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**Report of the Canadian Parliamentary Delegation respecting
its participation at the 18th Winter Meeting of the OSCE
Parliamentary Assembly**

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

**Vienna, Austria
February 21-22, 2019**

Report

From 21 to 22 February 2019, a delegation of four Canadian parliamentarians attended the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe Parliamentary Assembly's (OSCE PA) Winter Meeting in Vienna, Austria. The **Honourable Hedy Fry, P.C., M.P.** led the delegation, which included the **Honourable Senator Colin Deacon**, the **Honourable Senator Percy Downe** and the **Honourable Senator Ghislain Maltais**. The delegation was accompanied by Ms. Alexandra Smith, Advisor, Mr. Matthieu Boulianne, Association Secretary and Ms. Josée Thérien, Association Secretary for the Canada-Europe Parliamentary Association.

2019 OSCE PA Winter Meeting

Parliamentarians from across the OSCE region, together with representatives of the “Partners for Cooperation” states, met in Vienna, Austria for the OSCE PA’s 2019 Winter Meeting.¹ They discussed such topics as resolving protracted conflicts, combating corruption, money laundering and the financing of terrorism, and balancing the protection of human rights with national security considerations. The agenda included opening and closing joint sessions, as well as meetings of each of the OSCE PA’s three General Committees: Political Affairs and Security; Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and the Environment; and Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions. In addition, meetings of the Standing Committee and the Ad Hoc Committee on Migration were held.

Standing Committee

The meeting of the Standing Committee, which comprises the OSCE PA’s heads of delegation and members of the Bureau, was opened by OSCE PA President George Tsereteli (Georgia). The OSCE PA’s President, Treasurer, Secretary General and Chairperson of the Sub-Committee on the Rules of Procedure and Working Practices presented reports. Ambassador Andreas Nothelle (Germany), Special Representative of the OSCE PA, presented the draft Election Observation Mission (EOM) Guidelines, which propose changes to EOMs to ensure transparency, neutrality and efficiency.

Activities of the Canadian Delegation:

The **Honourable Hedy Fry, P.C., M.P.** represented the Canadian delegation at the Standing Committee’s meeting. During her remarks to the Standing Committee, she announced that Canada will host the 29th Annual Session of the OSCE PA in Vancouver, British Columbia. 2020 marks the third time Canada will host a meeting of the OSCE PA, having also hosted the 1995 Annual Session in Ottawa and the 2008 Autumn Session in Toronto. Dr. Fry stated that hosting the Annual Session in Vancouver is a powerful reminder of the Helsinki Final Act’s vision: a zone of peace stretching from Vancouver to Vladivostok. She remarked that Vancouver is an excellent example of how Canada

¹ Some of the remarks and reports presented at the 18th Winter Meeting of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe Parliamentary Assembly (OSCE PA) are available at: OSCE PA, [2019 Winter Meeting, Vienna](#).

embraces and celebrates diversity, and as the federal Member of Parliament representing Vancouver Centre, she looks forward to welcoming parliamentarians to her vibrant and dynamic city.

Opening Joint Session of the OSCE PA's Three General Committees

President of the Austrian National Council, Wolfgang Sobotka, welcomed delegates to the Opening Joint Session of the OSCE PA's three General Committees. In his remarks, he emphasized the need for unity and multilateralism in these fragile times. He also urged parliamentarians to not become discouraged by governments that do not respect international agreements and manipulate social media to extend influence across borders. OSCE PA President George Tsereteli followed, noting that tensions have reached new levels across the entire OSCE region, particularly in eastern Ukraine and the surrounding region as the conflict there enters its sixth year. He also identified ongoing "frozen" conflicts in the region as sources of tension, including the conflict in Georgia and the Transdniestrian conflict in Moldova. Other sources of concern include domestic upheaval, such as the Yellow Vest protests in France, and the "shadow of Brexit" over the European Union. According to President Tsereteli, these challenges demonstrate a need for greater transatlantic and pan-European cooperation and multilateralism. He noted that parliamentarians are ideally suited to reinforce the special link between the OSCE and the people that should most benefit from the organization's activities.

