

Special Representative

To:

PA President

and

PA Secretary General

July 3, 2017

PC Brief Week 24-26, 2017

During the past weeks, there have been meetings by the Permanent Council (PC), including a Special PC, the Forum for Security Cooperation (FSC), the Contact Group with the Mediterranean Partners, as well of the committees and other informal bodies. In addition, the Annual Security Review Meeting (ASRC) was held, which is the most important yearly event regarding the implementation of commitments in "First Dimension", as well as four other conferences: the 6th Annual Discussion on the Implementation of the Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security, a Supplementary Human Dimension Meeting on Freedom of Religion or Belief, and conferences on "Media Freedom in Volatile environments" and on a "Gender Equality Review" – the latter with PA Special Representative on Gender Hedy Fry. Francesco Pagani accompanied the PA President and the Secretary General on trips to China and Kazakhstan. Francesco, Tim Knoblaue, Katerina Koci and I spent almost a week on the Election Observation Mission to Albania.

The PC approved the extension of the mandate of the Program Office in Ukraine, and, in a last-minute move, agenda and modalities of the ASRC.

Alongside the routine agenda the Chairmanship continued its attempt to reach consensus regarding the posts of the OSCE Secretary General and the heads of the autonomous Institutions. However, the positions of participating States regarding these most senior appointments have remained unchanged. An attempt to replace the candidate for the High Commissioner on National Minorities by outgoing OSCE Secretary General Zannier did not lead to progress. Consequentially, all four leading posts of the OSCE are vacant. The Directors of the Conflict Prevention Center and of the Office of the Secretary General are taking care of the functions of the Secretary General.

This time, the ASRC focused mainly on politico-military issues, while the session devoted to the "Transnational" (non-military) threats figured less prominently on the agenda. Regarding the latter, the Russian delegation mentioned its efforts to promote greater inter-parliamentary dialogue on terrorism. The focus on politico-military issues somehow turned the ASRC into another meeting of the "Structured Dialogue". This, together with the fact that it was well-attended, made it more interesting than many of the previous ASRCs. Russia, while reiterating its position regarding the modernization of the Vienna Document (i.e. the window of opportunity is closed) and regretting their actual lack of communication with NATO, stated that a return to 2013 NATO military posturing would make cooperation possible. Some interpret this as placing a pre-condition for further dialogue. The US announced that even preliminary discussions concerning joint projects in the field of disarmament and arms control are dependent on Russia's complete return to respect for its international and legal commitments and obligations, in particular in Ukraine. Others suggested that progress in the first dimension should be dependent on progress in other dimensions, which some see as an obstruction of efforts to rebuild mechanisms that could prevent military escalations. After the meeting, one participant drew the conclusion that in today's world confidence and security building measures seem to be possible only between friendly partners.

I was invited as a keynote speaker to the Annual Meeting on the Implementation of the OSCE Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Affairs, in order to present the PA's work and positions on the matter. Marco Bonabello informed participants of a meeting of "National Anti-Trafficking Coordinators and Rapporteurs from the OSCE Region" about the respective work of the PA.



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