



ASRC Working Session II: Early warning, conflict prevention, crisis management, conflict resolution and post-conflict rehabilitation: lessons learned and way ahead
Statement by Amb. Andreas Nothelle, Special Representative

Distinguished panelists and guests, colleagues, friends,

Let me first add our congratulations to Secretary General Lamberto Zannier for the organization of the Security Days. Those of you, who attended the event on Monday, heard the address by the leader of the Belgian OSCE PA Delegation, Minister De Donnea who spoke on our behalf. However, this being a formal meeting, I would like to repeat some of the points he made concerning the PA's past recommendations:

We hope that your work on the implementation of the Vilnius MC decision on "elements of the conflict cycle" will lead to developing a truly operational "civilian rapid reaction capability". One that could be deployed in time of crisis to supplement the work of field missions, as recommended by the PA's 2005 Washington Colloquium on issues of OSCE Reform and our subsequent decisions at the Annual Session in the same city. As was said there, "These teams would provide the OSCE with the opportunity to react swiftly to an unfolding crisis, assess the situation and its needs, and make policy recommendations to the OSCE executive bodies for future action. These civilian experts could be recruited on an ad hoc basis."

Additionally, at our Oslo Annual Session, we recommended developing preconceived fact-finding and negotiating mandates. We very much welcome that the Vilnius Ministerial Council acknowledged the PA's important role in this regard and decided to request the Secretary General to look into ways of involving representatives of the Parliamentary Assembly in the work of the OSCE executive structures when they address the different stages of the conflict cycle.

I have said it before - and I happily repeat - our admiration for the work that the Secretariat has done collecting ideas for a stronger involvement of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and its members in your efforts to address the conflict cycle. It has turned out that there is a rich potential in the OSCE PA, not only in early warning, in post-conflict rehabilitation and in the obvious area of mediation. We just heard from Ms. Kanerva about the importance of networking. MPs that are linked with their colleagues in other participating States through our parliamentary network

and have over the years acquired extensive expertise on specific conflicts and/or regions, have a strong comparative advantage over other players.

And, as Minister de Donnea said on Monday, MPs and Parliaments are an essential component of any solution.

We are delighted that this exercise of collecting ideas on how to make our contributions operational has become a successful testing ground for a very fruitful co-operation between the PA and the OSCE's executive structures, and I hope that participating States will be able to agree on a document that includes these ideas.

In our Palermo recommendations, which formalized our contribution to the Corfu Process, we proposed that the PA should be directly invited by the OSCE to take more political initiative such as organizing fact finding missions and offering "good offices" to facilitate negotiations. These initiatives could be public or confidential and carried out alone or in co-operation with other parliamentary actors such as the European Parliament or the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe. They would substantially increase the political credibility and visibility of the Organization.

An example has been the PA's Parliamentary Team on Moldova, which has a long tradition of cooperating with the OSCE Mission in order to facilitate the acceptance of political solutions. To be clear, the PA leaves the status negotiations to the governmental side and fully supports the 5+2 process, welcoming the reopening of these talks and the respective work of the Irish Chairmanship. What we would like to see is more contacts between legislators from both sides of the conflict. The discussions during the recent PA Team on Moldova visit to Chisinau and Tiraspol also looked at the role parliamentarians could play in facilitating platforms to support conflict mediation.

I look forward to continuing this discussion in the coming months.

Thank you, Mr. Moderator