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Parliamentary Association



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Report of the Canadian Delegation to the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly

Autumn Meeting

Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan

From October 3-6, 2018

Report

From October 3 to 6, 2018, a delegation of three Canadian parliamentarians attended the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly's (OSCE PA) Autumn Meeting in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan. Dr. Hedy Fry, P.C., M.P. led the delegation. Dr. Fry is also the OSCE PA's Special Representative on Gender Issues, a position she has held since 2010. The Canadian delegation also included, from the Senate, the Honourable Senator Percy Downe and, from the House of Commons, Mr. Luc Berthold, M.P. The delegation was accompanied by Ms. Josée Thérien, Delegation Secretary.

2018 Autumn Meeting

Over three days, parliamentarians from across the OSCE area, together with representatives of the "Partners for Cooperation" states met in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, for the 2018 Autumn Meeting.

The OSCE PA held a Parliamentary conference on the topic of "Promoting Security Dialogue in Central Asia and Beyond."

The Head of the Canadian Delegation, **Dr. Hedy Fry, P.C., M.P.**, attended a meeting of the OSCE PA Standing Committee¹. She also spoke at a side-event organized by the Forum of Women Parliamentarians of the Jogorku Kemesh of the Kyrgyz Republic promoting the participation of women parliamentarians within the OSCE PA.

A. Mediterranean Forum (Session 2)

The Mediterranean Forum debates specific issues affecting the Mediterranean region and includes an opportunity for the Heads of the Parliamentary Delegations from the OSCE Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation (Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Morocco, and Tunisia) and the Palestinian Legislative Council to address the OSCE PA. This year the Mediterranean Forum addressed the geopolitics of Central Asia and the Mediterranean: migration, trade and environmental challenges. The meeting was opened by OSCE PA Special Representative on Mediterranean Affairs Senator Pascal Allizard (France).

Ambassador Katarina Zakova (Slovakia), the Chairperson of the OSCE Contact Group with the Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation presented first. She gave delegates an update on the work and activities of the Contact Group. She mainly touched on the issue of radicalization and how education is a strong tool to counter and prevent radicalization.

Next, the Heads of the Parliamentary Delegations from the OSCE Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation each made a presentation on the issues dear to the respective countries and region. The Heads raised several challenges that affect

¹ The Standing Committee is made up of all heads of delegation, as well as Bureau members (similar to a board of directors).

the region and stressed that the region is very vulnerable. There are increasing pollution problems in the Mediterranean. Migration and refugee flows continue to require many resources. There is a need to identify real refugees and an international definition is warranted. The human smugglers must be stopped. Many felt that the situation is deteriorating and that all countries need to be involved and act now.

During the discussion period, parliamentarians offered comments and asked questions regarding a broad range of issues including the ongoing refugee and migrant crisis, terrorism, radicalization of the youth, and conflicts in the Mediterranean region and in Central Asia.

Activities of the Canadian Delegation:

B. Parliamentary Conference on "Promoting Security Dialogue in Central Asia and Beyond"

Following an official inaugural session that took place the previous evening, opened by the President of the Kyrgyz Republic H.E. Mr. Sooronbay Jeenbekov, with remarks from the OSCE PA President, Mr. George Tsereteli (Georgia) and the Secretary General Mr. Roberto Montella, the conference sessions began.

Session 1: Countering new challenges and threats in border areas through confidence-building and regional cooperation.

The first session was moderated by Ms. Kari Henriksen (Norway), Vice-President of the OSCE PA.

The Kyrgyz Republic's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Abdyldaev Erlan Bekeshovich, spoke about the importance of cooperation in the region, specifically regarding water resources and borders. He indicated that global security and fighting corruption are major challenges and that sustainable development is primary. The culture of tolerance and diversity is key to counter terrorism. He also spoke about the residual radioactivity of the Soviet era in many countries of the region and the growing threat of nuclear activity in Central Asia.

Next, Mr. Fabio Piana indicated that we need to take a cooperative approach to security. There are more and more incidents on borders of the countries of the region and there is a need to work towards security and stability and strike on transnational threats and organized crime. It is important to build national capacity in Central Asia.

Activities of the Canadian Delegation:

This session was attended by all members of the Canadian delegation.

Dr. Hedy Fry, P.C., M.P., spoke about balancing security challenges, border management and human rights. She indicated in her intervention that States retain the authority to regulate immigration and can thereby both deny or restrict access to state territory and remove non-nationals who are not authorized to enter or

remain in the territory. However, this prerogative is subject to the principles and norms of international law, particularly human rights obligations.

