

# PARLIAMENTARY PERSPECTIVE ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN TODAY'S EUROPE

---

---

## HEARING BEFORE THE COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE ONE HUNDRED TENTH CONGRESS FIRST SESSION

OCTOBER 18, 2007

---

Printed for the use of the  
Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe

[CSCE 110-1-8]



Available via <http://www.csce.gov>

---

U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE

61-806 PDF

WASHINGTON : 2010

---

For sale by the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office  
Internet: [bookstore.gpo.gov](http://bookstore.gpo.gov) Phone: toll free (866) 512-1800; DC area (202) 512-1800  
Fax: (202) 512-2250 Mail: Stop SSOP, Washington, DC 20402-0001

COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE

LEGISLATIVE BRANCH COMMISSIONERS

HOUSE

ALCEE L. HASTINGS, Florida,  
*Chairman*  
LOUISE McINTOSH SLAUGHTER,  
New York  
MIKE McINTYRE, North Carolina  
HILDA L. SOLIS, California  
G.K. BUTTERFIELD, North Carolina  
CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH, New Jersey  
ROBERT B. ADERHOLT, Alabama  
JOSEPH R. PITTS, Pennsylvania  
MIKE PENCE, Indiana

SENATE

BENJAMIN L. CARDIN, Maryland,  
*Co-Chairman*  
RUSSELL D. FEINGOLD, Wisconsin  
CHRISTOPHER J. DODD, Connecticut  
HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON, New York  
JOHN F. KERRY, Massachusetts  
SAM BROWNBACK, Kansas  
GORDON SMITH, Oregon  
SAXBY CHAMBLISS, Georgia  
RICHARD BURR, North Carolina

EXECUTIVE BRANCH COMMISSIONERS

VACANT, Department of State  
VACANT, Department of Defense  
VACANT, Department of Commerce

# PARLIAMENTARY PERSPECTIVE ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN TODAY'S EUROPE

OCTOBER 18, 2007

## COMMISSIONERS

	Page
Hon. Alcee L. Hastings, Chairman, Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe .....	1
Hon. Benjamin L. Cardin, Co-Chairman, Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe .....	3
Hon. Christopher H. Smith, Ranking Member, Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe .....	10
Hon. Mike McIntyre, Commissioner, Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe .....	5
Hon. Hilda L. Solis, Commissioner, Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe .....	4
Hon. G.K. Butterfield, Commissioner, Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe .....	11

## WITNESSES

Göran Lenmarker, President, Parliamentary Assembly of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe ..	5
--	---

## APPENDICES

Prepared statement of Hon. Alcee L. Hastings .....	18
Prepared statement of Hon. Benjamin L. Cardin .....	20
Prepared statement of Hon. Christopher H. Smith .....	21
Prepared statement of Göran Lenmarker .....	22

(III)



# PARLIAMENTARY PERSPECTIVE ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN TODAY'S EUROPE

October 18, 2007

COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE  
WASHINGTON, DC

[The hearing was held at 9:30 a.m. in room B-318 of the Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC, Hon. Alcee L. Hastings, Chairman, Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, presiding.

*Commissioners present:* Hon. Alcee L. Hastings, Chairman, Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe; Hon. Benjamin L. Cardin, Co-Chairman, Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe; Hon. Christopher H. Smith, Ranking Member, Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe; Hon. Mike McIntyre, Commissioner, Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe; Hon. Hilda L. Solis, Commissioner, Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe; and Hon. G.K. Butterfield, Commissioner, Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe.

*Witnesses present:* Göran Lennmarker, President, Parliamentary Assembly of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

## HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS, CHAIRMAN, COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE

Mr. HASTINGS. Well, it's 9:30 by the clock, Mr. President, and in an effort to make sure that we are expeditious, I'd like to convene this morning's hearing.

And this morning we're going to hear a parliamentary perspective on security and cooperation in Europe. Our witness is a personal friend of mine, Göran Lennmarker, a Swedish parliamentarian and Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee in the Riksdag, as well as my successor as President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly.

While the role of parliamentarian in the Helsinki process goes back almost to the beginning with the creation of the Helsinki Commission, the U.S. Congress has played an enormous role in shaping U.S. OSCE policy while combining regional and diplomatic expertise with the political capital Members of Congress have.

Over the years many countries expressed interest in emulating the Commission in their own national parliaments, but the creation of the 320-member OSCE Parliamentary Assembly has served a

similar purpose. It has created groups within parliaments who are knowledgeable about OSCE issues and willing to keep the diplomats moving forward.

As we see today, however, these issues are not necessarily easy.

Commissioner Solis, please come up.

The challenges in U.S. and European relations with Russia are growing, for example, while Russia's internal development is a cause for deep concern.

Numerous local and regional conflicts which erupted in the 1990's continue to simmer. People continue to suffer the effects of these conflicts today, although they are rarely noticed, given the absence of widespread violence. The lives and well being of more people are at risk if political solutions are not found.

In December, what many considered the last open question in the Balkans—the status of Kosovo—is expected to be answered. Unfortunately, there continues to be disagreement on what the answer should be, creating increased instability at a time when the whole region should be working on European integration.

Despite their freely undertaken OSCE commitments, many OSCE states are behind in their democratic development and fail to respect basic human rights. Belarus comes to mind, Mr. President, along with some countries of Central Asia. On a wider scale, we continue to see manifestations of anti-Semitism, racism, and other forms of hatred and intolerance.

And, of course, as we well know here in the United States, there are the challenges of protecting civil liberties and basic human rights at the same time we fight terrorism. As our witness today is aware, the president of the Belgian senate, our colleague Ann Marie Lizin, testified before this Commission earlier this year about her investigation of the U.S. detention center at Guantanamo Bay.

Parliamentarians have an unquestionable role to play in responding to these issues. They know the workings of democracy and the threats democracy faces. They deal with people and have an understanding of how a society works. And through the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and similar fora, they pool their experience and expertise to make Europe, the wider OSCE region and the world a better place.

As we know, governments often resent parliamentarians holding them accountable, and diplomats can be very much like the governments they represent. As a result, there are institutional issues that come up in the OSCE, including the role of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, that unfortunately sidetrack us from real issues like the holding of free and fair elections, combating corruption or responding to conflict.

I know that our witness today, my good friend Göran Lennmarker, will be addressing these questions regarding the situation in various parts of the OSCE region, as well as within the organization, and I very much look forward to hearing his views.

Before we turn to you, President Lennmarker, I'd like for the Co-Chairman of the Commission, my good friend and used-to-be House of Representatives colleague Senator Cardin.

**HON. BENJAMIN L. CARDIN, CO-CHAIRMAN, COMMISSION ON  
SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE**

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. Chairman, it's good to be back at the House. It's good to be back in this committee, where I spent many, many hours. This is one of the subcommittee rooms of the Ways and Means Committee, and I spent many an hour in this room, so it's nice to be back.

President Lennmarker, thank you for being here, but more importantly, thank you for your leadership in the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly. You are a very busy parliamentarian with very important responsibilities in your country, and yet you take time to lead the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly. And I just really want to thank you personally for that.

I felt the same with President Hastings and his commitment to international issues. I think it's just so important. We all have so much responsibility in our own country, but what you're doing in trying to make the world a little bit smaller and the effectiveness of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly to me is extremely important, and I thank you for your commitment.