On behalf of the Slovakian Chairmanship-in-Office of the OSCE, Slovakia's Minister of Foreign Affairs Miroslav Lajcak outlined the Chairmanship's priorities for 2019, including preventing, mitigating and resolving conflict; providing for a safer future; and promoting multilateralism. He remarked that the Chairmanship will focus on improving gender mainstreaming within the OSCE's operations, strengthening field missions, and sharing best practices on anti-terrorism and cybersecurity strategies, among other objectives. According to Mr. Lajcak, parliamentarians contribute to the OSCE by bringing the organization closer to the people it serves, adding credibility and visibility to election observation and being a source of new ideas to solve challenges.

OSCE Secretary General Thomas Greminger also delivered remarks. He reiterated President Tsereteli's assessment that tensions are worse than ever in the region and noted that resolving the conflict in Ukraine remains the OSCE's top priority. Although he expressed concern that the very concept of multilateralism is under threat, he also believes that solutions to the crisis in Ukraine and others will require cooperation and collaboration among states. The Secretary General noted that the OSCE had yet to pass its annual budget for 2019 given disagreement among participating States regarding funding targets, and stressed that he is committed to reforming the OSCE's budget process.

A question and answer session followed these remarks, during which time delegates had the opportunity to pose questions to the presenters. Parliamentarians raised a number of issues and concerns including returning foreign terrorist fighters and the rise of anti-Semitism in the OSCE region.

Activities of the Canadian Delegation:

The Opening Joint Session of the OSCE PA's Three General Committees was attended by all members of the Canadian delegation. During the question and answer session, the **Honourable Hedy Fry, P.C., M.P.** asked Mr. Lajcak if the Chairmanship-in-Office intends to implement and promote the recommendations of the recent United Nations report on youth, peace and security as part of its priority to provide for a safer future. Mr. Lajcak responded that he intends to adapt the United Nations findings to the OSCE context and will organize several events during his tenure to encourage youth inclusion. **Senator Deacon** also directed his question at Mr. Lajcak, asking if he will consider looking at technology entrepreneurship to reverse the effects of economic and social disruption. Mr. Lajcak responded that he looked forward to discussing this issue further with the Senator.

General Committee on Political Affairs and Security (First General Committee)

Chair Filippo Lombardi (Switzerland) opened the First General Committee, underscoring the importance of dialogue between the PA and OSCE officials in the politico-security dimension. He emphasized to delegates that protracted conflicts and the threat of a new nuclear arms race in the region require cooperation and multilateral solutions. Alan Farrell (Ireland), rapporteur of the First General Committee, told delegates that he intends to focus his report and draft resolution for the OSCE PA's Annual Session in Luxembourg in July 2019 on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, specifically goal 16 to promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development through accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels. He noted that sustainable development and security are inextricably linked, highlighting the importance of transparent and inclusive democratic processes in strengthening sustainable institutions. The rapporteur also underlined the link between the involvement of youth and women in policy-making and lasting peace, and commended the work of the **Special Representative on Gender, the Honourable Hedy Fry, P.C., M.P.** in this area.

The OSCE PA's delegates heard a presentation by Ambassador Maria Victoria González Román, Acting Chair of the Security Committee of the OSCE Permanent Council and Permanent Representative of Spain to the OSCE. She reviewed the committee's activities from the previous year, which focused on countering terrorism and trafficking as well as enhancing cybersecurity. In 2019, the committee is prioritizing security sector governance reform, particularly the increased participation of women in the security sector. It will also address the development and reform of critical infrastructure in the field of cybersecurity and consider how to combat terrorism, as well as violent extremism and radicalization that lead to terrorism.

