

Special Representative

To:

PA President

and

PA Secretary General

PC Brief Week 11, 2015

This week there were two meetings of the Permanent Council (PC) as well as meetings of the Forum for Security Cooperation (FSC), the Contact Group with the Asian Partners, the Preparatory Committee (PrepComm), the Human Dimension Committee, the Advisory Committee on Management and Finance (ACMF) and full day informal meetings on both Cyber Security and on the situation in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (mission, secretariat and institutions).

The PC adopted a decision extending the mandate of the Special Monitoring Mission (SMM) to Ukraine for one year until the end of March 2016. The SMM will have access to resources amounting to 88,7 Million Euros, making it by far the most expensive OSCE field operation currently deployed. In comparison, the 2015 Unified Budget (excluding the SMM) amounts to 141 Million Euros and the second largest OSCE field operation after the SMM is the OSCE Mission in Kosovo, with a budget of 18,9 Million Euros. 65 Million of the total amount will be assessed based on existing scales of contributions, 20 Million will be provided by participating States on a voluntary ("extra-budgetary") basis. The remainder will be financed from unspent funds. Although the SMM has had difficulties recruiting and training the mandated 500 monitors, the new mandate foresees, under certain conditions, the possibility for the Chief Monitor to request the deployment of up to 1000 monitors. The PC also approved an extension of the deployment of OSCE Observers to two Russian Checkpoints on the Russian-Ukrainian Border for an additional three months. There was also a debate about how free SMM monitors are to perform their task, since they are prevented from going to specific places in the country, as security guarantees from separatists are not always granted. The SMM also detailed incidents with Ukrainian armed forces, where they were not granted access and asked for passports and nationality details. Western countries made clear, in a number of interpretative statements, that the separatists and Russia are obliged to grant the mission access to all parts of the country, including Crimea. Russia regretted that the PC did not accept a Serbian proposal for a declaration repeating United Nations Security Resolution 2202 on the package of measures for the implementation of the Minsk Agreements. The crucial point is about the order in which political and military steps will be taken.

Finally, the PC approved the extension of the terms of References of the Audit Committee until 31 December 2017. The Special PC was addressed by the Foreign Minister of Armenia, Nalbandian, who made a number of pointed remarks regarding Nagorno-Karabakh and Armenia's relationship with Turkey, prompting sharp replies from the representatives of Azerbaijan and Turkey. There was also a debate with the Chairman of the Council of Europe Council of Ministers and the Foreign Minister of Belgium, Reynders, about cooperation between his organization and the OSCE. ODIHR Director Link delivered his periodic report to the PC. In reply to my question about future election observation missions, including those in EU and other Western countries, and the readiness of participating States to second short-term observers to these missions, he stated that the ODIHR will continue trying to broaden its geographical scope, but that indeed a shortage of funds and short-term observers makes it necessary to remain selective. In addition, there were the usual debates under "Current Issues". Finally, the FSC approved timetable and modalities for the Fourth Annual Discussion on the Implementation of the Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security.



Andreas Nothelle
Ambassador
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