It's nice to have Spencer Oliver back. Spencer, as you know, started as a staff person here on the Hill, and we're very proud of his work in creating the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly as a way in which parliamentarians can have major impact on legal issues. So we're just very proud.

This is my 21st year in the U.S. Congress, and I started my first year working on the Helsinki Commission. And shortly after coming to Congress, I became a Commissioner and worked on the Helsinki Commission issues.

I'm very proud of what role the OSCE has played in the Human Dimension, on the Economic and Environmental Dimension, and also on the Security Dimension. It's had major impact on getting Soviet Jews out of the Soviet Union. It had major impacts on initiating legislation in our states to deal with human trafficking—more recently, in dealing with the problems in anti-Semitism and discrimination issues and dealing with protecting the rights of the Roma population throughout the many countries in Europe. And the list goes on and on.

And I'm proud of the work that we've done in helping countries fight corruption within their own countries and leading them to democracy. I'm proud of the role that our commission has played in initiating many of these matters, working with our friends from Europe.

It's been a good run. We've gotten a lot of things done, and the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly can be very proud of its important role within OSCE and within each of our individual states.

I had the opportunity, as you know, to chair the second committee, which I found very rewarding, because I think the economic and environmental basket doesn't quite get the same attention as the human rights dimension or security dimensions. And we were able to help countries that were really struggling in dealing with the economic issues.

I think challenges for the future in dealing with corruption and dealing with energy are going to be critical issues that we have to confront in the OSCE region. But I'm particularly pleased to have

you here, because I do think, as I told you before the hearing started, we really need to look at the challenges facing the OSCE.

I am very concerned about the bureaucracy in Vienna. I think it's become way too bureaucratic. We need to get our capitals more directly involved in the work of OSCE. I worry about what would be the bureaucracy in Vienna's view of the Parliamentary Assembly. I worry about it, because I think the Parliamentary Assembly is a critical part of the OSCE.

Parliamentarians have a unique perspective. I've seen the struggle on election monitoring and think that was an area where we spent an awful lot of energy in order to protect something that's very, very important and why we aren't all working together in a more effective manner.

So I hope that this will be part of today's hearing, planning strategies to make sure that we're effective in the future, because I do think for the member states and, quite frankly, beyond the member states—what we're doing with our Mediterranean dimension has been very important outside of the OSCE states itself—that we present a model that could be used internationally to help move understanding and cooperation so that we have a safer world and more prosperous world for all the citizens.

And I think we play a major role in that, and I'm just proud to be part of the Helsinki Commission and welcome you here to Washington.

Mr. HASTINGS. Thank you very much, Senator.

Commissioner Solis, the President's Special Representative.

**HON. HILDA L. SOLIS, COMMISSIONER, COMMISSION ON  
SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE**

Ms. SOLIS. Thank you very much, Chairman Hastings and also Co-Chairman Cardin. It's a real pleasure to be here in this capacity now, and I especially want to welcome Mr. Lennmarker and, obviously, our good friend Mr. Oliver.

I am very grateful for the position that you have asked me to serve in the migration area. Immigration, as you know, is a very, very troubling and controversial, but very important issue that we're facing not only here in the United States, but obviously in all parts of the world.

And I just came from another briefing regarding Iraq and the refugee situation there that bordering states in the Mediterranean are faced with. So I'm sure that we're going to be learning about the role that the United States will be playing in helping to transition those refugees and asylum refugees as well. So I'm sure that we're going to be able to shed a lot of light on that.

And I really appreciate all the work that you have done and look forward to hearing your report, and I'm looking forward to attending our meeting next year. And I'm very excited about the enthusiasm and the spirit of OSCE and what it represents.

I think for someone like myself who comes from a State like California that is viewed in some cases as progressive, we have a lot that we can share—our ideas with other members of the various parliaments that are going to be represented.

This week there is a delegation of women from the Congress who are going to be visiting parliamentarians in Europe to talk about

women's health issues, teenage issues and juvenile issues. So that's another aspect that I hope to share my position as the representative for youth to talk about what we're trying to do in the States, but also as a member of the Helsinki Commission.

So welcome, and thank you very much.

Mr. HASTINGS. Thank you, Commissioner Solis.  
Commissioner McIntyre?

**HON. MIKE McINTYRE, COMMISSIONER, COMMISSION ON  
SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE**

Mr. McINTYRE. Thank you so much, Mr. Chairman.

And what a pleasure it is to be able to have each of you gentlemen here with us today.

I'm especially pleased that, Mr. Lennmarker, you and I were together in February in Vienna at the Winter Meeting, and thank you for the leadership you had there as well as the excellent planning that we saw at the meeting that we had in Kiev, Ukraine, this July and the leadership that you've exhibited throughout. You've given wonderful service to OSCE and to the member nations that has been a blessing in the work of OSCE.

Your work and leadership has been excellent. It's been energetic. It's been very efficient. And I think those are the simplest, but the most dynamic ways to describe your leadership and I greatly appreciate the leadership that you've given. It's always been fair, and I've always enjoyed working with you and working under your leadership during my service on this Commission.

Spencer, I'd also like to say thank you for being here today and for your leadership. We're very proud of the commitments you have and especially enjoyed the time that we spent with you also in the Ukraine recently. It's great to have both of you gentlemen here with us today. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. HASTINGS. Thank you very much.

President Lennmarker? Or as we are fond of saying in the Assembly, you have the floor.

**GÖRAN LENNMARKER, PRESIDENT, PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY OF THE ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE**

Mr. LENNMARKER. Thank you, my dear friend Alcee Hastings, president emeritus of the Parliamentary Assembly of the OSCE. Thank you for the nice words from all of you. Could I first say it is a great pleasure and a deep honor to be here in the Helsinki Commission of the U.S. Congress?

And I would like to thank the members of the Commission—certainly, the President, Mr. Hastings, president emeritus of our organization and also a very active emeritus, I might say. Usually, emeritus means that you lean back sometimes. That is not for Alcee Hastings. He continues to contribute very valuably to our work.

And also to the Co-Chair, Senator Cardin—nice to see you. And you also have contributed to the Parliamentary Assembly through the work in the committee that you chaired.

Ms. Solis, I'm glad to see you here. You will have a tough time, I can tell you, when you are a representative of migration, which is a hot topic—a hot topic in all parliaments, I can tell you, in Europe, and you have the same, of course, in your country—because it's a contentious issue. It's an area where perhaps nobody I saw is extremely successful. We are more and less failures sometimes, I say. Some are less failures than others.

And Mr. McIntyre, I appreciate very much working with you and look forward to so as you also climb on those ladders in our organization, because we need a strong U.S. participation in those. That's extremely important, because our organization is focusing on the wider Europe. But its very value is in its membership from the United States—and Canada, I would add.

We won't forget that we are 56 countries. We are about half of the world economy. We are one-third of the land surface of the globe. We are about one-fifth—a little less nowadays—of the population of the globe in the 56 countries. And certainly their focus on the OSCE area, particularly on the wider Europe, is extremely important.

