

Special Representative

To:

PA President

and

PA Secretary General

Permanent Council Brief Week 29, 2012

This week, there were meetings of the PC, the FSC, the Mediterranean Contact Group, subsidiary bodies and several meetings of informal working groups.

For the first time since I arrived in Vienna, I have been invited to attend the usual ambassadorial EU lunch hosted by the EU Presidency. We will have to see whether this novel initiative by Cyprus will be repeated. For a long time I have criticized that (apart from knowledge that I acquire from other sources) I know very little about the national positions of individual EU member countries, who agree on a joint position before the EU Presidency speaks on concrete substance in those bodies that the PA is allowed to attend. If the invitation to this EU meeting becomes general practice, I might learn more about individual positions in the future.

The participants at this week's lunch discussed - with Amb. Kobieracki, the Director Conflict Prevention Center (CPC) - issues that the CPC deals with, in particular how the ideas contained in the OSCE Secretary General's report on addressing the conflict cycle could be implemented. As such, the lunch was a follow-up to a meeting of the respective informal working group, which had taken place the preceding day. During this meeting, several countries, among them Russia and Turkey, again underlined the importance of the consensus principle, urging that all important steps that the Chairmanship or the Secretariat and Institutions would want to take had to be dealt with in the decision-making bodies. In addition, Azerbaijan and Georgia outlined their specific concerns about possible activities of the Chairmanship and the Secretariat. Russia believes that the OSCE has sufficient tools at its disposal already now, and it stressed that the participating States should be consulted even on internal guidelines of the Secretariat. In this context, the participants at the lunch discussed the problems caused by the limited mandates of the executive structures, which in many cases makes early warning activities impossible, even when the Secretariat and the field presences possess the necessary information. Another issue discussed was frictions and jealousies between executive structures, as well as the need for more accountability and performance assessment.

In the meeting with the Mediterranean Partners for Cooperation I presented to the participants – upon request by the Ukrainian chairmanship of the Contact Group - the outcome of the Annual Session in Monaco, and in particular of the PA's Mediterranean Forum. Unfortunately, the Chairmanship had chosen to put a lengthy and mostly technical presentation by the ODIHR with the Albanian electoral reform between the first items on the agenda and my presentation. This resulted in an almost total absence of ambassadors, in particular from the Partner countries, when, after more than two hours, the point was finally called up. I did, however, get a response from the delegations of the EU and the USA. I also used the opportunity to refer to President Migliori's Press Statement on the terrorist killings at Burgas Airport.

All participating States seem to have accepted Mongolia's application for full OSCE membership; the adoption of a decision will, however, be slightly delayed due to some predominantly technical problems with the regional application of the Vienna Document and Mongolia's participation in the work of the FSC.



Andreas Nothelle
Ambassador, July 24, 2012