

## Special Representative

OSCE's parlamentariske Forsamling  
OSCE alm. del - Bilag 27  
Offentligt

To:

PA President

and

PA Secretary General

### PC Brief Week 4, 2006

This week, the First Segment of the Economic Forum, which this year was held in Vienna (the second segment of the Economic Forum in Prague will address, among other things, issues of transport security), as well as meetings of the Permanent Council, and of the Preparatory Committee took place.

The first day of the Forum was marked by routine statements with many general remarks and the praise of the wise decision of the PC to hold this conference, whereas the second day, which was devoted to regional transportation issues, was much more concrete and in parts very informative. It can be illustrated by the discussion in the Forum on South East Europe: It turned out that around 4 billion Euros for road works and 12 billion for the railways will be needed to do the necessary to bring the transport systems in the region up to date, not to forget the Danube river, sea- and airports, which require additional funds. Since this is far more than the states in the region or the international community can afford (the available funds are at 3 to 4 billion), a strict prioritization is needed. This encounters several obstacles: There is a lack of reliable data, political differences, regional and other egoisms, but also a difficulty arising from the many actors in the field, namely several different priority lists that need to be consolidated. Public Private Partnerships are difficult to achieve. Corruption causes high costs, higher than a sophisticated security system would produce. Visa regulations of the Schengen States are an obstacle to economic interchange, and this situation is expected to deteriorate when more states of the region become EU members. Since the region is the one closest to the European Union and seen as a possible template for other regions, it is self evident that other regions are faced with even far greater problems, including ongoing regional conflicts.

Positive developments are examples of regional cooperation as well as the ongoing transfer of tasks into regional ownership. Everybody seems to have understood that improvements in the speed of border crossings cost much less and are much more rewarding than enormous investments in the improvement of road and rail. This does not only address the issue of the border management, but also that of a better coordination of timetables and procedures. Whereas the OSCE should leave the technical as well as the financial side to those organizations better suited for the task, it could do a lot of good in the field of diplomatic action to improve regional cooperation, enhance the fight against corruption or upgrade border management.

The PC took a decision on the date of the Human Dimension Implementation Seminar. The main point on the agenda was the report by the Director of ODIHR, Ambassador Christian Strohal. While all the other areas in which ODIHR is active were positively mentioned, the differences over its election monitoring activities persist. Under Current Issues figured the Russian law on Non Profit Organizations, caricatures of Mohammed in a Norwegian magazine, Andijan (Uzbekistan) trials, the report of the Human Rights Review Group in Morocco, and a Turkish Court decision in favor of the freedom of Expression. Under Any Other Business, Hungary extended an invitation to consider the need for monitoring its upcoming parliamentary elections (9 April and the second round on 23 April). The Chair announced the dates and topics of the three Supplementary Human Dimension Implementation Seminars: March 30/31 on Human Rights defenders, July 6/7 on the freedom of and the access to information, and on November 2/3 on democratization. He also called for nominations of External Auditors, since the term of office of the British auditors will be expiring. Norway has already announced its interest.



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