If you look at Europe—and I chose the title “Whole and Free”, because I think that is a value that we share over the Atlantic—I think that if you compared it with what happened in your country a long time ago now when you built your country, I would say that what we see in Europe today is that coming today of the European continent.

The fall of the Berlin Wall was perhaps like when you went over the Mississippi once—the divide there going to the west. We are going to the east in a way. So the Berlin Wall was perhaps like the arc in St. Louis, showing the way in.

And I would say that you coming from California—the Pacific of Europe is perhaps the Black Sea, while the European integration we go on further. We are at 54 countries in the wider Europe, and 23 of them are new countries. They didn't exist as independent countries 20 years ago. Forty percent of the members in our Parliamentary Assembly were not national parliaments that recently. And I think that shows the construction that we are in Europe.

I would say that essentially Europe is on its right track, because if you look back in history, Europe has usually been the source of problems for itself and also for other continents. And I don't wish to say that in the U.S. Congress that certainly the United States had to pay a lot throughout the last century for helping Europe to sort out the mess that we have done in Europe—and beyond Europe even.

Now Europe certainly is, I would say, in a situation where I guess we would be able to construct a whole and free continent. We are not there yet, but there have been enormous gains throughout the last decade. They are more democratic than ever before. There is less oppression than ever before. It's more prosperous than ever before.

I would particularly say that the eastern half of Europe is catching up—sometimes rather rapidly. Coming out of dictatorship is not that easy—to build a modern democracy in a modern functioning economy, taking in, of course, all the problems that you

have with members of the former regimes, trying to accommodate them.

And we are certainly more peaceful after the battles that we have had. I just mentioned the word “Srebrenica,” which in Europe, of course, gives a bitter shame.

So I would say against that background, Europe is doing pretty well. I say this because I think it’s important, because I otherwise will focus on problems, and when you focus on problems, of course, you take on those areas which are not functioning that well.

The way we build our Europe is on two very important pillars. One is about values. It’s a value-based work in Europe, where we agree on principles that are there. And the other is to have strong organization.

OSCE is one of those strong organizations that needs to be there to see to it that you don’t only have values that are all there on paper, but also values that are followed by the member countries—not only pretend to follow values, but also actually doing these. And I think this is extremely important to build our European continent in that way.

These 54 European countries have 880 million—nearly three times as big as the United States population-wise. It’s, as I said, a rapidly growing continent economically, and we now have to focus, I think, on the things that we need to do before we reach the goal of a whole and free continent.

One thing, of course, is a frozen conflict. I hate the word “frozen conflict” because it implies that you can live with a conflict. It is not so. It is a price paid for these conflicts constantly day by day. People are killed. If I take the one that I have been deeply engaged in and I’m not going to call that conflict, people die. Young people are killed along the line of contact. A shepherd goes after straying sheep, for example, that trample on a land mine, and a catastrophe is caused by that.

We need to see at least that we not only focus on the frozen conflict, but we also deliver results. If I just look at the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, I would say that the three co-chairman of the Minsk Group have done a really good job. One of those is, as you know, from the United States, together with France and Russia. Now it’s up to the leadership of the two countries to be able to sign on a solution, which I think is a good solution for the two countries.

But I also say that the three areas in Europe where a lot of work still needs to be done is the western Balkans, the six or the six-plus countries, the plus being Kosovo that is not yet part of a stabilized Europe, so to say, and had recent conflict, as you remember, in the 1990s. Both Srebrenica that was, in a way, the symbolic catastrophe of that region, and accordingly, the Kosovo campaign if you go back to the spring of 1999, led to tremendous work there, not least by the OSCE. We have missions over there. I’ve been traveling by car, I can tell you, throughout these countries to see the missions and to see the work that is done there. And there you see the strength of the OSCE. I must really tell you that they’re doing an enormous job on the ground. And we see that.

I can tell you one example that we were going to wind down one of the missions in Croatia, because Croatia is in the process of joining NATO and EU. But the work done by the OSCE is so impor-

tant that they could not be replaced by something else. Now we see even the Croatians say that perhaps we should stay on with this type of OSCE work on the ground.

This reflects some return of refugees and attention for refugees. And also when it comes to the Hague Tribunal, the lesser crimes are dealt within the national system, not in the Hague Tribunal. These are just an example.

The other is the Black Sea area—as I said, the Pacific of Europe, if I make the parallel with the U.S. expansion in the 19th century. And I think that it is important to see that Ukraine and Turkey in the European Union, which I strongly, strongly support, and the countries of southern Caucasus—the three of them and Moldova, a country that is usually forgotten, because it's rather small, but an important one.

In Belarus, we need to see that the OSCE, which it has a mission there, supports democracy, that we support the independent sovereignty work.

Well, let's finally come to the Central Asian countries, the five countries that are in a difficult geographical position. They are landlocked, all of them—the Caspian Sea is really not a sea, but more a salty lake—and they have come out of a tradition of dictatorship and never been independent countries.

And I want to underline that, because this is tough to build a modern, functioning democracy when you come out of such a situation. And we certainly would wish to see much more engagement when it comes to Central Asia. It will be a much longer journey.

When I talk to my Baltic friends—if we only look at Lithuania, they'll say that yes, we also came out of dictatorship, but we had democratic neighbors, had strong democratic countries in our neighborhood. That is not so in Central Asia. That's why I particularly want to emphasize engagement in Central Asia.

For one thing, I appointed a special representative there, a colleague from Finland, as you know, and we will also try to show from the Nordic country on how you can have a regional cooperation on practical issues in order to try to get these countries to cooperate with each other, which is sometimes difficult when you are a new sovereign country. You want to express your independence, your own national institutions, and then of course you are sometimes a little less happy to share with a neighboring country which is in the same position.

That is also why we will have our next annual session in Astana, the new capital of Kazakhstan in early July or late June next year. That's also why I'm personally supporting the idea that Kazakhstan should have the chairmanship of the OSCE.

Kazakhstan is not the perfect democracy. No country in Central Asia is that. There are also some others of these I've described where democracy has not yet taken root. But I think we all are a work under construction, and engagement is part of that. That's why I am so strongly supportive of this idea of the chairmanship, but also sovereignty support.

Can I add one point that I think is important? Building a sovereign country takes time, and to build a democracy you must be a sovereign country first. Democracy-building is a challenge, and

sometimes you have to think through what are the different stages in it.

Could I just end with two important things that were brought up by you, and that is about the parliamentary dimension? It's very simple. It's like children. They don't do what the parents say; they do what the parents do. And if we on the OSCE say that parliamentary dimension, strong democratic oversight is important, should we have that in our own organization? It's not more complicated than that.

You need parliaments not only for making laws and taking budgets, but to control power, for power must be controlled. That is the essence of democracy, and I think that we need to see to it that we have a proper parliamentary dimension in our own organization, an open democratic organization that has a scrutiny that should be there for everyone. And so I think that is extremely important.

It's also important when you look at the internal machinery. And you referred to that—that the role of the Parliamentary Assembly as an institution in OSCE is extremely important. Oversight does not mean micromanagement. Administrations are there to be an executive, but oversight is control that things are done in the correct way.

