

## Special Representative

To:

PA President

and

PA Secretary General

*PC Brief Week 46, 2013*

This week, there were meetings of the Permanent Council (PC), the Forum for Security Cooperation (FSC), the Contact Group with the Mediterranean Partners for Cooperation, as well as numerous meetings of the PC committees, other subsidiary bodies and informal gatherings. Marc Carillet participated in a two-day ACMF retreat which aimed to make progress in the negotiations of the 2014 OSCE Unified Budget.

The PC decided to extend the mandates of the OSCE Presence in Albania, and the OSCE Missions to Montenegro, Skopje, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia and debated the ongoing efforts of the Minsk Group and the Geneva talks to deal with the Conflicts in the South Caucasus, without being able to discern any progress on these issues. The FSC debated the future of Arms Control in Europe, a debate that led to a controversy about the Russian statement that the CFE Regime was totally obsolete and could not even serve as a basis for future arms control settlements.

Compared to previous years, delegations do not seem to be very ambitious about the drafting of Ministerial Council (MC) documents. The two draft declarations (the "political" declaration and the one on Helsinki+40) that the Chairmanship has proposed might contain the lowest possible denominator for agreement, which most delegations seem to see as sufficient. The U.S., however, expressed the opinion that such a political declaration would not lead anywhere and would therefore be unacceptable, particularly stressing that they do not see any added value in passing another Helsinki+40 declaration given the already existing one that passed in Dublin.

It also appears that there is little chance that essential Human Dimension issues that did not find consensual language at the previous MC meetings will achieve consensus this time, especially in light of the absence of readiness West of Vienna to take on board concerns from CIS countries as expressed in documents proposed by them. The exception is an apparent break-through on Cyber-Security. In a last-minute agreement, the informal working group that has been dealing with it for two years finalized a set of Confidence Building Measures (CBMs).

Also, this year, some delegations make it more difficult than in previous years to insert language into documents that refer to the work and/or the recommendations of the PA. Three delegations (Canada, supported by the Czech Republic and Russia) have explicitly objected to drafting suggestions from the PA based on an unnecessarily restricted interpretation of the Rules of Procedure, despite the fact that for many years this has been handled differently, and the Chair of that particular committee was ready to continue this past practice.

The last meeting of the Contact Group with the Mediterranean Partners for this year dealt with the conclusions from the OSCE Mediterranean Conference that had been held in Monaco. Here as well I called for explicit references to the work of the PA in pertinent documents (PA.GAL/9/13). The second main point of this meeting was Libya's application for the status of a Partner. All delegations present spoke in favor of a swift decision about the application.

With numerous aspects of the budget proposal that remained controversial in the retreat, this year's budgetary process seems to be as bumpy as in previous years. Complicating the picture, a fracture within the EU is emerging between those, led by the UK, who would like to decrease their contribution to the OSCE budget and others, mostly Scandinavians and Central-Europeans, who favor a budget that matches the expectations linked with the implementation of the mandate of the organization.



Andreas Nothelle  
Ambassador, November 18, 2013