

Special Representative

To:

PA President

and

PA Secretary General

Permanent Council Brief Week 3, 2011

The main event of this week was the opening of the Icelandic Chairmanship of the Forum for Security Cooperation (FSC). The chairmanship will last until April; the other two Chairmanships in 2011 will be held by Italy and then Kazakhstan.

The new Chair presented a work schedule for the full year. The FSC will focus on the work it was tasked with by the Astana Summit (Paragraph 8 of the Declaration): "Conventional arms control and confidence- and security-building regimes remain major instruments for ensuring military stability, predictability and transparency, and should be revitalized, updated and modernized. We value the work of the Forum for Security Co-operation, and look forward to the updating of the Vienna Document 1999. We value the CFE Treaty's contribution to the creation of a stable and predictable environment for all OSCE participating States. We note that the CFE Treaty is not being implemented to its full capacity and the Agreement on Adaptation of the CFE Treaty (ACFE) has not entered into force. Recognizing intensified efforts to overcome the current impasse, we express our support for the ongoing consultations aiming at opening the way for negotiations in 2011".

The PC did not make any decisions. Under "Current Issues", it debated the planned referendum in Kazakhstan for an extension of the Kazakh President's mandate, the situation in Belarus, the Khodorkovskii/Lebedev case in Russia (put forward by the E.U.), and the new media law in Hungary (U.S.A.). In all instances Russia criticized the "unbalanced" way the EU, the U.S. and other states West of Vienna dealt with the subject in their statements. In return, Russia brought up a point "Violations of media freedom in countries West of Vienna", citing alleged failures of Sweden, Poland, Lithuania, the Czech Republic and the U.S.A. to comply with OSCE commitments in specific cases. The events in Tunisia were also discussed briefly, prompting Russia to say that this discussion came too late.

The ACMF has not yet formally discussed the budget for the closure of the Office in Minsk.



Andreas Nothelle
Ambassador
January 21, 2011