Could I add one personal word? I was previously in the opposition chair of the constitution committee in the Swedish parliament, and we scrutinized the Swedish Government's handling of the tsunami catastrophe in Thailand or in the Indian Ocean. As a matter of fact, Sweden was the hardest hit country in Europe—of course, much less than the countries there—but the handling of that catastrophe was scrutinized in parliament.

And that was extremely important to show responsibility, of course, but also for the future, because that's the whole idea with scrutiny. Governments don't like to make the mistakes twice, if they are smart.

Could I then end with a word of election monitoring? That is an important part of the work of the Parliamentary Assembly. We have observed about 90 elections throughout the years, I would say. More than 2,000 parliamentarians have been there, and I think that this is one of the important things in the construction of a democratic Europe—to observe the elections.

But we had a problem, as you know, with ODIHR, when it comes to the internal cooperation with the OSCE. We should do this together, and if you do it together, you should be open. You should do it in a trustful way, not having internal difficulties.

There is a way to sort this out. It's called the cooperation agreement. It was established long before you and I, Mr. President, were in charge of our Parliamentary Assembly back in 1997. And we have scrupulously, from our parliamentary side, followed that. I'm sorry to say that has not been from the other side. Now we need to sort that out. That is extremely important to do that.

Could I end with one particular word to you as democratically elected parliamentarians from the United States? We need you in OSCE Parliamentary Assembly. We need you in other parliamentary assemblies. We need you taking part in the international

world. We know that you have tough schedules in your country, in your parliament. You are extremely busy. I've seen the schedule.

But see to it that you have the time to participate with other parliamentarians, to discuss, to meet—not only to rush into a meeting and rush out again, but having a cup of coffee or a drink or sitting at night to contemplate things. We need you there, and I think there should be ways to see that you can make Congressmen and Senators able to participate even more. We would appreciate from the rest of us.

Thank you.

Mr. HASTINGS. Göran, I, last evening, read your full remarks and with your permission and with unanimous consent of the Commission, we will accept your full statement into the record. And I appreciate very much your summarization of those remarks.

I would urge the staff to make sure that we get them up on our Web site, because they are illuminating on many of the issues that we may not reach in our question time.

Just as a followup to what you said regarding our parliamentary meeting yesterday, I, as well as others, met with Tunisian parliamentarians, you'll be pleased to know. Our Mediterranean partners were here in America, and I cited the fact that you were here and your important work that you are continuing in that area—as well as a potential future Mediterranean partner, Lebanese parliamentarians were here yesterday as well, and I, as well as others, met with them.

Commissioner Butterfield, thank you.

We've been joined by the ranking member of the Helsinki Commission, and we all, of course, began with opening statements, so if you could give us a truncated opening statement, it would be appreciated.

**HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH, RANKING MEMBER,  
COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE**

Mr. SMITH. Well, I would ask that my whole statement be made a part of the record.

Mr. HASTINGS. Without objection.

Mr. SMITH. And I won't take the time of the Commission to deliver that, but just to welcome you, Mr. President and Spencer Oliver, to the Commission. And thank you for the honor of your presence and your testimony. And I do have some questions, but at the appropriate time I'll pose those.

But you mentioned the idea of checks and balances. The reason why I was late, Mr. Chairman, was that there was a group of Democrats and Republicans who just met with Catholic Church officials on Iraq. It was scheduled for an hour and went for an hour and 20 minutes.

And what we're doing is talking about responsible transition, and these are a very eclectic group, a very disparate group of Members who don't agree on very much, but we're trying to find a way forward on the vexing issue of Iraq. So that's what made me late.

But it was very, very illuminating—we're looking at the refugee issue, the 4.5 million or so refugees. We're looking at a whole bunch of issues, because we want, obviously, to protect innocent human life from what could be a genocide in Iraq and balancing

that with how quickly can we transition security to the Iraqi security forces. So it was a very, very illuminating discussion, and we're trying to find some way of working together.

And rather than para-control, sometimes we micromanage, and it's a good thing we do, because a lot of our bills have micro-management—State Department, Justice Department. We see our role, as I'm sure you would agree, as total, absolute co-equals with the executive branch, and many of our parliaments need to realize that they are not an adjunct of the prime minister or the president for life. They are a co-equal branch. And so I think your point there was very well taken.

Thank you.

Mr. HASTINGS. Thank you very much.

Commissioner Butterfield, you joined us, and I'll allow you an even more truncated statement than Mr. Smith's.

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. You and I have that in common. I have a tendency to be brief anyway. Spencer, good to see you again.

Mr. President, thank you very much for coming.

Mr. Chairman, thank you for your leadership.

I'm happy to be here today. I've had three meetings this morning, and I apologize for being late, but welcome.

Thank you. I yield back.

Mr. HASTINGS. Thank you very much.

Following what Representative Smith said, Mr. President, I think you know of all of our deep concern about the humanitarian and security crisis resulting from the massive flow of Iraqi refugees into neighboring countries, including some 750,000 in OSCE partner state of Jordan, Egypt, and Turkey are impacted as well.

But I want to take this opportunity to thank you and your government for accepting more than 12,000 Iraqi refugees for resettlement in Sweden. Your country, as I understand it, is just a little over nine million people. This would be, then, the equivalent in the United States of accepting more than 400,000 Iraqi refugees.

Sadly, and I might add pathetically, we've resettled less than 2,000 refugees from Iraq since 2003. Clearly, in my view—and you've heard it expressed here by Ms. Solis and Mr. Smith—the United States has a significant role and I believe should lead in addressing this catastrophe.

And for the purpose of my fellow Commissioners, I have introduced legislation developed in the Helsinki Commission that would provide substantially increased humanitarian aid for Iraqi refugees and their host countries, international organizations working in the region and the 2.2 million internally displaced in Iraq.

One of the things that I find that is a phenomenon that many policymakers here don't know is that many of those internally displaced Iraqis are Christian, as well as this legislation would expedite the process and move Iraqi refugees for resettlement in the United States.

I'd like your view as to what we can do to encourage other OSCE Participating states and international communities to assist in this effort, but I'd also like, Mr. President, if you would amplify on the mid-September meeting of the Chairman-in-Office that took place in Spain. I gathered from that meeting and words that came from

the Chair-in-Office that they had managed to allow ODIHR and the Parliamentary Assembly to work more efficiently.

And I just am wondering since that time, as we've had election monitoring take place, how you respond to whether the mandate that evidently was developed in Spain with Chairman-in-Office Moratinos was undertaken.

And maybe we could do it this way.

Hilda, if you would ask a question.

Chris, if you would ask one.

Mike and G.K.

And Göran's a big boy, and he'll just take them down and maybe address it all at one time, rather than interrupt.

So, Hilda, if you would?

Ms. SOLIS. I am just very pleased to hear your report, Mr. President. And I'm very anxious also to see how the OSCE can play a bigger role in providing direction assistance for the refugees in Iraq. And I commend your country and I commend all the work that folks have been doing.

Clearly, we can learn a great lesson from you. I don't know why we have our own stalemate here in the House when we refuse to help resettle refugees and we know that some of the Iraqis have family members who live in our states and in our districts. And we definitely want to work to play a role to focus that attention on some of the Members here in our Congress to take more of a leadership role.

