



To the Heads of the national delegations
to the Parliamentary Assembly of the OSCE

Dear Colleague,

as you are aware, the term of the Secretary General of our Assembly is expiring at the end of this year. In this connection, Rule 38 of our Rules of Procedure, which regulates the election of such important office, acquires topical importance. Said article, unfortunately, seems to contain several ambiguous and contradictory elements that might lead to misinterpretations and misapplications.

Against this backdrop, I drafted a new wording of Rule 38, so as to uphold two basic principles which I consider unavoidable:

1. the term of office of the Secretary General must be set. Today this is the only position within the Assembly for which no fixed expiration is envisaged. According to the proposed amendments, indeed, a maximum of two five-year terms is envisaged, with a possible extension of the second five-year term for no more than two years, with a total term of office lasting no more than 12 years. This would ensure the necessary stability of the position as well as a leadership turnover, which is of vital importance in every organisation. Moreover, the wording of my proposal will enable the current Secretary General, who by the way has been holding his position since the very establishment of the Assembly – that is, for more than 13 years - to have his mandate extended for two additional years;
2. the majority requirements applicable to the election of the Secretary General, to his/her re-election and to the election of the Deputy Secretaries General shall be identical. On the contrary, the existing Rule seems to envisage a simple majority scenario for the re-election of the outgoing Secretary General



Camera dei Deputati

and a consensus-minus-one scenario for all remaining votes.
Such rule is clearly unfair.

I am going to submit my proposal to the consideration of the next Standing Committee meeting, to be held in Washington on 1st July 2005. Upon drafting my amendment, which you can find herewith attached, I also took into consideration the remarks brought up during a previous discussion that took place in Copenhagen last month within the enlarged Bureau.

With a view to the Washington meeting, I would like to ask for your personal support and that of your delegation, as a sign of the Assembly unity and of the willingness to have it function properly. In this respect, I would very much appreciate your signing the attached form.

The proposal has already been upheld by six Vice-Presidents of the Assembly and by the Heads of the delegations of Italy, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cyprus, France, Germany, Iceland, Netherlands, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine as well as by many other members of the Assembly itself.

In the hope that I can rely on your support I would be pleased to provide you with any further information that you might need.

I avail myself of this opportunity to express the assurances of my highest esteem and consideration

Giovanni Kessler (Italy)
Vice-President of the OSCE
Parliamentary Assembly