



TO: OSCE PA BUREAU

THROUGH: OSCE PA SECRETARY GENERAL

MONTHLY REPORT for APRIL 2023

Spring recess (03-14 April), when no regular meetings were held, has led to somewhat reduced activities of the OSCE in Vienna in April, with following main events:

- The Chairmanship-in-Office of North Macedonia has stopped the last **COVID-19** measures regarding the limited physical presence at meetings. However, the practice of holding hybrid meetings (in person and online) continues, with possibilities for statements only for those present in the room.
- In the month of April, the **Permanent Council** has heard reports by the Head of the OSCE Mission in **Skopje**, Ambassador Killian Wahl, and by the Head of the OSCE Mission to **Moldova**, Ambassador Kelly Keiderling. Ms. Marija Pejčinović Burić, Secretary General of the **Council of Europe**, has addressed the PC as well.
- Continuing the practice of thematic reports, SG Schmid reported on *Combating the Trafficking of Cultural Property: Protecting our Heritage while Tackling Organized Crime*. SG Schmid is using every opportunity to alarm the participating States presenting them the (harsh) consequences of the non-adoption of the **Unified Budget**.
- One special PC meeting was held during the spring recess to discuss the RF war against **Ukraine**, which continues to dominate the overall OSCE agenda.
- Participating states continue to request release of three former local **SMM members**, still detained and under prosecution by *de facto* authorities in Donbas, in violation of their functional immunity. Blockade of the Lachin Corridor and establishment of Azerbaijan's checkpoint continues to carry the high potential for escalation and is causing heavy exchanges between Armenia and Azerbaijan on every PC meeting.
- Intensive informal discussions in the groups of (likeminded) participating States, have yet to reach progress in resolving major issues which are not only burdening the work of the Organization, but are threatening its very foundations (**2024 Chairmanship; 2023 Unified Budget; terms of Heads of 4 OSCE Institutions (SG, ODIHR, HCNM, RFoM)**, expiring at the end of the year; **mandates of the Field Offices**, also expiring at the end of the year (except Moldova, which expires at the end of June, with realistic prospects for extension¹ for another six months period)).
- Due to the overall atmosphere among the participating States and low probability for consensus on the decisions for major **conferences (ASRC, EEF, HDIM)** it is expected that they will be organized as Chairmanship events, following the last years practice of the former Polish Chairmanship. An **Economic and Environmental Security Conference** is tentatively scheduled for 22-23 May 2023 in Struga, North Macedonia.
- Without consensus on its extension, mandate of the **external auditor** of the OSCE French *Cour de Comptes*, has expired on 30 April. Thereby the OSCE has lost its main

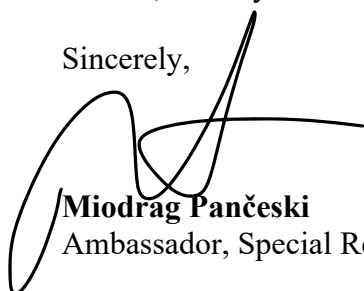
¹ Ambassador Kelly Keiderling, Head of the OSCE Mission in Moldova, estimates the chances for the extension of the mandate to 80%

auditing instrument for its financial statements which, for several donors, is a prerequisite for disbursement of extrabudgetary funds.

- **Security Committee** meeting was dedicated to *Combating transnational organized crime, particularly in conflict-affected areas*, again focusing on the RF war against Ukraine.
- The **Forum for Security Cooperation** (FSC) Chairmanship has been taken over from Bosnia and Herzegovina who presided in the first trimester, by **Bulgaria** who will chair in the next period, passing on the baton to Canada after the summer recess.
- In the framework of the FSC, the usual Global Exchange of Military Information (**GEMI**) was organized from 26-28 April. As announced previously, RF did not participate (and “will not participate in GEMI until the end of the special military operation”).
- Second **Supplementary Human Dimension Meeting** took place on 24-25 April, focusing on *International Humanitarian and International Human Rights Law Breaches in the RF war against Ukraine*.
- 23rd Conference of the **Alliance against Trafficking in Persons** took place on 18-19 April, with a theme *It's About People: National Leadership to End Human Trafficking*. Several OSCE PA Members participated in the conference - Ravshanbek Alimov (Uzbekistan), Gudrun Kugler (Austria) and Kyriakos Hadjiyianni (Cyprus). On the margins of the conference, the Vienna Office met with Andreja Stojkovski, CiO SR on Civil Society, to establish communication and explore possibilities for cooperation with PA SR with the same portfolio.
- The **Economic and Environmental Committee** (EEC) meeting was dedicated to *Addressing Security Risks from Environmental Degradation with Negative Impacts for Biodiversity* and included a contribution from the PA. The Chairmanship has appointed Mr. Naser Nuredini, former Minister of Environment and Physical Planning of North Macedonia, as Special Representative on Climate Change.
- The Vienna Office has taken another new initiative: **informal meetings** with Heads of the OSCE **Field Missions** when they come to report to the Permanent Council. So far, we met with Ambassadors Wahl (Skopje), Kierling (Chisinau) and Davenport (Priština). These meetings offer a better insight into the work of the Field Missions and build avenues for more intensive cooperation.

Vienna, 03 May 2023

Sincerely,



Miodrag Pančeski
Ambassador, Special Representative