

Special Representative

To:

PA President

and

PA Secretary General

PC Brief Weeks 43/44, 2016

During these two weeks, there were many meetings of the Permanent Council (PC), the Forum for Security Cooperation (FSC), the Preparatory Committee (PrepCom), the Advisory Committee on Management and Finance (ACMF), the three topical committees, other informal meetings. In addition, there was a Supplementary Human Dimension Meeting (SHDM on Freedom Of Expression And Freedom Of The Media With A Special Focus On Conflict Situations), an OSCE/ODIHR seminar election observation and follow-up of recommendations and an OSCE anti-corruption expert meeting "Lessons from South East Europe". Marc Carillet was in Moldova heading the staff of the Election Observation Mission, and Francesco Pagani spent a day traveling to the US for the Election Observation Mission there. SG Roberto Montella, Deputy SG Semyon Dzakhaev, Andreas Baker and Maria Chepurina visited Vienna.

The PC decided to forward a draft agenda for the Hamburg Ministerial Council to the ministers. The Chairmanship informed delegations that also a decision on modalities of the 2016 Human Dimension Seminar had been adopted through the "silence procedure". The FSC decided that the 2017 Annual Implementation Meeting (of politico-military commitments) will be held in Vienna on February 28 and March 1 next year.

From a PA perspective, the highlight of these two weeks was PA President Muttonen's address to the PC. The address, which is available on the PA website, was very well received, as expressed in the thirteen statements it received in response. Twelve countries aligned themselves with the EU statement, meaning that almost all (51 out of 57) participating States reacted to the presidential address. Most statements reacted very positively in tone to the calls for an enhanced dialogue and increased cooperation between the parliamentary side and the executive structures of the Assembly. Russia and Belarus pleaded for a less confrontational tone in PA debates. Azerbaijan took a more critical stance, formulating "expectations" vis-à-vis the PA. During more informal talks following the address, some ambassadors explicitly rejected the idea of any form of oversight by the Parliamentary Assembly. Among diplomats there is the concept of a cooperative OSCE PA that is - besides being a forum for interparliamentary dialogue - an implementing agency of the decision-making bodies of the governmental side without any oversight function. This stands in stark contrast to decades of PA decisions. The PC was followed by a reception for the Vienna OSCE community commemorating the PA's 25th Anniversary.

Still from a PA perspective, the second highlight was an ODIHR seminar on election observation and follow-up of recommendations. The seminar, which partly focused on experiences from the last election observation in Russia, with a keynote speech by the Chairwomen of the Russian Central election Commission, also saw the participation of several other Chairs of national election commissions, received very high attention from ambassadors. President Emeritus Kanerva, who had led the short term OSCE observer mission in Russia, addressed the meeting during the opening session, and I made a presentation on electoral obligations, commitments, and other standards. I made clear that observers are not mandated to validate or de-validate the results of an election, an issue raised by Ukraine.

The many informal negotiations regarding possible draft Ministerial Council Decisions continue, with the number of drafts increasing. Some of them contain language on the role of the OSCE PA, we have also made suggestions that others include such text.



Andreas Nothelle
Ambassador
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