Ambassador Claude Wild, Chair of the Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC) and Permanent Representative of Switzerland to the OSCE, discussed the priorities of the FSC for 2019, which will be centred on cooperation and pragmatism. The FSC will explore new topics such as private military and security companies and continue to work on issues including regional confidence and security building measures particularly as they relate to the ongoing conflict in and around Ukraine.

The First General Committee then heard a presentation by Ambassador Lamberto Zannier, the OSCE's High Commissioner on National Minorities. He expressed concern at the overall security environment in Europe and the increasing nationalism and identity

politics that disproportionately affect minorities. He condemned the use of minorities as pawns in some participating States' geopolitical strategies and called for their inclusion in conflict prevention. He also underscored the importance of education and political representation in solving issues related to integration.

The special debate on "Resolving Protracted Conflicts" was opened by the Deputy Directors of the Conflict Prevention Centre (CPC), Charles Lonsdale and Paul Picard. They discussed the tools the OSCE has developed to resolve protracted conflicts, including information monitoring, early warning systems and mediation. They also highlighted the work of the PA in facilitating dialogue and mediation through the Special Representative on Mediation. Mr. Lonsdale emphasized that each protracted conflict in the region is unique and requires different resolution mechanisms. He further noted the importance of gender sensitive approaches to conflict resolution. In the debate that followed, delegates raised several issues, including the ongoing humanitarian crisis in eastern Ukraine and the Transnistrian conflict in Moldova.

Activities of the Canadian Delegation:

The meeting of the First General Committee was attended by all members of the Canadian delegation. During the special debate, the **Honourable Hedy Fry, P.C., M.P.** spoke about the need to integrate gender mainstreaming in all processes seeking to address protracted conflicts in the OSCE region. She underscored the link between gender mainstreaming and the sustainability of peace, and called on the OSCE and participating States to not just make commitments in this area, but to implement them.

General Committee on Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and the Environment (Second General Committee)

Chair Nilza Sena (Portugal) opened the meeting of the Second General Committee, and the committee's rapporteur – Elona Gjebrea Hoxha (Albania) – started her presentation by emphasizing that policymakers must stay ahead of the rapid digitalization process that is significantly changing the OSCE region and ensure that people's needs remain at the centre of this process. Noting the 2018 Ministerial Council decision on combating corruption, she stated that the OSCE PA will focus its activities on countering this threat to stability and security. Ms. Hoxha also remarked that the area of terrorism financing requires immediate attention. Regarding migration, she underscored the need for security across borders and expressed her support for gender sensitive migration policies. Ms. Hoxha concluded her remarks by calling on all participating States to urgently address the threat of climate change, which she emphasized is linked to increased conflict, drought and natural disasters.

Ambassador Kairat Sarybay, Chair of the OSCE's Economic and Environmental Committee (EEC) and Permanent Representative of Kazakhstan to the OSCE, outlined the committee's work plan for 2019. The committee will hold eight meetings in 2019, four of which will focus on the following themes: disaster risk reduction, sustainable development, technology and anti-corruption. He commended the PA for its continued cooperation with the EEC and engagement on these issues.

Ambassador Vuk Žugić, Co-ordinator of the OSCE's Economic and Environmental Activities, spoke about the OSCE's priorities in the economic and environmental

dimension for 2019, including anti-corruption, connectivity in relation to trade, migration and human capital. He also noted the need for gender mainstreaming within the OSCE and reflected on how it could be an avenue for cooperation between the PA and the executive structures. He concluded by calling for further collaboration with the private sector on economic and environmental issues of importance.

Ambassador Žugić also opened the special debate on the subject of good governance in the area of fighting corruption, money laundering and the financing of terrorism in the OSCE region. He highlighted that corruption seriously affects the economies of participating States and greatly threatens development. He cited data indicating that countries affected by corruption attract less foreign investment and that corruption increases the cost of doing business by up to 10%. He called on participating States to increase transparency and accountability in the public sector and noted the work of the OSCE in providing assistance to participating States in this regard. He also encouraged participating States to share best practices on anti-corruption strategies, particularly involving the use of new technologies.