Hon. Percy Downe, Senator, spoke about combatting transnational terrorism and organized crime. He said that terrorism financing and organized crime pose serious threats to the rule of law and economic development around the world and one of the solutions to this problem lies in tracking illegal assets and confiscating proceeds of crime. Considering that the fight against transnational terrorism and organized crime is a growing problem internationally, the importance of international co-operation cannot be emphasized enough. This includes co-operation within the OSCE framework. Members of the OSCE PA, must continue to support the OSCE in the important work it carries out to combat terrorism financing and organized crime, including field operations that provide valuable training and assistance to local police forces.

Mr. Luc Berthold, M.P., spoke about the need to face new challenges and threats. Many countries are facing illegal immigration, but we need to remember that most people that are going through borders are simply looking for a better life. It is important to stop and arrest the people who are taking advantage of the vulnerable populations.

Session 3: Strengthening citizens' engagement in building secure societies.

The third session of the conference was moderated by **Dr. Hedy Fry, P.C., M.P.** (Canada), OSCE PA Special Representative on Gender Issues.

The first speaker, Mr. Almazbek Musabekov (Kyrgyzstan), is Deputy Director of the National Institute for Strategic Studies. He spoke about the latest elections in Kyrgyzstan where a new process was tested. Automated ballot machines were used in the last Presidential election and the new election model was successful. A good system permits greater democracy and transparency. He indicated that transformation has to happen through the legislative process and using new technologies can facilitate interaction with citizens. It is important to reach out to citizens : the more they feel engaged, the easier it will be to combat terrorism, organized crime and assure border security.

Next, Mr. Hans-Ullrich Ihm, (Acting Head of Mission) Senior Project Officer, OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Uzbekistan spoke about the importance of citizens participation in security issues and the importance of instruction and education. He reiterated the need for religious tolerance, the support of a secure society and regional cooperation. He presented an overview of some successful projects within the organization: best practices exchanges, human rights Centres, roundtable discussions and exchanges in the region.

Activities of the Canadian Delegation:

This session was attended by all members of the Canadian delegation.

Mr. Luc Berthold, M.P., discussed the importance of the participation of youth in society and the need to involve them very early in the process. He explained the requirement for secure elections in order for people to participate. He also spoke

about the necessity to put an end to false news and interference from foreign and external influences. It is important to continue the effort to increase women's participation and re-establish trust in the system.

C. OSCE PA Standing Committee

The Standing Committee began with a report from Mr. George Tsereteli (Georgia), President of the OSCE PA.

Current international and political issues were discussed. The rise in populism and nationalism were highlighted as a security threat to democracy and that it is not an answer to transnational challenges. There is also an economic prosperity decrease.

The Secretary General of the OSCE PA., Mr. Roberto Montella (Italy), presented his report to the Standing Committee. He updated the delegates on the missions of Special representatives who have remained very active in recent months. This year also saw the most significant contribution of the OSCE PA to the OSCE's annual Human Dimension Implementation meeting in the meeting's history. He informed the Assembly that it will soon benefit from the support of two junior professional officers. The website is also being re-designed to keep with the times. The dates and location of the upcoming meetings of the OSCE PA were presented.

Delegates next heard a report concerning the election monitoring mission in Turkey and reports from several special representatives to the president of the OSCE PA.

After that, Lord Peter Bowness, Chairperson of the Subcommittee on the Rules of Procedure reported on the work of the subcommittee.

Delegates next received an update from the OSCE PA's Treasurer, Ms. Doris Barnett (Germany). She reported that finances continue to be in good order. More resources are needed as more and more missions are undertaken. An audit is coming up and she will be reporting on it at the next meeting in Vienna. She supports an increase in the budget.

Activities of the Canadian Delegation:

Dr. Hedy Fry, P.C., M.P., represented the Canadian delegation at the Standing Committee meeting.

Dr. Hedy Fry, P.C., M.P. Special Representative on Gender Issues reported on her mission to Kiev, Ukraine. She met with government and parliamentary officials as well as the leadership of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission in Ukraine. Dr. Fry particularly underlined the need for greater equality between women and men to fully advance Ukraine's reform agenda and conflict-resolution efforts.

Respectfully submitted,

The Honourable 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

ASSOCIATION	Canadian Delegation to the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe Parliamentary Assembly (OSCE PA)
ACTIVITY	Autumn Meeting
DESTINATION	Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan
DATES	From October 3-6, 2018
DELEGATION	
SENATE	Hon. Percy Downe
HOUSE OF COMMONS	Hon. Hedy Fry Mr. Luc Berthold
STAFF	Ms. Josée Thérien
TRANSPORTATION	\$ 47,417.12
ACCOMMODATION	\$ 3,869.19
HOSPITALITY	\$ 0
PER DIEMS	\$ 1,442.86
OFFICIAL GIFTS	\$ 0
MISCELLANEOUS	\$ 34.99
TOTAL	\$ 52,764.16