

Special Representative

To:

PA President

and

PA Secretary General

PC Brief Week 21, 2015

This week, there were a Conference on Enhancing the Efforts in Preventing and Combating Intolerance and Discrimination against Christians, Focusing on Hate Crimes, Exclusion, Marginalization and Denial of Rights, another edition of “Security Days” (“Building Bridges: Promoting Dialogue to Prevent Radicalization and Violent Extremism”), meetings of the Permanent Council (PC), the Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC), the Contact Group with the Asian Partners for Co-operation, the Preparatory Committee (PrepComm), the Economic and Environmental and the Human Dimension Committees, a “Roundtable on Gender Responsive Reconciliation in Afghanistan”, as well as many other informal meetings. Francesco Pagani participated in the South East European Regional Meeting of Heads of Missions and Institutions.

The Permanent Council did not take decisions. It debated an address by the Minister of Women’s Affairs of Afghanistan, H.E. Dilbar Nazari and the regular report by the Head of the OSCE Program Office in Astana (who also reported about the visit by the Chair of the PA’s Third Committee, Isabel Santos), as well as the usual issues discussed under “Current Issues”. Again, some participants expressed their frustration about repetitive debates behind closed doors in which all sides refer to alleged facts, without the OSCE having the possibility to seriously examine those facts in a methodologically sound manner. In the case of Ukraine, this is also linked to the many restrictions that the Special Monitoring Mission (SMM) is faced with. The debates under “Current Issues” also included an emotional and highly controversial debate on two topics: the “International Day against Homophobia, Transphobia, and Biphobia”, raised by Canada, and the International Day of Families, raised by Russia. This latter debate demonstrated the deep trenches in the OSCE regarding opinions how OSCE commitments affect fundamental values and beliefs.

The “Security Days” as well as the Conference on Intolerance against Christians were interesting from an intellectual point of view and involved an interested public, but did not result in any practical proposals for active action by the OSCE. Several participants of the latter made reference to the 2011 Belgrade OSCE PA Resolution on “Combating Intolerance and Discrimination against Christians in the OSCE Area”, especially on the necessity to assess relevant pieces of legislation in the participating States in the light of OSCE commitments.



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Ambassador

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