

THE FUTURE OF THE OSCE MEDITERRANEAN PARTNERS FOR COOPERATION

HEARING BEFORE THE COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE ONE HUNDRED ELEVENTH CONGRESS FIRST SESSION JULY 23, 2009

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**THE FUTURE OF THE OSCE MEDITERRANEAN
PARTNERS FOR COOPERATION**

JULY 23, 2009

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JULY 23, 2009

COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE,
Washington, DC.

The hearing was held from 2:01 to 3:25 p.m. EST in 210 Cannon House Office Building, Washington, DC, Hon. Alcee Hastings, Co-Chairman, Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, presiding.

Commissioners present: Hon. Benjamin Cardin, Chairman, Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe; Hon. Alcee Hastings, Co-Chairman, Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe; Hon. Mike McIntyre, Commissioner, Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe; Hon. Darrell Issa, Commissioner, Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe; and Hon. Robert Aderholt, Commissioner, Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe.

Members present: Hon. Gwen Moore, a Member of Congress from the State of Wisconsin.

Witnesses present: William Hudson, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Near Eastern Affairs, U.S. Department of State; Sotiris Roussos, Personal Representative on Mediterranean Partner Affairs, OSCE; and João Soares, President, OSCE Parliamentary Assembly.

HON. ALCEE HASTINGS, CO-CHAIRMAN, COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE

Mr. HASTINGS. It's my distinct honor to convene this hearing of the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe on "The Future of the OSCE Mediterranean Partners for Cooperation." I welcome you all here today—and so does the thunder, apparently—and commend the leadership of my good friend who will be here shortly—who is here now—of Senator Ben Cardin, who serves as chair of the Helsinki Commission, and my fellow commissioners. We've been joined by Mr. McIntyre and others are coming, I believe.

For the past several years I have served as Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe Parliamentary Assembly's special representative for Mediterranean affairs. And I've had the distinct pleasure of having been appointed by President Emeritus Lennmarker in that capacity, and by the now-president of the parliamentary assembly, João Soares, also, to the same capacity.

The objectives are to enhance the long-standing relationship between the OSCE participating states and the Mediterranean Part-

ners for Cooperation that extends back to the Helsinki act of 1975 of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, now the OSCE.

In the succeeding decades the OSCE Participating States and their Mediterranean partners have worked to increase mutual confidence and develop economic and environmental cooperation in order to promote security and stability throughout Europe and the Mediterranean basin. It is through this unique forum that Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Morocco—as my friend from Morocco enters the room—and Tunisia continue develop their capacity for leadership in the region, all the while exchanging expertise with the OSCE participating states.

Near the end of 2008, I toured all of the Mediterranean Partner states, with the exception of Jordan—which I have visited on many occasions. During discussions with my interlocutors, beginning in Morocco, that I proposed bringing them and asking them to come to Washington to have a candid discussion about participation mechanisms for their partnership with the OSCE and how these might be improved.

Over the past two days, the proposal that I made last December became a reality. High-level delegations of parliamentarians and dignitaries and academics from the OSCE Mediterranean Partners states—of all of the partner states—gathered here in the Capitol Visitor Center for the Helsinki Commission’s “Seminar on OSCE Mediterranean Partner Engagement.”

These delegations were joined by the gentleman who’s walking there, now—my president of the OSCE parliamentary assembly, João Soares of Portugal—and by previously-mentioned president-emeritus Göran Lennmarker of Sweden and vice president of the OSCE, Jerry Grafstein of Canada, and representatives of the Greek chair in office, and representatives of the future Kazakh chair in office, and Ambassador Jonas Hafström on behalf of the Swedish presidency of the European Union.

Sessions for this seminar included notable panelists, such as Paul Fritch of the OSCE Secretariat, an exciting presentation this morning by Dalia Mogahed of the Gallup Center for Muslim Studies, Barry Pavel of the National Security Council, and a thought-provoking professor, Dr. Ian Lesser, of the German Marshall Fund. Our discussions with these panelists centered on OSCE Mediterranean Partner participation mechanisms, security in the Mediterranean, youth empowerment and challenges of the OSCE region, respectively.

I’m going to ask unanimous consent that the rest of my statement be made a part of the record in the interest of time and because so many of my colleagues are here. But we are joined by distinguished witnesses who will help us to synthesize the topics discussed throughout our seminar as well as share their vision for future or empowerment of the OSCE Mediterranean Partners.

I’ll identify our panelists after I hear from colleagues and I’d like now to ask the chair of the CSCE, my good friend from the U.S. Senate, Senator Cardin, if he would make opening remarks.

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

Mr. CARDIN. Well, to Congressman Hastings: First let me thank you for arranging the Mediterranean Partners meeting here in Washington. It was an extremely important opportunity for our partners to get together and exchange their views. I also want to thank you for chairing today's hearing as we in the U.S. Helsinki Commission look at the Mediterranean Partners and ways in which we can enhance our effectiveness within OSCE.

Let me apologize from the beginning that the Senate Foreign Relations Committee will be meeting shortly with the prime minister of Iraq so I'm going to have to excuse myself to attend that meeting. But engagement with our colleagues representing the OSCE Mediterranean Partner countries has been a particular focus of the OSCE parliamentary assembly for many years as evidenced by the work of its successive special representatives on Mediterranean affairs and the assembly's annual Mediterranean seminars, which are a critical part of the agenda of the assembly's fall meetings.

We and our Mediterranean Partners have paid particular attention to the issues of security and economic cooperation. In 2002, the parliamentary assembly convened its first conference dedicated to ensuring peace, democracy and prosperity in the Mediterranean region. Since 1993, security, trade and economic cooperation have been the subjects of debate during the assembly's annual sessions and have been addressed in the final declarations of those meetings.

Most recently, the Vilnius Declaration ratified at the conclusion of the parliamentary assembly's annual meeting this month in Lithuania includes a resolution on Mediterranean free trade authored by our good friend Senator Jerry Grafstein of Canada. This resolution calls for the creation of the Mediterranean Economic Commission with the mandate to reduce trade barriers and facilitate the transition to a knowledge-based economy in the countries of the region. It also recommends the creation of a Mediterranean agricultural marketing board with the aim of creating jobs in the agriculture sector for young people, which could be a valuable part of the security in that region.

During my service as chair of the parliamentary assembly's committee on economic affairs, science, technology and environment, the committee also focused on trade and economic cooperation in the Mediterranean region. As many of you may recall, during the 2005 annual session of the parliamentary assembly in Washington, D.C., our committee hosted a panel discussion on developing trade and economic cooperation with our Mediterranean partners, which featured an address by the ambassador of Morocco to the United States. The Washington declaration adopted at the conclusion of the 2005 annual session contained a resolution addressing both soft and hard threats to security, enhancing economic cooperation, dealing with the challenges of migration and promoting tolerance in the Mediterranean region.

