

## Special Representative

To:

PA President

and

PA Secretary General

### *Permanent Council Brief Week 30, 2008*

During this week, meetings of the Permanent Council, the FSC, a joint Contact Group with the Partners for Cooperation, the Preparatory Committee and the Advisory Committee for Management and Finance took place, as well as the Chairmanship's Seminar on Election Related Issues.

PA SG Secretary General Oliver, Dep. Secretary General Schøn, and the Vienna Liaison Office staff attended the seminar on behalf of the PA. The opening and concluding remarks were delivered by SG Oliver. I acted as a panellist in one of the panels. Those diplomats who stayed in the room throughout the two days and have sufficient information about the issue evaluated the seminar and the spirit in which the PA and the ODIHR dealt with each other predominantly positively. The tone of SG Oliver's concluding remarks was warmly welcomed.

The lesser informed repeated what former PA President Bruce George, who also attended the seminar, said and wrote. In essence, Mr. George accused the PA leadership of conspiring with some participating States to replace the ODIHR by the PA, at the price of watering down election standards. His oral statements also included a number of remarks disqualifying parliamentarians as serious and devoted election observers. Mr. George's "non-paper" on the issue, which contained these inaccuracies, contradictions and accusations against the PA and its leadership, was later circulated on request by the UK delegation, despite the fact that we in our statements had informed about the facts.

The Permanent Council took a number of decisions on modalities for several conferences of the governmental structures, including an Afghanistan Conference and a Mediterranean Conference to be held in Jordan. The U.S., the EU and others stated that the modalities for direct NGO-participation in the upcoming Terrorism Conference should not be seen as a precedent.

The PC also acknowledged receipt of the Financial Report and Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 December 2007 and the Report of the External Auditor. In this context, Russia criticized the lack of transparency, in particular with regard to the auditing in the field and extra-budgetary contributions. Ukraine equally criticized lacking clarity which had led to irregularities relating to the use of extra-budgetary funds.

Austria invited to observe the Austrian parliamentary elections this September (28). I briefed the Contact Groups in a joint meeting about the activities of the PA with the Partners, in particular in and after the Annual Session in Astana.



Andreas Nothelle  
Ambassador  
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