I happen to have gone to Iraq several months ago and visited with some of our counterparts in Jordan and heard there the tremendous impact that the refugees in just resettling people—professionals, by the way, many who were able to leave and flee—but tremendous amount of discrimination that is going on and is being inflicted on this population.

And my concern also is with what has happened in Iraq also in terms of their constitution and the treatment of women and how, in fact, my understanding is that the constitution has actually lessened the role of women in government. And their status in society has actually been lowered in terms of how they are categorized in the category with children and with disabled individuals.

And I was told that by counterparts there from Iraqi women who served in their new parliament there, so to speak. That's the message that we received. It was very disturbing to see that our own public here is not fully aware of what has taken place and what impact that will have in so many years to come.

I'm very concerned also about the food shortage that is also occurring out there. This is something that I'm sure is happening in many other countries that are faced with these kinds of dilemmas. But the fact that there's a food shortage, that we are not appropriately seeing food items also being administered, because there are rogue militia that are confiscating food supplies. So we heard from Sunni representatives who were saying that they were being punished also indirectly and were not receiving food supplies.

So that's another crisis that I think we need to focus in on. And I know maybe I'm going off a bit here from our role, but I think that this is such a compelling issue for all of us here in the United States and certainly in Europe. Every time we travel to Europe,

I'm constantly being told what is the United States doing about addressing Iraq besides coming to closure on the war there, but helping to provide assistance. And how can we do that better in the structure of the OSCE?

Mr. HASTINGS. Thank you.

Chris?

Mr. SMITH. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Very briefly, again, Mr. President, thank you again for being here. I'm going to leave for a hearing that started at 10, and I'm ranking there as well, on reauthorization of a law that I wrote in 2000, the Trafficking Victims Protection Act, emphasizing prosecution protection and prosecution prevention and protection—what we're all trying to do throughout the OSCE region.

I've been in shelters all over the world—Nigeria, Peru, all of the Asian countries, Bosnia, Russia, Italy, Ukraine, Romania—and I've been to those both faith-based and those that were more secular oriented. And both offer, I think, a tremendous opportunity for reconciliation for the women.

There is a bias I find, though, against faith-based groups among some people. And I would hope that we could address just how important it is that as we deal with the physical and mental catastrophe that these women face, that very often there is a profound spiritual hole in her life for these trafficked women especially that only a faith intervention can help to fill.

The brokenness is so profound, so complete, and in the shelters I've seen the faith-based component very often can address that, and I think we need to integrate our efforts on dealing with that.

On the Roma, we all know there was a Warsaw meeting on the Human Dimension, a full day spent on the Romani participation in the Parliamentary Assembly. Maybe you want to speak to that.

Belarus—we all try to encourage Belarus to become part of the Parliamentary Assembly by living up to certain standards and benchmarks. Is their delegation at least beginning to catch the good infection about democracy and human rights?

And finally, on anti-Semitism. Our deep concern of this Commission—it's bipartisan—that that scourge never again—and the rising tide of anti-Semitism and our special efforts that the Parliamentary Assembly has made. Your thoughts on that.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mike?

Mr. MCINTYRE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Lennmarker, my concern is about Russia, and within that discussion, would you address action taken recently by Russia, supported by several other countries—Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and others—that put forward a draft decision for the Madrid ministerial talking about having basically a one size fits all to observation of elections, a maximum of 50 observers. And this appears to be the culmination of several years of Russian efforts to undercut OSCE election observation.

I wonder how you suggest that we respond to that. And along that line specifically, has OSCE been invited to the upcoming Duma elections?

And we all know that President Putin has been taking certain actions in Russia that concern all of us. Do you think there's any chance that Russia might leave the organization? If they were to,

do you think that would affect other countries that might follow their lead?

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. HASTINGS. Thank you.

Mr. Butterfield?

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My question is a very basic question. I've looked at the names of the participating Members of the House, and it looks like there are nine of us who are on the Commission, and I am the junior of the nine, and so I'm still engaged in the learning process.

I've traveled to the Assembly on two occasions, and I don't get the sense that the Assembly is as strong as it could be in Europe. And I guess my question is a very basic one, and that is does Europe really need the OSCE? And if so, what can we do to enhance the organization and to give it more visibility and to give the states more of an opportunity to play a more prominent role in this organization?

I want to deal with it from a very basic perspective. And I hope I'm wrong, but I don't get the feeling that we have the prominence that we deserve.

Thank you.

Mr. LENNMARKER. Thank you. Could I then just try to make rather short remarks? I can do it before we have to leave.

Mr. HASTINGS. We've also initiated a process where people in the audience have an opportunity to ask a question. I'm reading this for the first time. It said: "You call Kazakhstan a work under construction in terms of democratic progress. Can you explain how you think Kazakhstan's taking the chairmanship in '09 would assist this work under construction? What chance is there that their progress would be slowed if they are, quote, 'rewarded,' unquote, with the chairmanship?"

I apologize, Göran, but I do like for people who come to our hearings to have an opportunity to ask questions sometimes.

Mr. LENNMARKER. Thank you. I think that's the whole idea. We have tough questions, and we try to answer them.

Could I start with Iraq? It's important for all of us to see to it that we give a possibility for refugees from Iraq to come to seek shelter. That is certainly the position of my country—parliament and government alike—that we have a responsibility to do that.

Sweden is, then, roughly like New York, I guess, population-wise. So I think you can refer to that. And you said 12,000, Mr. President. I guess it's more 20,000 nowadays. It's rapidly increasing, I can tell you.

And there are two things I think are important. One is, of course, to lead by example. It's easy to say nice words, but it is more difficult to live up to your word. And I think that is the role of our country that said, "Yes, we have to do it."

We try also to get other countries in Europe, not only in the European Union, to be more open, which is, again, very difficult, because there is a debate on migration. That is in some countries not very pleasant, I can tell you. And in that circumstance, I think that's important.

The other is to have a functioning labor market so that people can get into jobs. That is what we found is the most important

thing. When you come to a country, you are prepared to contribute to the country you come to. And if you have a functioning labor market, they can do that soon. That is far easier—far easier than when you have the feeling that they steal our jobs or whatever—which is sad, very sad, I can tell you.

Not least, of course, is to add that they come to a culture that is not so close to your own. That, of course, adds to the problem. You know, for example, that if you have an Arabic name, it's more difficult to get a job—you know that for sure—than if you have a Swedish name, because that's how it functions in reality.

Certainly, we also in the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly have focused a lot on that. We had recently a conference together with the Chairman-in-Office in Cordoba in Spain focusing on discrimination against Muslims which are in Europe. This is also part of the question to finding techniques as legislators, not as micromanagement, perhaps, but also see to it that our administrations can handle this.

Mr. Hastings, you asked about the 19th of July. Spencer Oliver and I myself, together with the leadership of ODIHR and also the Chairman-in-Office, met in Madrid to sort out and to underline the importance of keeping to the agreements that we have done. And we also put some very concrete things that we should do for the upcoming two elections that were very close. One was in Kazakhstan in mid-August. The other was more than 2 weeks ago in Ukraine.

And I'm sorry to say, but I say it openly, that they did not fulfill what we agreed on. We were particularly disturbed that we were not allowed to share the long-term observers report on which we base the verdict of an election. And that is not acceptable.