So as you can see, within the OSCE and within the OSCE parliamentary assembly, we've made significant progress in advancing the interests of our Mediterranean partners within the context of

the commitments within OSCE. What I have urged is taking a look at how we can further that process.

It's interesting, Mr. Chairman, that the commission held a hearing in 1993, the U.S. Helsinki Commission. At that time, we looked at creating an OSCME, an Organization for Security and Cooperation in the Middle East because we thought that the Helsinki process was so valuable that the direct adoption of that process by the countries within the Middle East could have direct benefit as it had within Europe.

So we suggested that. I do recall we heard from, Abba Eban, the former foreign affairs minister of Israel. We also heard from the distinguished ambassador from Egypt, Ahmed Maher, el-Sahad, at that time, both favorable towards the concept. I have since travelled to the region many times and have talked to the leaders of the countries in the region. They all think that this makes great sense so—and I think we have one or two options that I really do encourage the witnesses today to comment on this.

We could try to strengthen the role of the Mediterranean Partners in the countries within the region within the OSCE framework. We could look at a separate framework, which incorporates similar ideas although there's no cookie-cutter approach. I know we have to tailor it towards specific needs of the region. But I do think, looking at the historic problems in the Mediterranean and in the Middle East, that using the experience since 1975 with what we've been able to do in CSCE gives us hope that we could make further advancements in this area. And I look forward to the witnesses today and I hope that we'll be able to continue to make progress in promoting peace, security and economic well-being within the Mediterranean area.

Mr. HASTINGS. Thank you very much, Senator. I'd also like to recognize the secretary general of the parliamentary assembly of OSCE, Spencer Oliver, who has joined us as well. I now turn to Congressman McIntyre for any statement you may wish to make, Mike.

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

Mr. MCINTYRE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll simply say, in the interest of time, we do welcome our friends who have joined us. We especially appreciate your leadership, Mr. Chairman, in working with our Mediterranean partners. I know a couple of years ago it was my pleasure when we were in Vienna together to go to a special reception for our Mediterranean partners and how pleased we are to see these types of relationships growing and continuing and being enhanced. And we're so glad to have you as well as others who are here from the OSCE to join us here in our nation's capital. Thank you.

Mr. HASTINGS. Just like the partner states participate in the OSCE, our CSCE has by now designated an auxiliary group but a very active member of the American delegation when we attend the fore of the parliamentary assembly is Gwen Moore from Wisconsin, my colleague. Gwen.

**HON. GWEN MOORE, A MEMBER OF CONGRESS FROM THE
STATE OF WISCONSIN**

Ms. MOORE. Thank you so much. I am so grateful that we have this opportunity to meet with our Mediterranean partners. I think that the urgency of developing these dialogues among parliamentarians and at NATO, the European Union and OSCE is really trumped by the patience that our past presidents and others have shown and our partners have shown in coming to the United States. We welcome you here and I am anxious to hear the testimony of our panels.

Mr. HASTINGS. Thank you very much, our congresswoman. We'll hold just one minute for Commissioner Darrell Issa if he has any statement that he may wish to make. Come over here, Darrell.

**HON. DARRELL ISSA, COMMISSIONER,
COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE**

Mr. ISSA. Chairman, I waive any opening statement considering my arrival.

Mr. HASTINGS. All right. Thank you so much, Congressman—that allows us to get to the first panel. And we are joined by Ambassador William Hudson, the acting deputy assistant secretary for Near Eastern Affairs of the U.S. Department of State. Ambassador Hudson has extensive experience in the region as a senior career Foreign Service officer and recently, ambassador of the United States to Tunisia where I had the good fortune of visiting Tunisia when he was ambassador and was hosted extremely well by he and the extraordinarily capable staff at the United States Embassy. The ambassador's curriculum vitae is outside. I won't go into all the details. And so ambassador, you have the floor.

**WILLIAM HUDSON, DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR
NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE**

Mr. HUDSON. Thank you very much. Distinguished chairman, members of the commission, I want to thank you for calling this important hearing and for providing us an opportunity to participate in this exchange on engagement of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe with our Mediterranean partners. I also welcome the interest of our partners in participating in this forum with members of the United States Congress on an issue that is vital to many of our shared interests.

The OSCE's special relationship with the six Mediterranean Partners for Cooperation goes back to the start of the Helsinki process. In 1975, the Helsinki final act included a Mediterranean chapter emphasizing the close links between the security of Europe and the security in the Mediterranean region. This security link has been underscored in subsequent OSCE documents such as the 1999 charter for European security and the 2003 strategy to address threats to security and stability in the 21st century. The OSCE participating states have committed themselves to exploring new avenues of cooperation and interaction as well as to explaining the scope of broad exchanges on OSCE norms, principles and commitments.

Through ongoing dialogue and joint activities with the Mediterranean partners, the OSCE has successfully shared its unique, com-

prehensive, three-dimensional approach to security with the Mediterranean partners on a number of topics including confidence and security-building measures, OSCE as a platform for dialogue in fostering norms of behavior, the 21st-century threats to security and state stability, protecting human rights and fundamental freedoms as well as linkages between the environment and security, media and new technologies and migration and integration policies.

The annual OSCE Mediterranean conferences, which are usually hosted by the partner state, provide the opportunity to exchange views and contribute to further developing the relationship between the OSCE and the Mediterranean partners. The conferences are also attended by international organizations, parliamentarians, academics and importantly, NGOs, leading to a unique cross-fertilization of ideas and recommendations.

In fact, a number of very interesting recommendations came out of the 2008 conference in Amman, Jordan, including suggestions to promote closer involvement of civil society in counterterrorism efforts to address climate change and desertification through regional cooperation and to support the creation of civil society networks in the Mediterranean region. The United States is very interested in following up on these and other recommendations.

Mediterranean partners have many opportunities to get involved in the work of the OSCE. In addition to attending and participating in a wide range of OSCE meetings and conferences, they are also invited to send observers to electoral missions of the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, who have received training in Warsaw to that end. Thanks to the OSCE's partnership fund, we now have increased opportunities for conducting joint projects. The United States already has used this fund to support two projects and hopes to be able to contribute to it more in the future.

We are particularly encouraged by a lively discussion at the June 2009 workshop conducted in Vienna on the topic of media. This workshop, which was based on a suggestion made by Egypt, brought together more than 35 experts from the OSCE and the Mediterranean regions to discuss challenges and best practices in setting up and promoting mechanisms to encourage free speech. Such exchanges provide us with an opportunity to learn and work together to foster security and stability in our countries.

The United States is interested in increasing cooperation with the Mediterranean partners in all three OSCE dimensions and in hearing Mediterranean perspectives on broader issues as well. We sincerely look forward to engaging with our partners on issues such as their approach to the reintegration of Iraq into the community of nations and to ways to resolve tensions over oil and gas supply and demand issues in Eastern Europe.