During the special debate, delegates discussed the importance of strong institutions to fight corruption, the link between money laundering and funding of terrorism and the necessity of prioritizing good governance efforts. The roles played by civil society and the private sector in anti-corruption efforts were also raised.

Activities of the Canadian Delegation:

The meeting of the Second General Committee was attended by the **Honourable Senator Colin Deacon**, the **Honourable Senator Percy Downe** and the **Honourable Senator Ghislain Maltais**. During the special debate, Senator Downe spoke about the growing problem of illicit financing in the OSCE region. He remarked on the massive losses to the global economy due to bribes and corruption, and the blurring of lines between terrorist financing and criminal financing in recent years. Senator Downe emphasized the need to enhance cooperation between participating States to combat these problems.

General Committee on Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions (Third General Committee)

The Third General Committee was held concurrently with that of the Second General Committee. Chair Margareta Kiener Nellen (Switzerland) opened the meeting with updates on her recent activities, including her visit to Ukraine in December 2018. She described her plans to continue engaging with participating States on human rights concerns and underscored the responsibility parliamentarians have to protect human rights both at home and abroad.

Rapporteur Kyriakou-Hadjijanni (Cyprus) then presented his ideas for his report to the 28th Annual Session in Luxembourg. He noted that respect for human rights continues to deteriorate across the OSCE region, due in part to the rise of populism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism, racism, sexism and other forms of intolerance in recent years. Mr. Kyriakou-Hadjijanni also emphasized the need to ensure that the rights of vulnerable groups, particularly children, receive special attention by governments. Finally, he called on

participating States to reaffirm their commitment to the principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Helsinki Final Act.

Ambassador Ivo Šrámek, Chairperson of the Human Dimension Committee of the OSCE Permanent Council and Permanent Representative of Czechia to the OSCE, began his remarks by commending the OSCE PA for championing democratic principles, particularly its election monitoring efforts. He then shared the Human Dimension Committee's work plan for 2019, stating that it will focus on increasing participation in public and political life by ensuring respect for human rights. In addition, the Human Dimension Committee will explore the issues of tolerance and non-discrimination, freedom of expression, freedom of the media and information, prevention of torture, as well as economic, social and cultural rights.

The Chair's remarks were followed by those of Ingibjörg Sólrún Gísladóttir, Director of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR). She thanked the OSCE PA for its excellent collaboration with ODIHR, particularly in the field of election observation. She then stressed that as national legislators, it is incumbent on parliamentarians to ensure that their constituents' fundamental freedoms are enshrined in domestic law. According to Ms. Gísladóttir, key topics of concern for ODIHR include the participation of women in political life, combating intolerance and non-discrimination, and the integration of minority populations.

The special debate on the scope of legitimate restrictions on human rights in times of emergency was introduced by Harlem Désir, OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media. He noted that while states may be compelled to enact security measures in response to emerging threats and crises across the OSCE region, these measures must be temporary and directly related to an emergency which threatens the life of a nation. In addition, these measures cannot infringe on certain non-derogable rights, including the right to life and the right to be free from torture. Mr. Désir emphasized that the work of journalists and the media is even more critical during states of emergency to ensure transparency and an informed public.

During the special debate, parliamentarians discussed various issues including "fake news," hate speech, and the safety of journalists. Some delegates stressed that states of emergency should never be used as pretexts to restrict human rights such as freedom of the media and freedom of expression.

Activities of the Canadian Delegation:

The **Honourable Hedy Fry, P.C., M.P.** attended the meeting of the Third General Committee.

