

to Europe. The central theme of OSCE PA's Tenth Annual Session was "European Security and Conflict Prevention: Challenges to the OSCE in the 21st Century."

This year's Assembly brought together nearly 300 parliamentarians from 52 OSCE participating States, including the first delegation from the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia following Belgrade's suspension from the OSCE process in 1992. Seven countries, including the Russian Federation and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, were represented at the level of Speaker of Parliament or President of the Senate. Following a decision taken earlier in the year, the Assembly withheld recognition of the pro-Lukashenka National Assembly given serious irregularities in Belarus' 2000 parliamentary elections. In light of the expiration of the mandate of the democratically elected 13th Supreme Soviet, no delegation from the Republic of Belarus was seated.

The inaugural ceremony included a welcoming addresses by the OSCE PA President Adrian Severin, Speaker of the National Assembly, Raymond Forni and the Speaker of the Senate, Christian Poncet. The French Minister of Foreign Affairs, Hubert Védrine also addressed delegates during the opening plenary. The OSCE Chairman-in-Office, Romanian Foreign Minister Mircea Geoana, presented remarks and responded to questions from the floor.

Presentations were also made by several other senior OSCE officials, including the OSCE Secretary General, the High Commissioner on National Minorities, the Representative on Freedom of the Media, and the Director of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights.

The 2001 OSCE PA Prize for Journalism and Democracy was presented to the widows of the murdered journalists José Luis López de Lacalle of Spain and Georgiy Gongadze of Ukraine. The Spanish and Ukrainian journalists were posthumously awarded the prize for their outstanding work in furthering OSCE values.

Members of the U.S. delegation played a leading role in debate in each of the Assembly's three General Committees—Political Affairs and Security; Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and Environment; and Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions. U.S. sponsored resolutions served as the focal point for discussion on such timely topics as "Combating Corruption and International Crime in the OSCE Region," a resolution I sponsored; "Southeastern Europe," by Senator VOINOVICH; "Prevention of Torture, Abuse, Extortion or Other Unlawful Acts" and "Combating Trafficking in Human Beings," by Mr. Smith; "Freedom of the Media," by Mr. HOYER; and, "Developments in the North Caucasus," by Mr. CARDIN.

Senator HUTCHISON played a particularly active role in debate over the

Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty in the General Committee on Political Affairs and Security, chaired by Mr. HASTINGS, which focused on the European Security and Defense Initiative.

An amendment I introduced in the General Committee on Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and Environment on promoting social, educational and economic opportunity for indigenous peoples won overwhelming approval, making it the first ever such reference to be included in an OSCE PA declaration. Other U.S. amendments focused on property restitution laws, sponsored by Mr. CARDIN, and adoption of comprehensive non-discrimination laws, sponsored by Mr. HOYER.

Amendments by members of the U.S. delegation on the General Committee on Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions focused on the plight of Roma, by Mr. SMITH; citizenship, by Mr. HOYER; and Nazi-era compensation and restitution, and religious liberty, by Ms. SLAUGHTER. Delegation members also took part in debate on the abolition of the death penalty, an issue raised repeatedly during the Assembly and in discussions on the margins of the meeting.

While in Paris, members of the delegation held an ambitious series of meetings, including bilateral sessions with representatives from the Russian Federation, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, the United Kingdom, and Kazakhstan. Members met with the President of the French National Assembly to discuss diverse issues in U.S.-French relations including military security, agricultural trade, human rights and the death penalty. A meeting with the Romanian Foreign Minister included a discussion of the missile defense initiative, policing in the former Yugoslavia, and international adoption policy.

Staff of the U.S. Embassy provided members with an overview of U.S.-French relations. Members also attended a briefing by legal experts on developments affecting the right of individuals to profess and practice their religion or belief. A session with representatives of U.S. businesses operating in France and elsewhere in Europe provided members with insight into the challenges of today's global economy.

Elections for officers of the Assembly were held during the final plenary. Mr. Adrian Severin of Romania was re-elected President. Senator Jeremiah Graftstein of Canada was elected Treasurer. Three of the Assembly's nine Vice-Presidents were elected to three-year terms: Alcee Hastings, U.S.A., Kimmo Kiljunen, Finland, and Ahmet Tan, Turkey. The Assembly's Standing Committee agreed that the Eleventh Annual Session of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly will be held next July in Berlin, Germany.

WOMEN AND GUN VIOLENCE

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, just last year the Congress passed and President

Clinton signed into law the Violence Against Women Act of 2000. The law instituted welcome changes in Federal criminal law relating to stalking, domestic abuse and sex offense cases. In addition, VAWA 2000 created programs to prevent sexual assaults on college campuses, establish transitional housing for victims of domestic abuse and enhance protections for elderly and disabled victims of domestic violence.

The importance of the Violence Against Women Act should not be underestimated. However, if we are to comprehensively address this issue, we cannot ignore the impact of gun violence on women. According to studies cited by the Violence Policy Center, in 1998, in homicides where the weapon was known, 50 percent of female homicide victims were killed with a firearm. Of those murdered women, more than three quarters were killed with a handgun. And that same year, for every one time that a woman used a handgun to kill in self-defense, 101 women were murdered by a handgun.

While the firearms industry markets gun to women—asserting that owning a gun will make women safer—the statistics support the point made by Karen Brock, an analyst with the Violence Policy Center, "Handguns don't offer women protection; they guarantee peril."

LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT ACT OF 2001

Mr. SMITH of Oregon. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about hate crimes legislation I introduced with Senator KENNEDY in March of this year. The Local Law Enforcement Act of 2001 would add new categories to current hate crimes legislation sending a signal that violence of any kind is unacceptable in our society.

I would like to describe a terrible crime that occurred February 21, 1997 in Atlanta, GA. A bomb exploded at a gay nightclub and another bomb was found outside the club during the investigation. Packed with nails, the bomb exploded in the rear patio section of the lounge shortly before 10 p.m. Two people were treated for injuries resulting from the flying shrapnel. An extremist group called "Army of God" claimed responsibility for the bomb.

I believe that Government's first duty is to defend its citizens, to defend them against the harms that come out of hate. The Local Law Enforcement Enhancement Act of 2001 is now a symbol that can become substance. I believe that by passing this legislation, we can change hearts and minds as well.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE HMONG SPECIAL GUERRILLA UNITS

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, this weekend members of the Lao-Hmong American Coalition, Michigan Chapter, their friends and supporters will gather in my home State of Michigan to pay