

Special Representative

To:

PA President

and

PA Secretary General

PC Brief Weeks 38/39, 2015

During these weeks there were meetings of the Permanent Council (PC), Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC), the Contact Group with the Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation, the Preparatory Committee (PrepComm), the Advisory Committee on Management and Finance (ACMF), the three Committees on each of the OSCE "dimensions", a conference "New Challenges to Freedom of Expression: Countering Online Abuse of Female Journalists", an "Hour with the Secretary General", and an ACMF retreat. During the first week, Roberto Montella, Marc Carillet and I participated in the PA Autumn Meeting in Ulan Bator, with Francesco Pagani and the Research Fellows covering the activities in Vienna. In the second week, there was no PC meeting, because most ambassadors had moved to Warsaw in order to attend the annual Human Dimension Meeting (HDIM).

The PC decided to extend the mandate of the deployment of OSCE observers to the two Russian border checkpoints of Donetsk and Gukovo on the Russian-Ukrainian border until 31 January 2016. Under "Current Issues", Azerbaijan raised ODIHR's decision not to observe the upcoming parliamentary elections, because of severe limitations Azerbaijan had imposed on its mission. Azerbaijan accused the ODIHR of violating its mandate, by virtue of taking a unilateral decision as opposed to upholding OSCE's commitments, as well as failing to engage in consultations with Baku over the content of the Needs Assessment report. The EU, the US and Norway, above all, supported the ODIHR. Several delegations expressed hope that the issue could be solved by a reconsideration of the restrictions. The PA was cited a couple of times in the context of the discussion, so Francesco Pagani explained that in line with the ongoing discussions in Ulan Bator the PA would not deploy a mission, unless the ODIHR decided that Azerbaijan had removed the restrictions in a timely manner, allowing for a meaningful observation. Azerbaijan regretted "that the PA had followed ODIHR's practice".

During the "Hour with the Secretary General", SG Amb. Zannier provided a briefing on his visit to Ukraine on 10-11 September, including recent plans for the Special Monitoring Mission (SMM) to extend its operations in order to best observe and monitor the withdrawal of weapons. SMM's plans include an increase of its present force by 150 monitors (current force 532), a reinforcement of its monitoring capacities along the "line of contact" by increasing its "forward patrol bases" from five to 13, installing static cameras, and procuring additional Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) for deployment. Amb. Zannier also urged the participating States to make a stronger effort to second qualified personnel which would be available on short notice.



Andreas Nothelle
Ambassador
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