

Special Representative

To:

PA President

and

PA Secretary General

Permanent Council Brief Week 20 - 22, 2006

These weeks, meetings of the Permanent Council, the Advisory Committee on Management and Finance and most of the Working Groups, took place. The Permanent Council did not take decisions. The most important point on Vienna's agenda right now is the discussion of the 2007 Program Outline, as mentioned in the last Permanent Council Brief. The initial discussion in the Preparatory Committee made it clear that most delegations are not favorable to the proposed budget increase of about 4 percent and the continuous shift of funds from operative tasks, especially in the missions, to administrative tasks in the Secretariat. There also seems to be a general skepticism about the Secretary General's attempt to implement performance based planning by 2008. The Russian delegation again is requesting to see project lists instead of generalized descriptions of "programs".

Other points on the Preparatory Committee agenda included a draft decision on the Anti-Trafficking mechanism and one on establishing a partnership fund. Helga Konrad and the Chairmanship disagree over the reasons why her mandate was not extended. The draft decision tries to make the office of the Special Representative an integral part of the Secretariat, but at the same time wants the personality to be high level and political and not touch the autonomy of the respective units at ODIHR.

I have had several discussions about election observation. I understood that many Western diplomats believe that the Russian complaints against ODIHR are solely caused by the role that Parliamentarians play in EOMs and that it would be better to let ODIHR operate independently, which might lead to a cancellation of the cooperation agreement.

The Permanent Council heard addresses by the First Dep. Minister for Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan Rakhat Aliyev, the Personal Representative of the European Union SC/High Representative on Montenegro Dialogue Miroslav Lajcak, as well as reports by the Personal Representatives of the Chairman-in-Office on Tolerance Issues, Amb. Ömür Orhun, Gert Weisskirchen and Anastasia Crickley, and of the Heads of the OSCE Center in Almaty Amb. Ivar Vikki and the OSCE Presence in Albania Amb. Pawel Vacek.

Under Current Issues, it discussed;

- Parliamentary elections in Azerbaijan
- Uzbekistan and the Andijan tragedy
- The situation in South Ossetia, Georgia
- The Transdniestrian conflict
- 30th anniversary of founding the Moscow-Helsinki-Group
- Albanian candidature for OSCE chairmanship 2012
- Referendum in Montenegro
- Death penalty in the USA
- The GUUAM summit
- Monument of Soviet Soldiers in Tallinn
- Kirgistan accepts decree to improve the political and democratic situation in Kirgistan
- Information matrix by the chairmanship on freedom of the media with regard to legal sanctions against journalists



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