

Special Representative

To:

PA President

and

PA Secretary General

Permanent Council Brief Week 44, 2009

During this week, meetings of the PC, the FSC, the Ambassadorial Working Group on the Corfu Process, the PrepCom, the ACMF, and of other committees, took place, as well as a weekend retreat on ambassadorial level, the latter one dealing with possible decisions of the upcoming Ministerial Council in Athens and with the Corfu Process.

The PC did not take any decisions, but heard the regular reports by the heads of the three Human Dimension Institutions Haraszti, Lenarcic and Vollebaek. The Russian Federation dealt with the ODIHR in a friendly tone, in strong contrast with his sharp criticism directed against the HCNM and in particular the almost personal attacks on the Representative of the Freedom of the Media. When speaking about election observation, Lenarcic reported correctly about the extent of the PA election observation activities and commented positively on the cooperation. Several delegations, among them the EU and Norway, welcomed the good and effective cooperation between the PA and the ODIHR in recent election observation missions. The EU also urged the ODIHR to continue this cooperation "in the spirit of partnership and on the basis of the 1997 Co-operation Agreement as well as MC Decision 19/06". Switzerland referred directly to the Vilnius Declaration citing several aspects of the resolution on Election Observation contained therein.

As reported, I was invited to participate in the ambassadorial retreat. The Chairmanship also invited the Heads of Institutions to this meeting and expressed the wish that this would become regular practice, which was explicitly supported by many delegations and not objected to by anybody. The retreat itself turned out to be a very useful exercise with more than 150 interventions, in which the spirit of dialogue that I had observed in many meetings of the "Corfu Process" persisted. Turkey sometimes sounded more skeptical about aspects of the process. Russia insisted again that the Corfu Process needs to be seen as distinct from future negotiations on their "European Security Treaty Initiative", having as core elements a prohibition of the use of force and a legally binding rule stating that self-determination may not be given priority over territorial integrity.

When discussing which decisions might be put on the agenda of the Ministerial Council the dialogue even led to immediate results on some controversial issues. There seems to be a high probability for a political declaration and a decision on the Corfu Process (= "European Security Dialogue" respectively "Euro-Atlantic and Euro-Asian Security Dialogue"), and even a slight chance for a political MC Declaration. Concrete items under discussion in the Corfu Process are possible rapid reaction instruments to be deployed by the Chairmanship in crisis situations without prior consultation of the PC, more effective mediation mechanisms, as well as the question how to deal with "de facto existing non-recognized entities". Other items included a "renovation" of the Vienna Document and a possible OSCE summit next year. Clearly, there is wide-spread acceptance that the first dimension of the OSCE needs to be updated and reinforced. When some participants referred to the 2005 Report of the Panel of Eminent Persons, I urged them to also take into consideration the recommendations from our PA Washington Colloquium. I also called for more references to PA resolutions in the drafts for the Ministerial Council.

Several ambassadors have again said how much they would appreciate concrete PA input into the Corfu Process.



Andreas Nothelle
Ambassador
November 3, 2009