The Mediterranean Partner countries are at the crossroads of Europe, Africa and the Middle East. Their historical and existing ties with other regions have distinctively positioned them to play a key role on issues ranging from regional conflicts such as Chad and Sudan to Middle East peace, migration, terrorism and more. The Mediterranean Partners have played a positive role in both the regional and the world arena and have the potential to make an even greater contribution. We believe the onset of a new U.S. ad-

ministration offers a new chance to engage in the OSCE partnership and to intensify and reinforce our relationships in this critical area.

The Obama administration has shown its willingness to listen and to think critically about the United States foreign policy priorities and objectives. In President Obama's June 4th speech in Cairo, he said that he had come to seek a new beginning between the United States and Muslims around the world, one based on mutual interest and mutual respect. We have seen a promising start to the new administration's engagement with the Mediterranean. Secretary Clinton met with the foreign ministers of Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia on the margins of the Gaza Reconstruction Conference in Sharm El-Sheikh in March.

She used that opportunity to discuss regional cooperation and other concerns of mutual interest. Special envoy for Middle East peace, Senator Mitchell, subsequently visited the region to solicit their ideas and support for peace. We continue to look for opportunities to engage our North African partners bilaterally and regionally on a wide range of issues, including migration, terrorism economic cooperation and regional security.

In doing this, we are committed to working with the OSCE via the Mediterranean Partners as well as other multilateral fora arrangements, to ensure that our efforts with the countries of the region are consistent and mutually reinforcing. The OSCE participating states and the Mediterranean Partners should work together productively to confront the challenges at hand, and promote security, stability, and individual freedoms throughout the region and throughout the world.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today and I'm happy to take any questions that you may have.

Mr. HASTINGS. I'll turn the questioning now to Chairman Cardin.

Mr. CARDIN. I thank you for that courtesy. Let me if I might, secretary, just cover a couple points. The OSCE, has had an incredible amount of success considering it's a consensus body, depends upon voluntary compliance, basically, yet has rather strong commitments as far as human rights, security and economic and environmental commitments.

When we take a look at what it's been able to accomplish in avoiding conflicts through its missions; when we look at the technical assistance that's made available to member states whether it deals with migration or it deals with border security—and the list goes on and on and on—when you take a look at the progress that it has made on basic freedoms including journalism and making sure that we put a spotlight where countries are not doing, what they should be doing and now taking on the issues of the Internet and what we need to do about Internet freedom of expression.

And then you take a look at some of the initiatives of the United States commission on trafficking in persons and anti-Semitism and anti-Muslim activities and the fact that we can bring consensus among all states to an action plan in these areas where I think it initially people thought that would not be possible.

I mention that all because I really do believe this model can work in the Mediterranean and the Middle East. And I guess my question to you—it seems to me the Mediterranean partners have been

a very valuable addition to the proud record of the OSCE. But we should perhaps look at either expanding that model or a separate model for the Middle East particularly.

One option could be to strengthen the roles of our partners in the OSCE itself. Give them a stronger voice within the OSCE. Another suggestion could be to expand the number of country states that are partners within the OSCE. I have personally thought that Pakistan—partner in Asia acknowledged—it would be nice to have them in our organization particularly since we do have Afghanistan currently as a partner.

Or we could look at a separate organization using the OSCE as a model but that takes time in order to go through all the diplomatic hurdles in order to achieve a different organization. So I would just like to get your view as to how you see the future from the point of view of either strengthening the OSCE—looking at separate organizations or do you think that the dynamics in the Middle East are such that it would be difficult to have a consensus organization with the type of record that we've seen within OSCE?

Mr. HUDSON. Thank you for that question. The OSCE is a very interesting organization because as it brings together the Israelis with the Jordanians and the countries of the Maghreb, they go to meetings together. They have an opportunity to see each other face to face. It's a very positive forum for doing that kind of thing.

Anything we can do to push forward on dialogue and participation in that regard would be a good thing. And this is a personal view, and I can give you a more official answer, if you like—but my own view is a consensus, an organization that works on consensus, would find some of the problems in the Middle East, particularly issues on the peace process challenging and problematic to deal with.

Mr. CARDIN. I just want to point out, I'll never forget the discussion I had with former Prime Minister Rabin in Jerusalem on this subject. And I sort of said the same thing to him. I said, how would you like to be a member of an organization where there are numerous Arab states and Israel? And he said he welcomed that.

He says if we have a chance to talk, if we can sit at the same table together and better understand each other and if we can make progress on economic issues and if we can make progress on basic rights and bringing down trade barriers and making that type of progress—and if our people can get to know each other better, the rest will come.

I don't think anyone expects that this process will produce the peace between the Palestinians and the Israelis. That's going to happen, we hope, as a result of direct negotiations with significant international interest. We understand that. But as far as an ongoing relationship in the Middle East, one day we hope we'll see peace in that region. But for prosperity and economics and human rights and security to really take hold, there's got to be some more permanency in the relationships.

And that's why the former prime minister thought this made sense. By the way, King Hussein of Jordan felt the same way when I met with him. So I know there are new leaders but they seem to be saying the same thing. And I just wonder if the United States should be more actively involved on parallel tracks, not the sub-

stitute the peace initiative, not to substitute the initiatives that are currently underway. But on a parallel track to try to figure out how we can really get more direct communications on basic OSCE principles among the countries in the region.

Mr. HUDSON. Thank you for that. As you know, President Obama has emphasized our willingness to have dialogue with mutual respect among all of our friends and allies overseas. I think our position should be that we would encourage any kind of regional organization that can bring Israelis together with their Arab neighbors for discussion and addressing mutual problems that all those countries have.

Mr. CARDIN. I'll just make one last point on this. It was pointed out yesterday by Mr. Lennmarker about the historic problems within Europe as to why the OSCE came about, because of the conflicts within that continent being unparalleled in the history of the world.

The differences among the Arab states in the Middle East are dramatic. It's not just Israel versus the Arab states; there are historic conflicts among our partner countries that I would think the pattern of OSCE and the progress that was made in OSCE contributing to the overall stability in Europe could be extremely helpful in leading us to a much more stable Middle East.

I would just encourage the United States and all of our member countries to look at what has happened since 1975 in Europe and use that as an example of what we can achieve particularly in the Middle East. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. HASTINGS. Thank you very much, Chairman Cardin. I'd like to take cognizance of the fact we've got a round of questions for everybody but we've been joined by our commissioner Robert Aderholt who was just elected as the vice chair of one of the committees of the parliamentary assembly, and I'm very pleased that that occurred.

Ambassador Hudson, you mentioned a partnership fund, OSCE partnership fund, and you cited to the fact that the United States has already accessed our two projects. I'm interested in two things—what are those projects and what do we intend, in the United States to do, to ensure that we are plus up the partnership fund?

Mr. HUDSON. Thank you. The two projects involved bringing people from Mediterranean Partner countries up to Warsaw for training on human rights issues. And we consider the partnership fund to be a very positive development. It allows us to, as I said, to develop projects where we can bring some of the Mediterranean Partner countries, individuals in those countries, up to important seminars, important training sessions. So we're very supportive of this.

