

Special Representative

To:

PA President

and

PA Secretary General

PC Brief Week 9, 2015

This week there were meetings of the Permanent Council (PC) and the Forum for Security Cooperation (FSC), the Contact Group with the Mediterranean Partners, the Preparatory (PrepComm), the Economic and Environmental (EEC) and the Human Dimension committees, as well as the Advisory Committee on Management and Finance.

The PC did not take any decisions, except for a routine administrative one, with which it annually adapts the budget of the previous year to the actual spending. The main focus – apart from the usual controversies under “Current Issues” over the developments in and around Ukraine – of the discussions was on the report by the Chief Observer Paul Picard of the OSCE Observer Mission at the Russian Checkpoints Gukovo and Donetsk. Currently, there are 22 observers in the observer mission. It became clear once again that the limitations of this mission do not allow it to conduct any meaningful border monitoring, although the report did confirm that persons in military clothes and ambulances with wounded people had been crossing the border in both directions. Furthermore, most delegations condemned the recent terrorist attack on a march in Kharkiv commemorating the anniversary of the Maïdan events of February 2014. Germany and Turkey, in particular, underlined the need for an orderly verification of the withdrawal of heavy weapons with the help of the OSCE toolbox.

The other item on the agenda was the regular report by the Head of the OSCE Mission to Serbia. Malta, under “Current Issues”, also raised the issue of the threatening situation in its immediate neighborhood caused by the disastrous recent developments in Libya. I briefed the PC on the outcome of the PA’s Winter Meeting. The OSCE was invited by Kazakhstan to observe their presidential elections and by Turkey for their parliamentary elections.

Discussions in the EEC mostly focused on preparations and the agenda of the 2nd Economic and Environmental Preparatory Meeting which are due to take place in Belgrade on 11 - 13 May. In the Human Dimension Committee it became clear that the Chairmanship is facing the usual problems of putting together a 2015 package of Human Dimension events, mainly because of Russian objections.

During an informal exchange of views with a High Level UN Panel reviewing the status of UN-led peace-keeping operations, delegates requested that the Helsinki+40 Process should also look at the issue of possible OSCE Peace Operations, especially in light of recent OSCE experience in Ukraine.

The Contact Group with the Mediterranean Partners debated the topic "After Paris - Freedom of the Media and Countering Violent Extremism and Radicalization".



Andreas Nothelle
Ambassador
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