

Special Representative

To:

PA President

and

PA Secretary General

Permanent Council Brief Week 35, 2011

The first week after the Summer Recess started with a three-minute PrepCom and a routine PC with a large number of items under "Current Issues". The main agenda item was the regular report by the Mission in Kosovo. The oral report made virtually no reference to the recent incidents in Northern Kosovo. The first statement came from the EU. It also only contained a very vague indirect reference to the riots. Other statements, in particular the statements by the U.S. and Switzerland, were clearer, although also very carefully avoiding blaming any side for what had happened. Russia and Serbia criticized the stance of the Kosovo authorities, underlining the validity of UN SC Resolution 1244, and highlighting the "worrying development" of organized crime there. Albania stated that the status quo in Northern Kosovo was unsustainable and that Serbia should stop supporting "parallel structures" in the north. Switzerland was the only participating State to hint at the need for some downsizing of the mission, referring to a stabilization of the situation of the Serbian population in Southern Kosovo.

The list of "Current Issues" contained "Economic Sanctions against Belarus" (brought up by Belarus), "Demolition of Buildings in Baku" (EU), "Rule of Law and Human Rights in Kazakhstan" (EU), "Elections in the Breakaway Region of Abkhazia" (EU), "Capital punishment in the USA" (EU), "Condemnation of the Terror Attack in Grozny" (EU), "Capital punishment in Belarus" (Switzerland), "Circumstances of the Recent Death of Andrzej Lepper, the Chairman of the Polish Self-Defense Party" (Belarus).

Under "Any Other Business", Denmark, Poland and Russia announced their upcoming elections (September 15, October 9 and November 4, respectively). Whereas the first two invited the ODIHR and the OSCE PA to observe the elections, the Russian statement only announced Russia's intention to keep the PC informed about the issue of international observers. Kyrgyzstan also reminded the PC of its upcoming elections (October 30).

In an informal briefing, OSCE Secretary-General Zannier explained his preliminary plans for some structural changes in the Secretariat, which he wants to play a more political role. According to him, none of the plans require PC approval nor will they affect the OSCE budget. The most visible changes would be that the Director of the CPC would additionally acquire the title and function of "Deputy Head of the Secretariat" and that among the directors one would be "Chief of Staff". Altogether, it sounds much like reverting to the de-facto situation under former OSCE Secretary-General Jan Kubis. In addition, he would create the post of a Director of Transnational Threats (police, anti-terror and borders); the costs will be covered by a downsizing of his office and the abolition of the second Deputy Director of the CPC. Representatives of the participating States did not criticize these plans, but Germany insisted on open tenders for any new position.

This week will be the first full working week. It will include a joint PC/FSC meeting with an address by the Director-General of the UN Office in Geneva, former PA Vice President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev.



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Ambassador
September 5, 2011