy Fry, P.C., M.P.  
Director  
Canadian Delegation to the Organization for Security and  
Co-operation in Europe Parliamentary Assembly  
(OSCE PA)

## Travel Costs

<b>ASSOCIATION</b>	Canadian Delegation to the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe Parliamentary Assembly (OSCE PA)
<b>ACTIVITY</b>	14 <sup>th</sup> Winter Meeting of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly
<b>DESTINATION</b>	Vienna, Austria
<b>DATES</b>	February 17 to 20, 2015
<b>DELEGATION</b>	
SENATE	Hon. Grant Mitchell, Senator Hon. David Tkachuk, Senator
HOUSE OF COMMONS	Mr. Dean Allison, M.P. Hon. Hedy Fry, P.C., M.P. Mr. Mathieu Ravnat, M.P. Mr. David Tilson, M.P.
STAFF	Mr. David Gagnon, Secretary of Delegation Ms. Erin Shaw, Advisor
<b>TRANSPORTATION</b>	\$ 38,854.02
<b>ACCOMMODATION</b>	\$ 10,303.19
<b>HOSPITALITY</b>	\$ 0.00
<b>PER DIEMS</b>	\$ 5,370.71
<b>OFFICIAL GIFTS</b>	\$ 0.00
<b>MISCELLANEOUS</b>	\$ 120.44
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 54,648.36</b>