I can take the question sir if you'd like on what our future funding would be and get back to you.

Mr. HASTINGS. All right. If you would then, I'll have one other question in this round. As I indicated to you we've concluded two days of seminars with a robust delegations from our partner states. The continuing theme or consistent theme that arose was the difficulty of negotiating the multiple dialogues led by different actors in the region and principally the OSCE and the European Union and NATO. My question would be what roles do you think for our

Mediterranean dimensions of these various entities should play to encourage synergy among their various activities.

As I listened over the course of the last two days, ambassador, I can't help but agree with all of the sentiment that was expressed most sincerely by virtually each delegation that it is very hard to keep up with who's on first and what's on second. They didn't put it that way, but I'm just putting in the plain old vernacular.

And in addition to that, if we start with the Barcelona process and go all the way through, every—and it was put bluntly by one delegation—every time we come up with a new institution or a new program we never seem to complete that before we start a new institution or program. So implementing plans—I kept referencing Sarkozy. But implementing a plan and trying to keep up with the dialogue and the different organizations. What's your take on that?

Mr. HUDSON. Well, I sympathize with the delegations who express their concerns to you because when I was ambassador in Tunisia, we had the Barcelona process, we had the neighbors process, we had the OSCE process. So I can understand their confusion and they have different delegations coming to them all the time with—but these delegations are involved in different kinds of processes all sort of hitting the same basic issues of political military environment and the economy and human development.

So all these organizations sort of have the same focus. It would be nice to find a way—I don't personally have an idea of how this could be—but you've hit on a very important coordinating problem that we have in that region that needs to be addressed in some way.

Mr. HASTINGS. Well, one thing that I'll just float that my luncheon guests were discussing was the possibility of having a first among equals type structure that would have say two members from the European Union, two from OSCE, two from NATO and two from each of the member states to assist as transmitters and receivers for coordination and collaboration.

Otherwise, clearly what winds up is a lot of duplication and at some point we reach diminishing returns because our partner states lose interest because they can't quite keep up with who it is that they're dealing with. I won't belabor it because we have so many of my other colleagues that I would hope would go forward. I'm just taking them in the order that they came, and Mr. McIntyre.

Mr. MCINTYRE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you again for this time today. When we think about the Helsinki Commission's recent seminar that we had parliamentarians and dignitaries from throughout the OSCE Mediterranean Partners, one consistent thing that was raised was a difficulty of negotiating the multiple dialogues led by different actors. When we look at the European Union, we look at NATO and of course OSCE, what do you think the Mediterranean dimensions of these various entities should play to encourage the synergy among these various activities?

Mr. HUDSON. Well, that gets at the issue that Congressman Hastings brought up which is sort of a fatigue in some of these Mediterranean Partner countries because they have so many people coming to them all the time. They'll have a NATO delegation, they'll have a Barcelona process delegation, they have an EU com-

ponent—how that is coordinated—it’s an important issue which I think has to be addressed by the international community and particularly by the member states in the OSCE and the member states of NATO and the EU.

I don’t have a good resolution on that but I would say we would encourage, our policy would be to encourage the dialogue in that regard so that we could coordinate all these efforts in that region so that they would all be more effective.

Mr. CARDIN. All right. Thank you, thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Ms. MOORE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you ambassador for your sage testimony. Not to be redundant—I was wondering, you mentioned a great many important issues that are of interest to the United States and certainly to the OSCE: the re-entry of Iraq into the community of nations; the apportionment and availability of oil and gas; Gaza reconstruction—certainly you mentioned that the Mediterranean Partners were at the crossroads of the world.

I am wondering, in view of the fatigue that you just mentioned of all this interaction with the European Union and NATO, do you have any specific recommendations for OSCE in sort of drilling down on any been focusing in or honing in on one of these issues that we could be particularly helpful with?

Mr. HUDSON. Thank you. I don’t have an answer for you today, but I would like to take this issue back to the Department of State because it is clearly very important and to give you an answer about a strategy that we might follow to address this important issue.

Mr. ISSA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Ambassador, you are either very fortunate or you’ve managed to simply end up in what has historically been the hot seat. The deputy assistant secretaries for Near East inevitably have a war or some humanitarian crisis during their tenure, no matter how long or short. Congratulations, you haven’t had one yet.

But to that end, and Congresswoman Moore said it pretty well when she talked about Gaza reconstruction, there are some residual effects that are on your watch: the landmine issues, the cluster bomb issues in Lebanon, the lingering effects of the takeover by Hamas of Gaza and the inability to reengage on some peer-to-peer level between the Palestinians and the Israelis.

This organization is dedicated to human rights; it’s dedicated to democracies that represent their people. We function under the rule of law and for their people. So it’s a particular frustration when I look throughout North Africa and around the Levant that there’s more work to do there than in the countries that we presently are engaged with.

Your point was very good and you’re absolutely right. Normally we can’t even bring the Israelis and the Palestinians together because one insists on being a nation and then insists that the other not be present.

Two, we have the obvious challenge that if there were consensus possible; A, they wouldn’t need us; and, B, it wouldn’t be where we always are putting so much of our energy. But having said that, how can this organization bring these disparate groups on a consistent basis into a relationship where they can see how the rest

of our system works and be not studied by us from the outside, even though they can't be full members on the inside at the present time. What would you suggest that we begin exploring if we're going to work with you as partners?

Mr. HUDSON. We have a real opportunity now with the partnership fund and what we need, in my view is—we have a mechanism which brings together the Israelis and their near neighbors, Jordan, other Arab states as I'm sure you're aware—Tunisia has always been very active in the peace process as has Morocco.

Mr. ISSA. I'm not sure I would be as diplomatic as you. They've always insisted on having a role, a seat at the table and particular cuts of the pie, but please.

Mr. HUDSON. The OSCE presents a mechanism that's already there to bring these countries together to discuss issues of mutual concern and interest. That is where the real value added is—instead of talking about very, very difficult issues that we confront in the Middle East peace process, this organization can start talking about the environment and the economy. There are lots of interesting issues there and issues where all the Mediterranean Partner countries have similar interests and concerns.

So you can start discussions at that level and that often can lead to something else when countries suddenly realize that they can cooperate on a certain level of issues that sometimes encourages cooperation above. So we would encourage the bringing these people into a process and through the partnership fund we'll be able to do more and more of that. That's our hope.

Mr. ISSA. And you mentioned Morocco particularly. Morocco, as I'm sure you're more aware than I, really has the mandate for Jerusalem. Well, Jordan has both historic occupation and a constant interest including of course in the Palestinians. Is there a role we could play to bring them together from a standpoint of a deteriorating situation both for tourism and for pilgrims in the more less tourism, true pilgrim sense, to the holy lands? Is that something that you think this group could use as a bridge before we could take the next steps and the next steps that we usually go to Sharm and talk about?

