

Special Representative

To:

PA President

and

PA Secretary General

July 9, 2013

PC Brief Weeks 25-27, 2013

During most of these weeks, Marc Carillet, Roberto Montella, Christian Pauzenberger and I were absent due to the Albanian Election Observation and the Annual Session in Istanbul. There were three PC meetings – one of them a Special PC with the Foreign Ministers of Serbia and Switzerland as the incoming chairmanships - as well as meetings of the FSC, the subsidiary bodies of the PC, several informal meetings and another two-day meeting of the High Level Alliance Against Trafficking in Persons “Stolen Lives, Stolen Money: the Price of Modern-day Slavery”. The PA’s Special Representative on Gender issues, Dr. Hedy Fry (Canada) represented the PA in the meeting.

The PC decided on the agenda and organizational modalities of the 2013 OSCE Mediterranean Conference, which will take place on the 28-29th of October in Monaco. The body also debated reports by the External Auditor about the past accounting period, the accounting Chamber of Ukraine, and the Audit Committee. This Committee is composed of experts from the Council of Europe, from the Auditor General of Sweden, and from the French Court of Auditors. The report of the Committee focused on three points: the OSCE would benefit from a longer budget cycle; there is urgency to perform the overdue update of the Financial Regulations; and there have been deficiencies in the appointment procedure of the External Auditors (the Committee should have been involved). The new external Auditor, the German Court of Audit (Bundesrechnungshof), was also present in the meeting. Pending consensus, the decision on the financial statements for this period has not yet been adopted.

There was another hearing of the three candidates for the post of High Commissioner on National Minorities, after which the Chairmanship announced its intention to propose the Finnish candidate, Astrid Thors, for the post. The other two candidates from Croatia and Russia have withdrawn their candidacy.

During the Special PC, Switzerland provided a detailed outline of their work plan for 2014. Serbia said that they agree with the Swiss plan and will be giving more details about their work plan in 2014. Almost all countries that made comments commended the joint-chairmanship idea and again underlined their support for the Helsinki+40 process.

The PCs that I attended dealt mostly with the usual routine matters and the repetitive mutual accusations under “Current Issues”. Russia and Belarus have increased the frequency of their statements that address issues of alleged non-compliance with commitments in countries “West of Vienna”. On the other hand, the tone of the discussion on the Office in Baku appeared to be more conciliatory on all sides. Very often, the rights of Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual and Transgender people (LGBTs) are at the center of sometimes very emotional controversies, including strong reciprocal attacks between the Ambassador of Norway and the representative of the Holy See.

I briefed the PC about PA-ODIHR cooperation during the Albanian Election Observation and on the outcome of the Annual Session. In his report, OSCE Secretary General Zannier underlined the importance that the PA attaches to issues of transparency, accountability and budget oversight.



Andreas Nothelle, Ambassador