



The President

To: Heads of OSCE PA Delegations
Members of the OSCE PA Bureau

20 October 2017

Dear colleagues,

As you are already aware of it, Austria held legislative elections on 15 October and, now that final results have been proclaimed, I have to regretfully announce that I will no longer be a Member of Parliament from 9 November.

You know as well as I do that political life is uncertain. It encourages us to take nothing for granted and to constantly fight to improve the lives of the citizens we represent. This thrilling uncertainty has been a central part of my life ever since I first held elected office some twenty years ago.

I have had my share of joyous moments in the Austrian Parliament and with you in the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly. It has been an immense honour to carry your voice as your President for the past fifteen months, and as Vice-President for the two years prior. I would like to warmly thank you for the trust you showed in electing me, as well as for your openness and everlasting commitment to dialogue which make of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly a unique forum for co-operation between our countries.

The OSCE Parliamentary Assembly carries an important voice in these times of turmoil. This makes it all the more crucial that our organization ensures a smooth presidential transition. I have conferred with Secretary General Roberto Montella on the steps that will be taken once I leave office and I understand that a clear process is being implemented in accordance with our procedures. I would like to already use this occasion to wish my successor George Tsereteli all the best in his service of our Assembly.

I outlined during our last Autumn Meeting in Andorra what would have been the guidelines of my presidency until our 2018 Annual Session in Berlin. Those priorities – women’s empowerment in international politics, the security implications of climate change, the use of culture as a peace-building tool, and closer relations with our Partners for Co-operation – build on our parliamentary culture of dialogue and offer equal opportunities for all our delegations to tackle together the challenges we face in the OSCE region. I trust that these

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objectives will continue to guide your efforts. After all, they are the concrete expression of your daily work and our common aspirations.

As we see every day, trust-building is needed more than ever. During my last weeks as a Member of Parliament and as President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, I will highlight our areas of convergence and encourage our Members to never stop searching for common ground. Whether in or out of office, we should remember that we must carry on promoting people-to-people contact, facilitating cultural exchanges and enabling meaningful dialogue.

I have been privileged to see this taking place all the time in our Parliamentary Assembly and I am convinced that only with such close co-operation will we ultimately guarantee peace and stability from Vancouver to Vladivostok.

Yours sincerely,



Christine Muttonen

President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly