

Special Representative

To:

PA President

and

PA Secretary General

March 20, 2017

PC Brief Weeks 10/11, 2017

During these two weeks there have been meetings by the Permanent Council (PC) and the Forum for Security Cooperation (FSC), a number of committees and other informal bodies and gatherings as well as a Special EEC with PA President Muttonen on "Participation of women in economic and environmental decision-making" and an Ambassadorial Retreat on future OSCE activities in the politico-military dimension. Also, the hearings for the OSCE Secretary General and ODIHR Director candidates took place. Francesco Pagani spent most of the second week on the Needs Assessment Mission for the upcoming Albanian elections.

The PC decided on the dates and venue of the 2017 OSCE Mediterranean Conference (23 and 24 of October 2017 in Palermo, Italy) and extended the mandate of the Special Monitoring Mission (SMM) to Ukraine until 31 March 2018. Other points discussed were the – for now - last regular report of the Dunja Mijatovic as Representative of the Freedom of the Media (RFoM), a briefing by the Foreign Minister of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia Nikola Poposki, and the usual items under "Current Issues", including a detailed report of the handling of the expulsion of a Turkish Minister from the Netherlands. The Dutch reply to the presentation by the Turkish ambassador did not address the issues he raised pertaining to diplomatic and consular law. In reply to Minister Poposki, the Russian representative gave a detailed account of what Mr. Poposki's government has done upon request by the European Union, listing many incidents of foreign interference into the country's process of building a new government after the recent elections.

The Ambassadorial Retreat, apart from hearing about the timetables of the work on a "structured dialogue" and the present and incoming FSC Chairmanships of this year (Romania, Russia, Serbia), discussed whether delegates should be "courageous" or "candid" when analysing the present threat perceptions existing in the OSCE.

Erlan Idrissov of Kazakhstan, one of the five candidates for Secretary General (SG), withdrew. Out of the remaining candidates only Štefan Füle (Czech Republic) did not mention the PA. I would have liked to asked a question about their prospects for PA-Secretariat Cooperation, which I had done during the hearings for ODIHR Director. However, the Chair approached me requesting me not to take the floor. He cited unnamed delegations that had criticized him for giving me the floor before, "because the PA has no role in the selection process". I sent a letter to the Chairmanship underlining that this refusal had no basis in the OSCE Rules of Procedure. All Permanent Representatives who I have discussed this incident with informally have expressed their disagreement with the criticism. In the case of the hearing of the ODIHR Director, PA Vice President Kent Hårstedt (Sweden) and Ingibjorg Gísladóttir (Iceland) outlined their very positive intentions for a good cooperation with the PA. Yet, the third candidate, Goran Svilanović (Serbia) apparently did not see the PA as an OSCE institution, insisting that – like in his cooperation with other International Organizations he would only cooperate on the basis of ODIHR leadership. As to the RFoM, the Chairmanship is exploring whether participating States are ready to extend Mijatovic's mandate until a successor has been identified, at most until summer.



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Ambassador