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**Press Release**

**Security committee calls for OSCE to work more transparently, globally**

BELGRADE, 9 July 2011—The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe should provide assistance when asked in the fields of democracy and human rights in North Africa, according to a resolution adopted by the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly Committee on Political Affairs and Security.

The measure is now expected to pass before the full Assembly on Sunday. It will then be part of the Belgrade Declaration which helps shape OSCE and national policy.

“With all the change we now see in our partner countries, such as Tunisia and Egypt, the OSCE must demonstrate it is ready to help emerging democracies get their footing. This resolution will help the OSCE function more efficiently to be able to help strengthen new government and non-government institutions when asked,” said Tonino Picula (Croatia), committee rapporteur.

To ensure greater transparency and accountability, the OSCE’s decision making body, the Permanent Council should allow public and the press to attend its meetings, the resolution says.

“We are parliamentarians. We debate and vote in public with all the scrutiny that brings because we know at the core of democracy is a relationship of trust between the electors and the elected. Likewise, to strengthen the credibility of the OSCE and let is shine as model of multilateral diplomacy, we need the organization’s meetings in Vienna to be open to the public,” said committee chair Karl-Georg Wellmann.

The committee’s resolution calls for strengthening cooperation with the United Nations and European Union. Specifically, the resolution identified food security as a “new and major challenge” deserving of priority treatment within the OSCE.

The resolution also recommends modifying the consensus rule for OSCE decision-making, at least for decisions related to personnel, budget and administration. The resolution encourages the OSCE to employ outside, independent auditors and make those audits available to the OSCE PA.

*The OSCE Parliamentary Assembly is comprised of 320 parliamentarians from 55 countries spanning, Europe, Central Asia and North America. The Assembly provides a forum for parliamentary diplomacy, monitors elections, and strengthens international cooperation to uphold commitments on political, security, economic, environmental and human rights issues.*

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