When it comes to Chris's questions—he had to leave—trafficking is certainly a big problem. And I would say it's not only for the countries where the victims come from. He mentioned destination countries.

I can go to my own constituency—Stockholm. We have had cases where girls have been imprisoned, living under miserable conditions. It's also our responsibility on so to say the receiving side—or whatever you say—for the destination countries and the countries of origin to work together, because it's not enough to be in shelters—which is important, and I agree fully on that. That is where the game stops.

But it is also for us in countries where the girls come to to see to it that we have vigorous law enforcement there, and also to really understand that this is a serious crime. Because to be sure, there are in Europe—perhaps also in the United States; I don't know—those who don't think it is a real crime. They look through the fingers, as we say. They don't prosecute as it should be, and I think this is an extremely important job. We had to do that back home, and I am sorry to say in my own constituency in Sweden, we have work to do on this matter.

When it comes to the Roma, one particular point we learned during the Serbian election, was how to introduce Roma into the political process. This is the best example I've seen to bring the Roma into the election process. We were all impressed by that. Still, it is a big problem by those Roma who are not integrated in Serb so-

ciety in this case. And, of course, it goes for any society. But there are those who are trying seriously to do this, and I commend that.

When it comes to Belarus, I would say that we had one moment in the history of the Parliamentary Assembly in Kyiv, as it's called in Ukrainian—I just underline that—when we had what I think is an example of the good work of the Parliamentary Assembly.

It was about the parliamentarians from Belarus having to defend and to debate—having to defend and debate what was that in the resolution on Belarus. Isn't that how it should be? Instead of not coming or locking the door, they had to participate in the debate. And that I think is extremely important. That is why I am a passionate believer in contacts, even with regimes that are not very pleasant.

But usually in such regimes also you have some people that are more open. Perhaps you can influence them more. We don't know that for sure, but I think that we must do that.

Anti-Semitism, of course, coming from Europe, the big shame of Europe—perhaps the darkest hour in mankind happened some 60 years ago. Anti-Semitism still is a problem, but I would add, though, that anti-Islamic is also a big problem. And some people utter things about the Muslims that if you change the word from Muslim to Jew, then we would realize how it sounds. I just want to say that, not diminishing the problem with anti-Semitism—not at all. I think we're not in the league of comparing things, but to put perspective into that.

Congressman McIntyre, election observation. When it comes to the Duma elections, I certainly hope that we will be able to observe them. We have not yet gotten an official invitation, but rumors are that we will get one. But I cannot confirm that as yet.

The idea that this would have some sort of a political control over election observation—that is absolutely not acceptable. You cannot have a vote or a veto on whether an election is correct or not. It should be independent. That's why we have this very good construction of our Parliamentary Assembly together with ODIHR doing this.

And independent parliamentarians, usually on the bipartisan you would call it, or multipartisan even, are greatly agreed on the judgment of an election. Of course, we want to see fair and free elections. We also know, some of us, because we are elected people, how we should observe elections. We also have the legitimacy of being elected, which is extremely important, I would say.

Civil servants are important to serve and to help us and to help us sort out things, but it is ultimately the judgment of elected politicians to make these verdicts, and that's why it's so important that we give parliamentary dimension when it comes to election observation. But again, Congressman McIntyre, no—no political vetting of election observation. That would be the death of the whole idea of independent.

I don't think Russia will leave us. That will be a big mistake, because the OSCE is needed.

And now I go to your question, Congressman Butterfield, that OSCE might not be that important in a well-established western democracy. But in countries that are focused on their own development, building their democracy, fighting to get a noncorrupt society

foot—corruption is a big, big problem in some of the new eastern democracies and non-democracies—there, of course, the OSCE is badly needed.

I spoke earlier before you had the possibility to arrive about the enormous OSCE presence in the Western Balkans, in Bosnia Herzegovina, in Serbia, in Kosovo. The biggest mission there is in Kosovo. It was recently 1,400 people in the OSCE mission dealing with democracy building, I would say, in the sense. There OSCE is badly needed. Go out there. Visit the missions and you will see that it is extremely important.

And I will say, as I underlined before, in Central Asia that OSCE is extremely important there. We have deficiencies. We just described this about the cooperation or sometimes lack of cooperation when it comes to election monitoring. There has been perhaps in Vienna more focus sometimes on the inner deliberations or the inner things of the organization instead of what we get out of it.

And I agree with—I guess it was Mr. Hastings who said that the need to be more of a political oversight over the ministries, on the OSCE work—it has gone down, so to say, on the list of priorities. And then, of course, the ministers tend not to follow it as closely as they should. But again, I think that is important.

Finally, Kazakhstan. I think that there are those who will say that there might be risk, but life is not a risk-free game. If we are to see to it that Central Asia is engaged, that we have sovereignty support, that we try to strengthen those strands of society that are wishing to have a western type of society, we must aid them to take that risk. That is my judgment. I cannot guarantee. Nobody can. But we need to do that. That is my firm judgment.

Mr. HASTINGS. There were two additional questions dealing with Kazakhstan, and with your permission, I would very much like to submit them to you, and then when you answer them, we can publish it on our website, and the first person that put them right there will receive them that way.

Of course, we've been joined also by Commissioner Aderholt, who you know has been very active.

And Robert, if you just wanted to have an abbreviated word, since you made it here.

Mr. ADERHOLT. Yes, thank you. I'm sorry. I had a couple of conflicts, but I want to thank you for being here this morning, and I'm sorry I came in late, but thank you for the work that you do in your role at OSCE, and we thank you for being here this morning.

As you know, the schedule is always very unpredictable around here, but a lot of things like Kazakhstan that I was wondering about as well, so I look forward to your answers on how to look for how we move forward on that. So thank you again for being here.

Mr. HASTINGS. Thank you very much, Mr. President. And this hearing is adjourned. And we will see you at noon, Robert, if you have time. We're in the Members' dining room. You can stop in and chat with us.

Mr. ADERHOLT. Thank you.

[Whereupon, at 10:30 a.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

## APPENDICES

### PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS, CHAIRMAN, COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE

I am pleased to convene this morning's hearing in which we will hear a parliamentary perspective on security and cooperation in Europe. Our witness, a close personal friend of mine, is Goran Lennmarker, a Swedish parliamentarian and Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee in the Riksdag, as well as my successor as President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly.

The role of parliamentarians in the Helsinki process goes back almost to the beginning. With the creation of the Helsinki Commission in 1976, the U.S. Congress has played an enormous role in shaping U.S. OSCE policy, combining regional and diplomatic expertise with the political capital Members of Congress have. Over the years, many countries expressed interest in emulating the Commission in their own national parliaments, but the creation of the 320-member OSCE Parliamentary Assembly has served a similar purpose. It has created groups within parliaments knowledgeable about OSCE issues and willing to keep the diplomats moving forward.

As we see today, however, these issues are not necessarily easy. The challenges in U.S. and European relations with Russia are growing, for example, while Russia's internal development is a cause for deep concern.

Numerous local and regional conflicts which erupted in the 1990s continue to simmer. People continue to suffer the effects of these conflicts today, although they are rarely noticed given the absence of widespread violence. The lives and well-being of more people are at risk if political solutions are not found.

In December, what many consider the last open question in the Balkans—the status of Kosovo—is expected to be answered. Unfortunately, there continues to be disagreement on what the answer should be, creating increased instability at a time when the whole region should be working on European integration.

Despite their freely undertaken OSCE commitments, many OSCE States are behind in their democratic development and fail to respect basic human rights. Belarus comes to mind, along with some countries of Central Asia. On a wider scale, we continue to see manifestations of anti-Semitism, racism and other forms of hatred and intolerance.

And of course, as we well know here in the United States, there are the challenges of protecting civil liberties and basic human rights at the same time we fight terrorism. As our witness today is aware, the President of the Belgian Senate, our colleague Ann Marie Lizin, testified before this Commission earlier this year about her investigation of the U.S. detention center at Guantanamo Bay.

Parliamentarians have an unquestionable role to play in responding to these issues. They know the workings of democracy and the threats democracy faces. They deal with people, and have

an understanding of how a society works. And through the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and similar fora, they pool their experience and expertise to make Europe, the wider OSCE region and the world a better place.

As we know, governments often resent parliamentarians holding them accountable, and diplomats can be very much like the governments they represent. As a result, there are institutional issues that come up in the OSCE, including the role of the OSCE PA, that unfortunately sidetrack us from real issues like the holding of free and fair elections, combating corruption or responding to conflict.

I know our witness today, Goran Lenmarker, will be addressing questions regarding the situation in various parts of the OSCE region as well as within the organization, and I very much look forward to hearing his views.

**PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. BENJAMIN L. CARDIN, CO-CHAIRMAN, COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE**

I want to thank you, Mr. Chairman, for convening this hearing, and I am delighted to welcome the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly President and our colleague from Sweden, Goran Lennmarker, to Washington and to Capitol Hill today.

I have been an active member of the U.S. Delegation to the OSCE Parliamentary for a number of years, and am particularly glad that I can continue to be active from the Senate as I had from the House. It has always been a valuable and rewarding experience, proposing new ideas and debating issues internationally just as we do here in the Congress.

The often neglected but, in my view, very important issues covered by the second committee have always been a priority for me. In recent years, and still today, official corruption has been major problem in many OSCE participating States. In the OSCE PA, we have pushed for greater anti-corruption efforts, taking the form of improving governmental transparency and accountability. I hope this will continue.

I have also urged, including at OSCE PA meetings, that all countries cooperate fully with the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, located in The Hague. That has meant Serbia first and foremost, given that country's poor record of cooperation. As much as we want to see this removed as an issue and for Serbia to move ahead with European integration, Belgrade must take action to improve its cooperation.

Members of the U.S. Delegation have also heard in recent meetings the concerns of our colleagues regarding Guantanamo Bay, and the U.S. human rights record. I believe we are no less concerned about this than our OSCE PA colleagues are, as our Helsinki Commission hearing in June and other activities demonstrate. We also know that this seriously hinders our own ability to press for positive changes in other countries. The answer, of course, is not to remain silent about the records of other countries, but to be sure we clean up our own act. I want to thank you, President Lennmarker, for encouraging the work of Belgian Senator Ann-Marie Lizin as your Special Representative on this issue.

I look forward to the discussion today and, as an OSCE PA Vice President, to continue to productive dialogue we have had with our parliamentary colleagues from other OSCE States over the years.

**PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH,  
RANKING MEMBER, COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND CO-  
OPERATION IN EUROPE**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and good morning to you all. Welcome especially to President Lennmarker, President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the OSCE, and to Spencer Oliver, General Secretary of the OSCEPA.

I have been active in the Parliamentary Assembly of the OSCE for almost ten years. I have seen the value of the Parliamentary Assembly in the fight against human trafficking and anti-Semitism. In both cases it was the Parliamentary Assembly that put these issues on the OSCE agenda.

It was only a few months ago that Rep. McIntyre and I were able to strengthen a Ukrainian resolution against trafficking. This week the OSCE is working in Vienna on combating the sexual exploitation of children. This effort originates in work we did in the Parliamentary Assembly, and in the Helsinki Commission. In the fight against anti-Semitism I worked closely with German and Canadian parliamentarians, and several of them testified at Helsinki Commission hearings that I chaired.

The Parliamentary Assembly is a vital part of the OSCE. Within the OSCE it has been the Parliamentary Assembly that has consistently pushed human rights issues to the top of the OSCE agenda. The governments of most OSCE Participating States have often been reluctant to put human rights first. They have criticized so-called "parliamentary interference" in OSCE policy, but they have been quick to take the credit for the PA's human rights initiatives.

Few people know the OSCE as well as President Lennmarker. Mr. President, I look forward to hearing you testify on issues of concern to us all.

**PREPARED STATEMENT OF MR. GÖRAN LENNMARKER, PRESIDENT, ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY**

It is with great pleasure and deep honor to appear here today before the Helsinki Commission of the U.S. Congress, and I would like to thank the members of the Commission for inviting me, in particular the Commission's chairman and President Emeritus of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, my good friend, Alcee Hastings, as well as its co-chairman, Senator Benjamin Cardin, who is one of the Vice Presidents of our Assembly.

I am also pleased to note that I am accompanied here by the Assembly's Secretary General, Spencer Oliver, who was the first Staff Director of the Helsinki Commission.

The work of the Helsinki Commission and the participation of the United States in OSCE and its Parliamentary Assembly have been invaluable to our organization. In fact, the membership of the U.S. and of Canada in our organization makes it unique—it is truly an organization that stretches from Vancouver to Vladivostok, and we want to strengthen the important transatlantic link in order for the OSCE and the Parliamentary Assembly to be able to meet all the numerous challenges in the OSCE world.

Today, Europe is doing well. It is whole and it is free, and it is in peace. Its security is better than ever, its economy is flourishing, and, particularly in its Eastern half, it is growing fast. Democracy and human rights have made dramatic progress since 1989. But in the young nations in the East, terrorism remains a threat and corruption and the lack of rule of law hamper economic progress. And there are still dictatorships in the OSCE area in the 21st Century—we did not expect this 15 years ago. So we still have a big job to do.

Europe today is based on free nations coming together for the good of all. We must concentrate our efforts to maintain that spirit of cooperation. The Conventional Forces in Europe Treaty must be kept. We should strive for open skies and open military budgets and work for transparency and for civilian and parliamentary control of the military and security. And the European Union should continue to expand and I am personally in favor of EU membership for Turkey.

And we must continue to try to find peaceful solutions to the unresolved, so-called "frozen" conflicts, in Nagorno-Karabakh, Abkhazia, South Ossetia, Transdnistria, and, yes, Kosovo, all carry high human, economic and political costs.

For almost four years, I have been actively involved in supporting the OSCE Minsk Group's attempts to find a peaceful solution to the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan about Nagorno-Karabakh. I have emphasized that I see "a golden opportunity" for a peace agreement. I still believe so. A good framework agreement has been presented by the Minsk Group, led by France, Russia and the United States. It is ready to be signed by the leaders of the two countries, if the political will is there.

The alternative, a new war, is unthinkable. The advantages of a peace accord for the whole region are huge. With peace, all three countries in the South Caucasus could, together, start to strive to build a region characterized by security, democracy, and prosperity.