Closing Joint Session of the Three General Committees

The closing joint session was opened by President Tsereteli, who introduced the speakers. The first speaker, Nahima Lanjri (Belgium), made remarks in her capacity as Chair of the OSCE PA Ad Hoc Committee on Migration. She informed the delegates about the committee's activities in 2018, including visits to Sweden and Denmark to assess migration developments. Regarding the committee's agenda for 2019, she stated that it will focus on the integration of migrants, particularly their access to the labour market.

The Chair of the OSCE PA Ad Hoc Committee on Countering Terrorism, Makis Voridis (Greece), also addressed the Closing Joint Session. He stressed the need for parliamentarians to implement previous OSCE PA commitments on countering terrorism, and underscored the emerging challenges related to returning foreign terrorist fighters. He also informed the delegates of the committee's activities in the previous year, including a conference at the Spanish Senate in Madrid concerning victims of terrorism.

In her capacity as the OSCE PA's Special Representative on Gender Issues, the **Honourable Hedy Fry, P.C., M.P.** addressed the Closing Joint Session, as discussed below.

The Special Representative on Mediterranean Affairs, Pascale Allizard (France) followed with updates relevant to his mandate. He highlighted the emergence of China in the Mediterranean region, particularly with projects connected to the Belt and Road Initiative. Senator Mike Lee (U.S.) delivered remarks on behalf of Chris Smith (U.S.), the Special Representative on Combatting Human Trafficking. He stressed the need to promote information sharing to prevent the sexual exploitation of children, and urged parliamentarians to implement all OSCE and OSCE PA commitments on combating human trafficking. Next, Gwen Moore (U.S.) spoke on behalf of the Special Representative on Anti-Semitism, Racism and Intolerance, Benjamin Cardin (U.S.). She underscored the need to immediately respond to recent acts of hate in the OSCE region, and reiterated Mr. Cardin's previous concerns regarding the lack of political will in the OSCE to respond to hate speech and racism.

Various speakers then reported on the OSCE PA's election observation activities in the preceding year, including the general elections in Bosnia and Herzegovina; the presidential elections in Georgia; the U.S. midterm elections; and elections in Armenia.

Finally, the Special Representative for the Slovak Chairmanship on Combating Corruption, Paola Severino (Italy), emphasized that corruption undermines security, and must be addressed using integrated and multilateral approaches. These approaches should include the use of regulated digital tools and technological innovations which can be used to increase citizens' political participation and foster more transparent and accountable democratic processes. She also highlighted the importance of engaging the private sector in the fight to end corruption.

Following a general debate, Lord Peter Bowness (U.K.) closed the session on behalf of President Tsereteli.

Activities of the Canadian Delegation:

The **Honourable Hedy Fry, P.C., M.P.** announced to the Closing Joint Session that Vancouver will host the 29th Annual Session of the OSCE PA in July 2020. In her capacity as the Special Representative on Gender Issues, she also presented her ideas for the 2019 Gender Report to be debated at the OSCE PA's Annual Session in Luxembourg. She began her remarks by commending the Ministerial Council for having passed a decision on preventing and combating violence against women after four years of being unable to reach consensus on this topic, and thanked the OSCE PA for its efforts in this area. She noted, however, that the decision lacks reference to several important issues, including intimate partner violence and violence against women journalists, and hopes

that these topics will be included in future decisions. She then provided observations on gender parity within the OSCE, which she said is still lacking and has even declined in some divisions; there is a need to educate OSCE staff on gender mainstreaming approaches. Dr. Fry also updated the delegates on her July 2018 visit to Ukraine, where she met with OSCE representatives, government officials and representatives from non-governmental organizations to discuss Ukraine's efforts to promote gender equality in all areas of private and public life.

