

TALKING POINTS FOR THE OSCE PA STANDING COMMITTEE

CHAIR OF THE AD HOC COMMITTEE ON TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

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- 1) The **Palermo Paper** served as a **useful reference tool** for the PA representative in Vienna in the Permanent Council preparations for the Astana Summit.
- 2) The outcome of the Astana Summit is known: the Summit passed a so-called "Commemorative Declaration." This Declaration reconfirmed the OSCE commitments, including all Human Dimension commitments. The Summit did, however, not reach consensus on an Action Plan, for which most countries had urged. However, since "99 per cent of the draft were agreed", there is broad consensus among delegations in Vienna to use the draft as a basis for future work,. The Lithuanian Chairmanship has been tasked in the Commemorative Declaration to continue working on the draft.
- 3) At first glance, the following can be said about the **two documents**:
 - The Palermo paper called for a reconfirmation of Commitments. The Astana Declaration represents such an explicit reconfirmation.
 - Both the Declaration and the draft Action Plan/Work Plan of the Lithuanian Chairmanship focus on the First Dimension issues listed in the Palermo Paper.
 - Migration will figure on the agenda of the OSCE this year, however not in the same in-depth manner as in the Palermo Paper, but rather focusing solely on illegal immigration.
 - Energy security has been referred to in the Summit documents. The Lithuanian Chairmanship will focus on this topic, i.e. by organizing a seminar in the spring of 2011.
 - The Legal Framework was mentioned in the document and will be another priority of the Lithuanian Chairmanship.
 - The Action Plan also speaks of intensifying cooperation with the Partners.
 - No concrete steps have thus far been taken thus far in the field of enhancing the OSCE's effectiveness ("OSCE Reform"). The OSCE SG plans to make a number of proposals and has welcomed the PA's announcement to make this issue the topic of its Annual Session.
- 4) On the other hand, the preparations for Astana also revealed once more that we need to do much more to make the diplomatic community understand the **value of parliamentary work in general and that of the PA in particular**. The most common misunderstanding is that governments make up the rules and that parliaments have to implement them. While this idea is wide-spread among diplomats, our views on the central role of **parliamentary oversight and democratic accountability** are not shared by many of them. Our **calls for a strengthening of the accountability and transparency of the OSCE** are seen as **undue interference** in their work and consequently considered as **taboo** in texts produced by executive structures.

- 5) Another taboo for the diplomats is to accept that the PA is an **OSCE institution**, although the Istanbul Summit in 1999 explicitly stated that we are one. There have been strong efforts to somehow define us out of the OSCE.
- 6) Thanks to hard work on the part of Secretary General Oliver and Ambassador Nothelle and political interventions by some of our members, we can live with the PA related wordings that finally figured in the declaration and in the draft Action Plan. However, we need to continue working on this important aspect of the much needed **OSCE reform**.
- 7) The Palermo paper calls for a continuation of the **Corfu process**. It appears that the management of this will be **partially outsourced** to a New York based Think Tank whose Vienna based director for Europe and Central Asia has described parliamentary election observers in a very insulting manner. We will have to closely watch how the work of this institute, the "International Peace Institute", will address the issues I just mentioned.
- 8) On Wednesday evening, we agreed on the following **steps that we will take next**: End of April we will circulate a draft report among the members of the Transparency Committee, which will continue an analysis of what will have happened in the meantime, and a list of proposals and recommendations for the future. After a discussion of this text in a meeting of the committee which we will most probably schedule to take place in **Vienna mid-May**, we will then deliver this report to the Annual Session in Belgrade.