Mr. HUDSON. Well, thank you for that. I don't have an answer for you on that today but I'd be happy to take that question and come back to you with something on that. I will tell you that Senator Mitchell has been very active with the Moroccans as he begins his peace process activities. Historically the Moroccans have been very helpful in this regard.

Mr. ISSA. One last question. When you make your follow-up, if you could give us, if you will, the best way—and I know Senator Mitchell is doing a good job with shuttle diplomacy, and that's usually how it works. You go to Morocco, you go to Israel, you go back to Morocco and so on. Is there a better dynamic to bring the parties together in some sort of a forum that we could potentially facilitate some direct dialogue, perhaps even with our special envoy.

Well, he's on my list of czars: high title, questionable portfolio, but lots of backing from the president. But is there a format that you think we could—when you follow up with the answer—kind of give it to us because this is an organization that has the staffing and the wherewithal to potentially go anywhere in Europe, the

Mediterranean and put together something which might bring parties together that up until now will only come together at a summit, and as you know all too well, summits are only after you've agreed to something that isn't probably going to accomplish anything but you've agreed to it so you'll sign it.

And the hope is we'd get people together for the dialogue you spoke of. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. HASTINGS. Thank you very much.

**HON. ROBERT ADERHOLT, COMMISSIONER,
COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE**

Mr. ADERHOLT. Thank you, sir. I don't have anything right now.

Mr. HASTINGS. Thank you very much, Mr. Aderholt. Ambassador, I genuinely appreciate your time and the State Department participating with us. I am sure you took notes, but I will make it a point to as our staff to see to it that you do have the follow up questions. One of the things that we like to do is to post on our Web site the particulars of hearings and briefings that we've had.

So the follow up is important to us and we thank you so very much, and as always it's good to see you.

We can now ask our second panel if they would join us. Professor Sotiris Roussos of the University of Peloponnese in Corinth, Greece. Professor Roussos and I share a similar mandate in his role as personal representative to the Greek chair in office of the OSCE for Mediterranean partners. And we are also going to be joined on our second panel by my good friend, the honorable João Soares, the president of the OSCE parliamentary assembly who is the former mayor of one of my favorite cities, Lisbon, the capital of Portugal.

Since we call you up first, professor, we'll begin with you.

**SOTIRIS ROUSSOS, PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE ON
MEDITERRANEAN PARTNER AFFAIRS, OSCE**

Mr. ROUSSOS. Thank you very much. It is great honor and pleasure to attend and witness to this hearing of the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe and to share views on how we can work together in order to make the Mediterranean Partnership of the OSCE even more effective by enhancing its potentials and fostering the ties between the organization and our common Mediterranean neighborhood.

In this regard, Greece as an OSCE participating state of the Mediterranean attaches great importance to the strengthening of relations with our Mediterranean partners and to the promotion of their engagement with the OSCE activities and mechanisms.

My appointment is underlining the strong will of the Greek chairmanship to further upgrade these ties as it emerges the strategic importance of the region for the Euro-Atlantic security. I would like last to share some reflections and to present some ideas to be thought upon by the partners honoring on our contribution on the triptych of synergy, symmetry and strategy.

Our times are marked by the most profound technical revolution in global communications which transcends national cultural boundaries. International partners of mass consumption with global brand names have become symbolic. Market-oriented reforms

and improvements in the business and investment climate are facilitating these changes all through the past decade.

In the Mediterranean, the role of the market forces in the private sector of the economy is expanding although sometimes it seems not so much. Governments are privatizing state-owned corporations and the banking, telecommunications and utilities sections. Trade systems are opening and restrictions on foreign exchange transactions are being eased.

Moreover, in response to these changes, development indicators are beginning to improve, especially in the past decade: Extreme poverty, people living on less than \$1 per day fell by 20 percent by 2000 and 2004. Over the past 15 years, life expectancy has increased in the region from 60 to 70 years, while the total fertility rate has fallen by 1.8 births per woman, the largest decline of any region in the world.

Nearly 90 percent of children completed primary education in 2005, up from 77 percent in 1990. About 90 percent of the population now has access to electricity and improved water resources.

Additionally, the enormous explosion in tourism, travel, commerce, international media and the translation publishing industries arrive at impressive cross-cultural transactions and nexuses. Side by side with this cultural globalization we have the most xenophobic and, in total, manifestations of narrow-minded nationalists and religious revivals.

According to a study by the joint project of the Dubai School of Government at the Wilson Center for Development at Brookings, although there was an economic revival between 2002 and 2008, however there were also other results. The same study points out that the situation seems more complicated since education is not a guarantee against unemployment in the Middle East.

In fact, unemployed rates in some countries are higher among those youth with relatively high levels of educational attainment. In Egypt, for example, the unemployment of university graduates reaches 25 percent whereas amongst illiterates and those of intermediate education is five and 10 percent respectively.

The same more or less tendencies can be traced in Jordan and Lebanon. Furthermore, employment prospects for youth in urban areas remain particularly bleak; nearly 76 percent of unemployed Moroccan youth live in urban areas.

Urban unemployment nearly doubled between 1982 and 2000, rising from 12 to 22 percent. About 60 to 70 percent of the youth in Egypt, Jordan and elsewhere thought this is a bad time, a bad period, for seeking a job in the Mediterranean and perhaps this is the beginning of thinking of migration as a serious alternative.

In both banks of the Mediterranean—not only the south, also in the north bank of the Mediterranean, in our countries—much higher education produces instead of conditions of prosperity, a proletarianized, impoverished intelligentsia deprived and resentful, directing its resentment against the elites as well as the other—in the face of the migrant, of the different which as seen as the agent of invasion, cultural and economic.

But the most startling effect of mass education is the collapse of earlier hierarchical notions of religious authority based on claims

to demonstrate of fixed bodies of religious texts, even in countries with state-appointed religious authorities.

The erosion of traditional religious authorities allows a wider debate on religion and science, democracy, modernity, gender, religious and ideological tolerance. The same absence of authority gives, however, the opportunity to radical and terrorist networks—personalities and institutions to hijack religious discourse and fastly undertake the role of champion of the true believers around the world.

Mediterranean societies have been saved through a large extent by a complex cultural and social texture created by the combination of elements of modernity and tradition. Moreover, identities in the Mediterranean have been and are still being saved through the construction of separate bodies of knowledge. And intercultural dialogue should be brave enough to discuss recent changes in the makeup, activity and the strategy of religious movements in Islam.

It's attack the role of migration communities in shaping an intercultural dialogue in the Mediterranean and all over the world. Such a dialogue should cope with a new process of pluralism and multiculturalism emerging in the great seats of Europe and through the explore of dynamic interaction between conflict and co-existence in multicultural cities in the Mediterranean and Europe.

There is a great importance in the role of press and mass media in supporting neutral understanding, the role of non-state actors in shaping ideological visions that affect state policies in the regions. The media have a serious impact of how ethnic national identities and social parties influence regional cooperation in the Mediterranean.