Dr. Fry then informed the delegates that her forthcoming report would focus on gender equality and youth. She noted that investing in and supporting youth is essential for sustainable economic and social development, and that gender equality is a key component of this support. However, these topics tend to be viewed in silos rather than as a comprehensive multidimensional issue. Dr. Fry intends to shed further light on these issues as they relate to each other in her gender report. She noted that young women and girls are particularly vulnerable to gender-based violence and constitute the majority of victims of online grooming. Any approach aimed at improving gender equality among youth, however, must include young men and boys, particularly when efforts are focused on dismantling the negative and far-reaching effects of toxic masculinity. Dr. Fry also informed the delegates that part of her report will focus on the gendered impacts of climate change and the need to engage with youth on this and other critical issues.²

All members of the Canadian delegation attended the Closing Joint Session. The **Honourable Senator Ghislain Maltais** spoke in support of the address by Dr. Fry, reiterating her call for gender mainstreaming across all OSCE projects and programs and commending her forthcoming report on gender equality and youth as timely and necessary. The **Honourable Senator Colin Deacon** recalled Dr. Fry's assertion in her address that the lower participation of young women and girls in science, math, engineering and technology (STEM) education and careers creates a "vicious cycle" that needs to be broken. He cited studies demonstrating a clear link between female leadership and business profitability and called on delegates to prioritize the promotion of female entrepreneurship.

Meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee on Migration

The **Honourable Hedy Fry, P.C., M.P.** represented the Canadian delegation on the Ad Hoc Committee on Migration. The Ad Hoc Committee serves as a focal point for the OSCE PA's work in the field of migration in all three dimensions of the OSCE,³ and develops policy recommendations aimed at improving the treatment of – and prospects for – migrants in OSCE participating States.

Additional Activities of the Canadian Delegation

On 20 February 2019, the Canadian delegation met with Natasha Cayer, Canada's Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the OSCE. She provided a briefing on Canada's priorities at the OSCE, and discussed such issues as the situation in Ukraine,

² OSCE PA, "[Address by Dr. Hedy Fry, Special Representative on Gender Issues to the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly](#)," 18th Winter Meeting of the OSCE PA, Vienna, Austria, 22 February 2019.

³ The three dimensions are: politico-military; economic and environmental; and human.

Canada–Russia relations, and the rise of nationalism and populism in the OSCE region. That same evening, the Canadian delegation and Ambassador Cayer attended a dinner hosted by the United States delegation, with other delegations from Ireland, Georgia, Albania and Lithuania.

On 21 February 2019, members of the Canadian delegation attended a reception hosted by the Austrian National Parliament at which they met colleagues from other national delegations.

The **Honourable Hedy Fry, P.C., M.P.** met Special Representatives of the OSCE Chairmanship-in-Office on Youth and Security to discuss ideas and areas of common interest for her upcoming report on gender equality and youth. Dr. Fry also met with Amarsanaa Darisureen, OSCE Senior Adviser on Gender Issues, to discuss activities for 2019 and opportunities for them to collaborate in the context of Dr. Fry's role as the OSCE PA's Special Representative on Gender Issues.

On 22 February 2019, the Canadian delegation met with the Open Dialogue Foundation to discuss recent human rights developments in post-Soviet countries, with a focus on Kazakhstan and Moldova.

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

ASSOCIATION	Canadian Delegation to the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe Parliamentary Assembly
ACTIVITY	18 th Winter Meeting of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly
DESTINATION	Vienna, Austria
DATES	February 21-22, 2019
DELEGATION	
SENATE	Hon. Colin Deacon, Senator Hon. Percy Downe, Senator Hon. Ghislain Maltais, Senator
HOUSE OF COMMONS	Hon. Hedy Fry, P.C., M.P., Director
STAFF	Ms. Josée Thérien, Secretary of Delegation Mr. Matthieu Boulianne, Secretary of Delegation Ms. Alexandra Smith, Advisor
TRANSPORTATION	\$ 47,566.87
ACCOMMODATION	\$ 6,645.91
HOSPITALITY	\$ 0
PER DIEMS	\$ 4,222.25
OFFICIAL GIFTS	\$ 0
MISCELLANEOUS	\$ 7.91
TOTAL	\$ 58,442.94