

## Special Representative

To:

PA President

and

PA Secretary General

July 12, 2013

*PC Brief Week 28, 2013*

This week, meetings of the PC, the Preparatory Committee, the Economic and Environmental Committee and the Human Dimension Committee took place, as well as the (2<sup>nd</sup>) Supplementary Human Dimension Meeting (SHDM) on Rule of Law in the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights and the Annual (FSC) Discussion on the Implementation of the Code of Conduct.

The PC approved its recommendation to the Ministers to appoint Astrid Thors (Finland) as OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities. The ministerial decision will be taken through the "Silence Procedure", meaning that it will be decided if by noon of July 17, 2013, no country has "broken the silence", i.e. objected to the decision.

The PC meeting also debated the last report by the parting High Commissioner Amb. Knut Vollebaek, leading to over 30 statements commending the work Amb. Vollebaek has performed. In my statement I welcomed that the High Commissioners, including Amb. Vollebaek, have always had an open ear for recommendations stemming from the PA, and have explicitly followed up on them. This prompted the High Commissioner to commend the PA's support and collaboration with him, in particular regarding the Bozen-Bolzano recommendations, which the PA – according to him – supported more than any participating State.

In the SHDM, we distributed a compilation of relevant PA decisions. Unfortunately, despite its title, issues of rule of law remained largely undiscussed in the meeting. Instead, most participants voiced their usual positions on a number of human rights issues. In my statement, I called for the creation and strengthening of democratically legitimized institutions in the international community, upon which the representative of the Council of Europe pointed at the Council's institutions, most of which are based on elections in the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe.

The discussion on the Code of Conduct was characterized by the usual conflicts of the first dimension, opening with a lengthy debate between Russia and the U.S. on NATO expansion. Much of the programming actually had very little to do with the Code of Conduct, and any substantial discussion was overshadowed by the repeated disagreements between the member states on issues barely related to the implementation of the Code itself.



Andreas Nothelle  
Ambassador July 15, 2013