Moreover, the means of information technology and wired society combined with mass education are capable of involving Mediterranean people in the discourse and debate about the role of the state and non-state actors and thus create an institutional and legal prerequisites for the development of the open and interacting Mediterranean civil society.

The role of gender in the development of such a civil society and intercultural dialogue is indispensable, especially the role of women as primary socializer for youth and children and the importance of women participation in activism in all walks of life.

Women empowerment can not only increase households' income but they can become a remedy for social dislocation and the most useful tool for equitable growth and social cohesion. It should not and could not however come as an imported recipe from other parts of the world but it should be homegrown, based on genuine social forces and the rich cultural tradition of the area.

Last but not least, the Arab-Israeli conflict and especially the Israeli-Palestinian tract influences Mediterranean participation of the OSCE a great deal. Of course OSCE framework could not solve these issues but it could exploit the momentum given by the U.S. leadership initiatives in order to expand the model of Helsinki, to expand the culture of dialogue, tolerance, comprehension and human rights despite essential political differences.

At this particular moment, expanding membership of OSCE Mediterranean Partnership, especially the case of the Palestinian Authority is not simply to add new countries, but to expand a para-

digm of confidence building and conflict resolution. Now it is more necessary than ever.

Summarizing through all recent discussions and papers, we can discern three main principles: flexibility, visibility, tangible results. Flexibility—it is beyond any doubt that flexibility is increasing effectiveness, overcoming sensitivities and various practical obstacles. It has been a well-taken point in both the Egyptian and the Moroccan paper that we can concentrate on fewer items. Greece and personally the foreign minister Ms. Bakoyannis has worked very effectively on women empowerment through local and regional entrepreneurship in the Mediterranean and the Middle East, an issue that combines human dimension and economy.

Visibility—it is important to increase the visibility of the OSCE Mediterranean partnership in the societies of the partners. We also believe that a young leaders forum would also provide the partnership with prominent young people in all walks of life. The first joint seminar of young diplomats from OSCE Mediterranean partners organized by Greece last year is a case in point.

Tangible results—concentration on certain issues and cross-dimensional items can produce recommendation and results, which might lead to micro-projects funded partly by the fund and partly by the Mediterranean governments aiming to promoting the finds of the conference of the Mediterranean societies and of the OSCE Mediterranean partnership.

Last, I'd like to share a personal reflection. Our Mediterranean basing can provide us with materials of dual use. We can use them to erect walls of division but with the same materials, build bridges of understanding. We all opt for the latter. Thank you very much.

Mr. HASTINGS. Thank you very much, professor. I now have the distinct honor of asking my very good friend, the president of the parliamentary assembly to give us his reflections, which I'm sure will be inspired by the two days of activities such that with his capabilities he probably will summarize for us all what we have done. João.

JOÃO SOARES, PRESIDENT, OSCE PARLIAMANTARY ASSEMBLY

Mr. SOARES. Thank you, dear chairman, for this opportunity. My first words are to greet you, Congressman Alcee Hastings and Senator Ben Cardin and all your colleagues from the Helsinki Commission, for this initiative. This seminar that took place until late in the morning today from the beginning of the morning of yesterday was a great moment—a great political moment. It was very important for us to have this possibility of discussing with our Mediterranean partners at this eye level and that's an initiative that has an author and you are the author of this initiative. And I have, as president of the parliamentary assembly, to thank you very sincerely and to greet also our good friend and your colleague, Senator Ben Cardin, for the work you have done.

That we have—as far as international relations are concerned—we have in our hands one of the best international tools that exists, if not the best: the OSCE and of course, its parliamentary assembly. The OSCE has proven along the 30 years of its lifetime that it can deal with any difficult situation and it has dealt in Central Asia, in the Caucasus, in the Balkans—everywhere from Vancouver

to Vladivostok. You know it better than anybody because you have been a very good president of our parliamentary assembly like our president emeritus who is here—Göran Lennmarker—you already quoted.

I strongly, personally believe that we have in our hands one of the best political, international instruments that has shown during the 30 years of existence its flexibility, its capacity to adapting to different situations and the capacity to deal with difficult challenges even in moments of war. We have proved it.

And last September, when, during our Mediterranean fall meeting in Toronto, we had the most wide discussion that occurred about the Caucasuses—south Caucasuses and war between Georgia and Russia. And the main problem for us and you gave—you, Helsinki Commission and you, personally, Ben Cardin and Alcee Hastings, gave us a great contribution to make our partner states from the Mediterranean believe that this is the good instrument to deal with the difficulties we have in our future. We have no other so good international institution including United Nations. This is the most effective.

But of course, we have problems and you've touched them when you made your questions to the ambassador from the Department of State that was here. There are too many institutions trying to deal with the Mediterranean problems. And so, there has to be—and I agree completely with the suggestion you made and the suggestion that was made to us by our secretary general Spencer Oliver—there has to be coordination.

And you, as a very dynamic special representative of the parliamentary assembly for the Mediterranean and the nice work that we have done here thanks to you here in Washington, you are in the best position to reach this coordination between all these institutions—NATO, Mediterranean parliamentary assemblies, all the other institutions that deal with the Mediterranean—without going so far as we go overseas and as we can go because we have proved it.

We have just proved it here in Washington but we have proved anywhere else. And it's very good that our Moroccan colleagues that were in now a seminar proposed to have in Morocco one seminar, an international conference on the framework of the OSCE and the OSCE parliamentary assembly about the water, which is one of the main problems. And I'm very glad because we have here and since a long time ago, we hadn't the opportunity of having Israeli parliamentarians, Egyptian parliamentarians, Jordanian parliamentarians and some other Arabic countries' parliamentarians discussing in a civilized manner with each other about the difficulties of the deals and the challenges that we have in the future.

And that—for me, it's very important. I agree completely with the quotation that our good colleague and friend Ben Cardin made of ex-Prime Minister Rabin. We should have, in the OSCE and in the framework of the parliamentary assembly, the representatives of the Palestinian Authority for the reasons that Rabin gave to Ben Cardin when they talked in Jerusalem about Israel entering the OSCE and entering the parliamentary assembly.

We have a big opportunity as our Greek friend said to us, the changes that came with the new American administration and the

new spirit that you, Ben Cardin, and especially President Obama represent for all of us give us hope—a great hope and a great expectation. I don't remember, since the last 50 years of my life, any time where there was so much hope concentrated in so few people. And I'm sure you are going to stand for this opportunity—that it's an opportunity for the United States and it's an opportunity for all of us. And of course, we have now a very good chairmanship.

We have to recognize that—Dora Bakoyannis and his team of Greek diplomats and Greek politicians are making a great work and with a great dynamic. And that the last in former council of ministers made a new spirit and the new approach and I am sure that our fall meeting that will take place in Athens and the council of ministers that will take place in Athens until the end of this year will represent new possibilities in approaching the complete questions because I remember our Egyptian colleagues that were there so experienced parliamentarians and diplomats that were always pushing us to look at the concrete matters, not only to the beautiful resolutions.