What happens in the East, in the Ukraine, Belarus, and in the Balkans, the Caucasus and Central Asia, is crucially important to all of Europe and to North America. However, we must also understand the difficulties facing newly created nations in building strong independent and democratic societies. The completion of that task will not happen overnight and that is why the elections in Serbia last January pleased me so much, for they showed that even in a country so recently involved in conflict and war, can, if the political will is there, make substantive strides towards democracy. Serbia's free and fair elections were impressive.

For the OSCE and its Parliamentary Assembly there are at least three important, unfinished tasks: the Balkans, the Caucasus, and Central Asia, and I believe that OSCE should now focus its work on conflict resolution and democracy building in the transitioning democracies in the East. These countries are full and equal members of the OSCE and its Parliamentary Assembly. We need to hear their voices in our meetings and our discussions. We strongly prefer co-operation and dialogue over isolation and silence. We should intensify a dialogue about common problems and the sharing of experiences and encourage regional cooperation, including trade—a prime motor in creating wealth. Where there is vibrant trade, there is usually peace.

As the only regional organization in which North America, Central Asia, the Caucasus, and Europe are all members, the OSCE is well suited to fulfill this task. In fact, its transatlantic and Central Asian dimensions make it not only unique, but also absolutely indispensable.

A central theme of my Presidency has been to engage Central Asia in our work. That is why I earlier this year visited all five member states in Central Asia to encourage them to be active in the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and work towards greater regional parliamentary co-operation. That is why the Parliamentary Assembly has decided to hold next year's Annual Session in Kazakhstan and why I, personally, support Kazakhstan's candidacy for the OSCE Chairmanship in 2009.

An Assembly initiative has recently been launched with the active support of the Nordic Council and its five Northern European member countries, to explore the possibility to host a conference this fall in Oslo, Norway, on encouraging greater regional parliamentary cooperation between the five Central Asian nations.

I hope for a more active engagement from the United States in our efforts to reach out to the countries in Central Asia.

The OSCE is not a diminishing Organization. Its work in conflict resolution and in strengthening democracy and human rights is crucial. We need a strong OSCE to contribute to solving the political, economic and social challenges facing our societies. Today, more than ever, we must use our organization as an instrument for political dialogue.

The OSCE field missions are the heart of this Organization. The Assembly has reiterated that the OSCE must continue making full use of its field presence, providing them with all necessary means to increase their effectiveness.

We need the active participation of the United States Congress and its members. For that, we need to find a mechanism that will

allow members of the U.S. Congress to travel and participate in the many international meetings and conferences taking place in the OSCE area. I don't know how that mechanism could look, but this is a vitally important matter and I hope to be able to discuss it further during my visit here in Washington

As President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly I have tried to further strengthen the role of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly. It is an essential OSCE Institution and should be seen as an asset for the OSCE as a whole in order to provide assistance to the OSCE in helping solve remaining conflicts and preventing new ones from erupting; to increase the respect for human rights; to fight against human trafficking; and to strengthen OSCE election observation.

The OSCE Charter for European Security adopted at the last Summit in Istanbul in 1999, adopted a resolution stating:

"The Parliamentary Assembly has developed into one of the most important OSCE institutions continuously providing news ideas and proposals. We welcome this increasing role, particularly in the field of democratic development and election monitoring."

Members of parliaments pass laws, approve national budgets and taxes, and scrutinize governments. Parliaments and parliamentarians also provide valuable assistance to international co-operation and development. The importance of parliamentary oversight and accountability in international organizations—including the OSCE—is essential and oversight mechanisms need to be built in to the system.

The Parliamentary Assembly's Brussels Declaration from 2006 emphasized "the necessity of more effective enforcement of the monitoring mechanism of the work of the OSCE in order to increase the efficiency of the organization and to ensure a higher level of transparency and accountability in the Organization."

Unfortunately, not much has been achieved, at least so far, at OSCE headquarters in Vienna. But as we all try to promote democratic values and democratic ideas throughout the world, we must live as we preach. I am a strong believer in oversight, and I want to underline that it does not mean micromanagement. The Constitutional Committee of the Parliament of Sweden is always chaired by a member of the opposition, which we believe, enhances the oversight mechanism and power of our Parliament. Recently, I chaired the hearings on the then government's action, or lack of action, in the aftermath of the Tsunami catastrophe in Thailand, where hundreds of Swedes died. The hearings further strengthened my belief in and support for parliamentary oversight. OSCE would be a stronger and more efficient organization if we parliamentarians had more and better insight into its work.

Election observation is an important part of OSCE's mandate. Since 1993, the OSCE PA has conducted close to 90 election observation missions with the participation of over 2,000 parliamentarians. Here, I would like to take the opportunity to encourage the members of the U.S. Congress to participate as much as possible in these observation missions.

Election observation is important because it helps build democracy. It is important that we have high standards that are the same for all states, East or West of Vienna, and that double stand-

ards are never acceptable. The leadership and presence of parliamentary observers at elections during transitional periods emphasizes the importance of legislatures as institutions that must provide a balance to executive authority. As parliamentarians are themselves directly elected public officials, their observations are of great value to the public and to the voters, as well as to local and international media.

As stated in the Assembly's Brussels Declaration (article 88), approved unanimously, of the Parliamentary Assembly's role in OSCE election observation missions:

"(It) Urges the Parliamentary Assembly to continue to provide political leadership to the OSCE Election Observation Missions, with the technical, logistical and long-term observer support of ODIHR respecting the Co-operation Agreement and, if possible, reinforcing it."

I can assure you that the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly has faithfully observed the letter and the spirit of the Cooperation Agreement in every election observation mission since 1997. Regrettably, OSCE's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) has not done so in spite of our best efforts and with the strong support from the Spanish OSCE Chairmanship led by Spain's Foreign Minister Miguel Angel Moratinos. We need to find a solution to this issue.

So far, this year, the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly has participated in and led four election observation missions: Serbia, Armenia, Kazakhstan, and Ukraine. On December 2, elections to the Russian State Duma will take place. The OSCE has not yet been invited, but we hope and expect that we will be. In this context, I am pleased that Poland changed its mind and invited OSCE observers to the Polish elections on October 21. By signing the Copenhagen Document from 1990, all OSCE participating States have agreed that the presence of observers can enhance the electoral process. Indeed, this process has proven so important in the continued development of democracy within the OSCE area and it is vital that the OSCE is allowed to continue this important work.

Let me conclude by once again thanking the U.S. Helsinki Commission for this opportunity to appear before you and discuss the vital issues of our day.

I look forward to your questions.

Thank you!







This is an official publication of the  
**Commission on Security and  
Cooperation in Europe.**

★ ★ ★

This publication is intended to document  
developments and trends in participating  
States of the Organization for Security  
and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

★ ★ ★

All Commission publications may be freely  
reproduced, in any form, with appropriate  
credit. The Commission encourages  
the widest possible dissemination  
of its publications.

★ ★ ★

**<http://www.csce.gov>**

The Commission's Web site provides  
access to the latest press releases  
and reports, as well as hearings and  
briefings. Using the Commission's electronic  
subscription service, readers are able  
to receive press releases, articles,  
and other materials by topic or countries  
of particular interest.

Please subscribe today.