

Special Representative

To:

PA President

and

PA Secretary General

PC Brief Week 4/5, 2016

During these weeks there were routine meetings of the Permanent Council (PC), the Forum for Security Co-operation (new Dutch Chairmanship), the Preparatory Committee (PrepComm), the Advisory Committee on Management and Finance (ACMF), the three topical committees, other informal meetings, and the two-day "First preparatory meeting" of the 24th OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum, in which OSCE PA Second Committee Vice Chair Nilza de Sena (MP, Portugal) participated (the News from Copenhagen 597 reported about it). Nilza Sena also paid a visit to the Vienna Office. Francesco Pagani accompanied the PA delegation on its visit to the Caucasus.

The PC debated the reports by Ambassadors Sajdik and Apakan on the Situation in Eastern Ukraine. Amb. Sajdik stated that - although the relations between Ukraine and Russia have further deteriorated and certain heavy weapons on both sides have not been withdrawn, a slight improvement in other fields can be reported since September. The number of civilian deaths has decreased and several thousand detainees were released (the release of further imprisoned persons, however, has stalled since autumn). Moreover, progress has been made in de-mining and humanitarian aid, and pensioners are able to get access to the places from which they receive their pensions. Amb. Apakan highlighted the increase in ceasefire violations since the beginning of December, with both sides moving forward to the contact line to seize control of villages not under the control of the government or separatists in the last year. The risk remains high, and the situation volatile and unpredictable due to a lack of trust at all levels between both sides. The withdrawal of heavy weapons has only been partial, and it is clear that these weapons are not permanently stored. The Special Monitoring Mission (SMM) continues to observe the use of weapons of all calibers.

The SMM's mandate will expire on March 31, 2016. Its proposed budget for the coming 12 months is EUR 99.3 million. The budget proposal represents a 12 per cent increase compared to 2015-16. It particularly aims at stabilizing the number of monitors at 800.

The PC also debated the regular report by the Head of the OSCE Mission in Kosovo, which gave an account on the current unrest in the country and inside the Kosovo Assembly. Otherwise, all the meetings during these weeks were routine.



Andreas Nothelle
Ambassador
February 8, 2016