And I know that you are also a man of the complete, Congressman Alcee Hastings: my master and my friend and my teacher—and that's very important. That's very important—to be people of the complete and that one of the most important added values that we can bring to these difficult matters because there are no miracle solutions for the conflict of the Middle East between Israel and Palestine and between Israel and the Arab states.

But there are approaches that could be done and if we think—and the opportunities that we've lost thanks to some European authorities at the time and the previous American administration with the Iraq war and with this terrible error that was committed—and if we think that all the resources that we spent—we together spent, unfortunately—in the decision taken in my home country soil unfortunately, I'm ashamed for it. But if these resources had been used—human and financial—had been used in the problems in the Middle East and in the conflict of the Middle East, Gaza strike would not be like that. This would not be like that and Lebanon would not be like that.

And I have a great hope and what I can assure you is that you can count with the experience of the parliamentarians. You are very well-placed to know that I have the greatest respect for diplomats and for other civil servants but the experience that we have of fighting in elections, fighting for our own ideas and our own ideals and being defeated sometimes and winning others—it's the most important added value that we can give. And I am sure that there is a new spirit as far as the Mediterranean cooperation is concerned after this Washington meeting and seminar. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. HASTINGS. Thank you very much, Mr. President. We'll turn to my colleagues if they have any questions but I'd like to take a moment of personal privilege. I have a constituent that came in the room and Alkia Lagerwal though that perhaps I didn't see him back there when he slid back on the wall. That's one of my constituents from south Florida and I'm glad to see you, young man. And tell your dad I said hello in case I don't get a chance to talk to you. Mr. Aderholt, do you have any questions?

Mr. ADERHOLT. I would like to ask our first panelist if—you had mentioned something that sort of piqued my interest there about—you were talking about the young leaders conference and the young leaders involvement in that. Could you expand on that a little bit and how that's currently going and what the situation is and what you foresee coming out of that?

Mr. ROUSSOS. Thank you very much for your question. It's a very critical one. To help preparing and lead, to help prepare leaders that can expand the cultural of the OSCE because OSCE's moves foremost by—it's a matter of culture of guidelines, culture of dialogue. So we have to help preparing a leadership—young leadership—that is abiding by this culture.

And one step is the young diplomats joint seminar. It's a seminar by young diplomats from the OSCE Mediterranean partners who are coming together in Athens and in Vienna. So there is an environment between all these, young diplomats who are going to, struggle against its others perhaps in various forum to help understand each other and to share perhaps some common interests and also transplant—in a way, transfer—this shared interest, this shared culture to their society.

We can actually do the same with other groups of leaders. We can do it with young entrepreneurs. We can do it with young women leaders. We have done very interesting—actually last year in Greece, we had a seminar on women entrepreneurship and we have seen a great interest by young women entrepreneurs from the region. So we can expand on this. And not only that—we can also exploit new technology because we have a big discussion today about the use of new technology, of telecommunications, of computer, of being wired. We can use these potentials in order to create networks. That means these people can communicate to each other and create networks around the Mediterranean.

And also, these projects can—these fora, these groups, these meetings can offer tangible results. We can see the results. And we do not need big money for this. For example, we talk about this partnership fund. Partnership fund is not big money. I mean, it's about half a million euros or so. So this is not big money, for an organization of a partnership. But in this kind of targeted initiatives and of this kind of groups, we can have tangible results with not so much money. This is what we think about this young leaders' forum.

Mr. ADERHOLT. Well, certainly it's something to be pursued and it's a great idea and I would encourage you to.

Mr. ROUSSOS. Actually, there is this idea—and again, we came back to this—to the coordination. For example, NATO Aspen Institute has such a program of young leaders. We can have a bigger one incorporating or coordinating the Aspen Institute, NATO, young leaders for the Mediterranean and the young leaders of the OSCE and perhaps a young leaders' forum that is going on in the new union for the Mediterranean. So this is one example but we can easily coordinate.

Mr. HASTINGS. Would the gentleman yield just a moment?

Mr. ADERHOLT. Sure, go ahead.

Mr. HASTINGS. Earlier today, we had a presentation from the German Marshall Fund and they're moving in that direction as

well in dealing with the youth. And I just add that and will provide you with that—

Mr. ADERHOLT. Yeah, well that's encouraging to hear. And yeah, well, thank you, professor, for your comments on that. I don't have anything else. I just do want to say, again, it's a great honor to have the president of OSCE parliamentary assembly with us and thank you for your leadership and it's good to have you here in Washington and before our panel today. Thank you.

Mr. HASTINGS. Ms. Moore.

Ms. MOORE. Thank you. Thank you so much, Mr. Chairman and thank you so much, Mr. President for the honor of having you here in the United States. I apologize for being out of the room. I'm working on being in two places at one time—been working on it for quite a while.

But I was happy to hear you speak about soft security issues and the need to train and do training and development with younger people. I want to focus on something that the Moroccan delegation to the OSCE has circulated a vision paper talking about the need to engage around the issue of energy and water. I represent a district right on Lake Michigan and of course, the Great Lakes contain 20 percent of the world's fresh water. And Lake Michigan on which my district resides is the only lake that's totally and completely contained within the United States. And so therefore, we have industries—120 industries—that relate to water development. We have a university that has an industry, an educational and academic system that is developed around water resources.

The impact of climate change and the lack of water on Earth is going to have a greater impact on women than anyone else as they seek to relocate their families. And so I am wondering what we could do in establishing a network among these Mediterranean research institutions to work on a dual track, to work on climate change and water development but also have that be a way of bringing women who are going to endure the greatest hardship under the dearth of these resources into these academic opportunities.

Mr. ROUSSOS. It's a splendid example of having a multi-dimensional work in the partnership. First of all, water is a security issue so it is by all means a security issue. It's an environmental issue and has to do also with the women and children quality of life and quality of work. Now, of course there were attempts in the 1990s by the Euro-Mediterranean partnership, by the Barcelona process, by the multilateral tracks to create a network of research institutes. But I think that this network has not been so successful, not because of the people because of other circumstances—mainly political.

It is a huge opportunity now to use the partnership fund and I think—to this direction. And also do something else. And, now, I would like to come back to what our chairman said about small businesses and micro-banking, micro-lending and women in these businesses because around protection of water, around water management, there can be a huge development of micro-business, micro-lending led by women. We have seen that; we have seen that in Bangladesh, we have seen that with fisheries in Bangladesh run by women with the micro-lending by Grameen Bank, which is a

success. So we can go on with these examples and we can start with the research network and perhaps also thinking about micro-lending.

Of course, I have here to make a distinction, to make a note that OSCE is not an economic organization. It's not a financial organization. World Bank or other organizations can do this job better. But what OSCE can do is, again, to have the cultural infrastructure, to have the culture of dialogue of cooperation and this is the main contribution of the OSCE partnership.

