

Special Representative

To:

PA President

and

PA Secretary General

PC Brief Weeks 15/16, 2013

These weeks were the first working weeks after the Easter Recess. I spent a large part of them with the President/PA Secretary General in Montenegro and at the Copenhagen Bureau Meeting. Roberto Montella was also partially absent for these events. During this time, there were three meetings of the PC and a number of meetings of the FSC, the Contact Group with the Partners from the Mediterranean, the committees and other subsidiary bodies.

The PC finally decided most of the Human Dimension agenda for the year 2013, except for the High Level Conference on Tolerance to be held in May in Tirana, Albania, which is still hostage to usual fights about the titles for specific agenda items. There was also a decision on the timing (June 19/20) of the Annual Security Review Conference (ASRC). I briefed the PC, as well as the Human Dimension Committee, about the outcome of the meeting of the PA Bureau and Transparency Committee. Several delegations welcomed the resumption of PA/ODIHR cooperation based on the 1997 Cooperation Agreement. However, the EU, in its reply in the Permanent Council, "re-worded" the relevant Ministerial Council Decision 19/06 by stressing the term "partnership" with regard to both institutions in a way that it seems to again go against a full implementation of the Cooperation Agreement. Also, in the Human Dimension Committee, the Head of the ODIHR Election Department expressed the ODIHR's readiness to resume the cooperation with an emphasis on "partnership". It remains to be seen whether this is just old rhetoric or it means that there is still resistance against the acknowledgement of the leadership function of the Chairman-in-Office appointed Special Coordinator.

The issue on the downgrading of the field presence in Azerbaijan has been referred to a working group. Lithuania opened its chairmanship of the Forum for Security Cooperation (FSC).

Three candidates for the position of the High Commissioner on National Minorities from Croatia, Finland and Russia presented their candidacy in an informal meeting. The Finnish candidate, a parliamentarian, seems to enjoy the highest support. However, after the meeting, several delegates did not seem to be convinced by any one of them and expressed interest in having a broader field of candidates.

Austria and Mongolia announced their elections.



Andreas Nothelle
Ambassador
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