

## Special Representative

To:

PA President

and

PA Secretary General

### *Permanent Council Brief Week 5, 2009*

The only event of some interest to take place was the address by the Czech Foreign Minister Karel Schwarzenberg as EU Presidency to the Permanent Council and the opening of the French Forum for Security Cooperation Chairmanship. Although the first one resulted in a high number of statements from the delegations, the debate did not reveal any novelties. We also participated in meetings of the Forum for Security Cooperation, the Security Committee and Economic and Environmental Committee.

There is still no movement on the budget (the ACMF has been cancelled, as has been today's). Behind the scenes, efforts are being made to find ways out of the crisis over the future of the Mission to Georgia. Since there are diverging views about how to deal with the budget items related to the Mission, in case these negotiations drag on, budget discussions are blocked. This is even more worrying since Georgia is not the only remaining budget issue.

In the Permanent Council, under "Current Issues," Russia complained about human rights violations in "so-called mature democracies," in particular addressing freedom of assembly and issues of Russian minorities, which resulted in a vigorous debate, especially with the representatives of the Baltic countries.

Albania, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Slovakia have extended invitations to observe their elections.



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