

## Special Representative

To:

PA President

and

PA Secretary General

### *PC Brief Week 49, 2014*

During this week of the Ministerial Council (MC) meeting, the Permanent Council (PC), and the Forum for Security Cooperation (FSC), as well as their subsidiary bodies and informal negotiating formats moved to Basel for an intensive continuation of their negotiations. All permanent staff from the Vienna Office moved to Basel and joined Copenhagen staff that was there for the PA's Bureau Meeting on the eve of the MC meeting (reported separately in the News from Copenhagen).

PA President Kanerva delivered his speech on behalf of the OSCE PA (available on the PA's website) after the opening speech by the Chairman-in-Office. The Bureau members present in Basel also attended the meeting. The President's short address, which focused its clear messages on the current European crisis, received many positive comments from a number of delegations.

In terms of substance, the outcome of the meetings during the MC was as meager as had been expected. Hundreds of hours of negotiations over the past weeks yielded 16 texts, as opposed to 34 proposals that had at some point been put forward. Most drafts in the Human Dimension failed to be adopted. Of the texts that were adopted many were reduced to the least common denominator – some of them to just a few procedural lines. As a consequence, most references to the work of the OSCE PA were equally dropped, with the exception of a more general declaration on the cooperation with the Mediterranean Partners. The declaration on further steps in the Helsinki+40 Process, which some hoped could replace a political declaration, was entirely without substance. There was also no agreement on the Chairmanship's plan to create (another) High Level Panel of Eminent Persons on European Security as a Common Project which is to deal with the impact of the current European security crisis and concepts to overcome it. Regardless of this, the Chairmanship is planning to go ahead with it. Most other documents adopted were either a repetition of texts adopted at previous MC meetings, of UN resolutions, of commemorative character or of procedural nature. The failure to agree on more substance was mostly the result of Russia's rejection of Western demands to include a condemnation of Russia's actions in Ukraine and the non-recognition of the annexation of Crimea in several texts, but also of antagonistic concepts of Armenia and Azerbaijan. In the end, in order to at least have some sort of an official statement reflecting the current European crisis, which also is an OSCE crisis, the Chairman-in-Office read out a "summary by the Chairmanship" using strong language in describing the position of a large majority of participating States, mainly regarding the situation in and around Ukraine.

In addition, the deal that seemed to have been struck the previous week regarding the Kazakh mission has still not been met with consensus, and there is no agreement on the opening of a mission in Mongolia, although the host country is requesting it, nor on an inclusion of Libya among the Partners for Cooperation. At least, they managed to find candidates for the Chairmanships of 2016 and 2017 (Germany and Austria) and to agree on them.

The deadline for the budget expires on December 20, 2014. Last year, there was no agreement on the budget before mid-Spring, so, as it was frequently the case in past years, there is a risk that last year's exercise will be repeated. So far, negotiations in the Advisory Committee on Management and Finance (ACMF) have been unsuccessful, despite a proposal by the Serbian ACMF to reduce the proposed budget increase from 2 to 1,5 million (total: 143.8 million). The Secretariat's share of the original increase was 900.000 Euros. The ODIHR, which has asked for an increase of almost 10 percent (1,6 million) has not reduced its part of the proposal.

The OSCE will begin its official Winter Recess on December 22 (last working day Friday 19). It will last until January 8, 2015 (first working day January 9).



Andreas Nothelle  
Ambassador  
December 8, 2014