

Special Representative

To:

PA President

and

PA Secretary General

Permanent Council Brief Weeks 12/13, 2012

During these weeks, meetings of the PC, the FSC, the PrepCom and other committees took place. There were also meetings of the newly established working groups on the Conflict Cycle (early warning) and on human dimension events and an ambassadorial discussion on reforming the budget cycle. These three meetings are of relevance for ongoing reform discussions; their outcome will have an impact on the future of the OSCE. The PA is invited to the meetings of all of these working groups and participates in them regularly.

The PC took a number of decisions, which appear at first glance primarily managerial (on the establishment of the OSCE Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) Upgrade Fund, on the Human Dimension Seminar in Warsaw, the Human Dimension Implementation Meetings and the 2012 Annual Security Review Conference), the discussion about which is always a proxy for the usual controversies between the CIS countries and the West. The controversies about the 2012 Human Dimension program focused on the issue of national minorities (or "persons belonging to national minorities" in the official terminology). The Chairmanship had originally proposed to schedule a Supplementary Human Dimension Meeting on election observation at the same time as the PA Annual Session. Following our interventions, the date was changed to a date immediately after the Session. However, it was not possible to convince the Chairmanship that holding the meeting so soon after the Annual Session will still make it difficult for PA representatives, as major stakeholders of election observation, to attend the meeting.

The PC also heard reports by the chairs of the three PC committees on each of the three OSCE "baskets". The intensified cooperation between them and the respective PA committees was mentioned in two of the reports and in the discussion. Under "Current Issues", Russia complained about inconsistencies in the deployment of election observation missions to participating States in different areas of the OSCE region and again urged for uniform standards for election observation. Western countries rejected this, claiming that such requests and even their discussion would jeopardize the autonomy of the OSCE institutions.

I reiterated the invitation that PA President Efthymiou had extended to the Permanent Representatives in Vienna to participate in the PA Batumi (Georgia) Spring Conference, underlining that although the plane has been filling up quickly, they would still have a possibility to join us on the chartered flight.



Andreas Nothelle
Ambassador
March 30, 2012