Mr. SOARES. I liked so much the question you put that I wanted to add something. I think that we as parliamentarians inside the framework of the OSCE are the best place to deal with these kinds of issues. And I agree with you. The paper that our Moroccan friends came to us—I quoted it in the first speech I made in the opening. It was one of the best papers we have here and the fact that our Moroccan colleagues took the initiative to go to an international conference about the water means that there is the flexibility and the spirit of the OSCE and especially in the spirit of the parliamentary assembly.

Gender problems—gender equality problems—is one of our main goals and our main tasks. And we have done work—I've seen it with my own eyes after Göran Lennmarker, after Alcee Hastings, I had the pleasure and the honor of being in Central Asia in places where there are real problems and where we are facing them and not only with the politically correct and the photo opportunity—with real work in the field. And sometimes without the networks.

I was surprised in Central Asia and I spoke this morning about it and I simply could establish a corporation with Aga Khan Network because they are dealing with the same goals, with the same challenges and they are doing such good work in the model of our own work as far as the parliamentary assembly's concerned. And that is something that we should always underline in a proud matter. We have one of the best secretariats in the world because we have a small budget, a small secretariat and we make a real work from Vancouver to Vladivostok.

I was very pleased, I have the opportunity to say but all Mediterranean partners came to the last presidential elections in the United States to the observing mission in a great number. And that means also the attraction that the United States has to our Mediterranean partners. But that means also, the quality of the work we are doing and I propose for example in the former ministerial council in Corfu the idea of taking good ideas that in other institutions have worked, like the ERASMUS program in the European Union or your program that came from the second World War of cooperation in building education for young people coming from other countries. But the ERASMUS has made more for the European Union than all the treaties and that is something that should be brought inside the OSCE. Excuse me.

Mr. HASTINGS. Were you going to add one final word there, Gwen?

Ms. MOORE. One final word and the president really said it much more eloquently than I could have. And that is—and I just wanted to just disagree a little bit with you, Mr. Roussos, to say that it's really hard to disaggregate economic issues from humanitarian

issues. And here, we're dealing with it when we look at the gender inequity because the status of women is like the canary in the coalmine.

If you can look at the status of women and tell what is going on in a country—if women lack economic opportunities, if they are not a part of growing the economy, if there are human rights issues with including them, the whole economy of the country will suffer indeed. So women are going to be critically impacted by climate change and water resources. We need to get them involved in education and if we could get our Mediterranean partners to see it as an economic issue for their future, it would help us deal with some of the human rights and gender issues as well.

Mr. HASTINGS. Thank you very much, all.

Ms. MOORE. Right.

Mr. HASTINGS. Thank you, professor. Thank you, Mr. President and Ms. Moore. I'm sure that President Soares and President-emeritus Lennmarker and my good friend Senator Grafstein and Spencer Oliver, the secretary general, all thought that they would come over here and get away from Tona Tensguard but that's sort of—for the persons who don't know, that's inside parliamentary assembly baseball but Ms. Tensgard has arrival now on gender issues and that Ms. Moore is constantly involved with us.

Toward that end, we said that we would be here an hour-and-a-half and we have been. I'd like to say with Mr. Nagisi al-Hamed, if you would or if you can walk with me, I have to go to the Rules Committee. It's been an extraordinarily busy day for all of us. We've had not only a fruitful hearing here this afternoon but the two days of interaction, in my considered opinion, was superb.

I'd be terribly remiss—the three staffers here on the desk with me are persons that were extremely instrumental in causing this seminar and hearing to be a success. And I want to take a special cognizance of the work of Fred Turner, the staff director that many of you have interacted with and continue to do so and I hope will as well as Alex Johnson who really was the principal author of many of the specifics and the hard work that was undertaken. And Marlene Kaufmann who I indicated to you earlier did in fact write the resolution that is now law in so far as the House of Representatives is concerned in that it passed unanimously last night. And I will get for you a copy of the Congressional Record that has the statements of members of Congress, including our good friend Chris Smith—when I know you've got to go, we are all right—our good friend Chris Smith, the ranking member of this organization.

Also, the fine staffers, interns—all of them that did all of this extraordinary work—I thank you and compliment you so well. It's one of the things that I encourage our partner states as well as the participating states to do more of and that is to have more young people that are involved as is the case at the secretariat of the parliamentary assembly—interns that go on to become career professionals in a variety of fields dealing with international undertakings.

President Soares, you mentioned the fact that our partner states came in great numbers to the United States elections. I'm not one that worries too much about bragging about things that I do. But I take full responsibility for asking then-secretary Colin Powell to

change the provisions of the United States to allow for election observers to show you how important relationships can be and how even though appearances may look from time to time as if persons have such serious disagreements that they can't come to terms and do things in a positive way.

I was in Russia as an election observer and I went out drinking vodka with two of my Russian colleagues. And one of them said to me in very serious terms—he says this is your third time here in Russia observing our elections and I don't have the privilege of observing yours. I took that to heart and I came back and for a year, worked with Secretary Powell who made that change in 2004 and for the first time, we had observers. For me, the loop was closed in 2008 when the same person that I had drinks with in Russia that I had drinks with him in Fort Lauderdale when he came to observe our elections. That's a part of what developing relationships can produce in the way of positive results for all of our countries and that's why I don't believe that there are any barriers that are incapable of being overcome by humankind.

But I do believe that institutions, not multiplicity of institutions, but institutions are greater than humans when it comes to collective undertakings. And therefore, I agree with my president that the Organization for Security and Cooperation and more specifically, its parliamentary assembly, has been a dynamic that has been not observed by the overall community here in this country as well as in many places in Europe and in the Maghreb and elsewhere. But they are doing and have done extraordinary work.

The development of the Mediterranean forum actually came from a person that I defeated to be president of the parliamentary assembly. The first person that I know that mentioned it was a gentleman that I asked to come but he could not arrange his calendar—is Michele Voissant from France. Followed by a person that I've had considerable disagreements with and will continue if he continues his path however in Albania recently, in spite of our differences, we worked together to assist in making sure that election observation went smoothly.

But the second person that took the lead on this would be Bruce George, a parliamentarian from the United Kingdom. And that was followed then by my presidency and followed robustly by the presidency of Göran Lenmarker and even more so in light of the fact that he lives even closer to the region than anybody did by now-President Soares. That's how it came about in the first place and you can be assured you have four of us that were directly involved and have known each other for a very long time and see this as vital and critical for stability in the Middle East and for peace and prosperity throughout the Maghreb and all of our partner states.

I thank you all for your attention and for being here with us. And I say to the partner states that are still here that it is our intention to work with the new Kazakh chair in office and to continue our efforts to follow up on this seminar. And as I said in the meeting, I'm hopeful that all of the six states will host a meeting that all of the six countries will attend. Thank you.

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