

Special Representative

To:

PA President

and

PA Secretary General

September 23, 2013

PC Brief Week 38, 2013

As this week was the only period of time without events outside of Vienna before October 10, it was packed with activities. In addition to the Permanent Council (PC), the Forum for Security Cooperation (FSC) and their informal subsidiary bodies, the informal ambassadorial working groups on Helsinki+40 and on Strengthening the Legal framework met, and there was another Security Days event.

However, the output of these meetings was quite thin. The PC did not take any decisions, nor were there discussions under "Current Issues" (the second time in a row). The Security Day saw a poor attendance; apparently interest is fading out when it takes place several times per year. Also, the discussions there were very academic. In a welcome move, Secretary General Zannier reminded the audience that having a PA is one of the comparative advantages of the OSCE and urged to make more use of its capacities in the field of conflict prevention. The next Security Day might take place on the level of Deputy Defense Ministers, as suggested by one delegation.

The Helsinki+40 meeting focused on issues of military security. The US and Russia seem to be hesitant to make this a major topic of the discussions, whereas some, like Germany, see it as an integral part of the Helsinki+40 Process. However, a majority seems to prefer having discussions exclusively in the format of the signatories of the different documents (like the CFE treaty, Open Skies etc), or wants to engage the FSC more intensively. I contributed to the discussions by underlining the most recent PA recommendations on Disarmament and Arms Control and on Confidence and Security Building Measures. As usual, there was no feedback from delegations.

The work on Legal Personality of the OSCE continues not to make any progress. All efforts of the Chairmanship and its Representative (former Danish ambassador John Bernhard) to come up with a compromise procedure that could lead to a formal approval of the respective draft Convention and mark some start of deliberations on a constituent document have been so far in vain. The US, as the only country which is totally opposed to a constituent document, has even hardened its position. It should be noted, though, that in 1993 in Rome all participating States have committed to giving the OSCE Legal Personality in the national legislation, but so far only 14 of them have implemented that commitment.

I also hosted a working lunch for the newly arrived ambassadors of Austria, Finland, Iceland, Ireland, Georgia, and the Netherlands and had a first meeting with the new US ambassador. All of them displayed readiness to cooperate closely with the PA and wanted to know a number of details about the PA's activities. The Austrian ambassador Dr. Christian Strohal is well known to the PA, having been the predecessor of the present ODIHR director.



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Ambassador