

*REPORT OF THE SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE ON SOUTH EAST EUROPE
ROBERTO BATTELLI FOR THE OSCE PA WINTER MEETING*

Vienna, 18-20 February 2015

During the 2006 Winter Meeting in Vienna, President Alcee Hastings appointed me Special Representative on South East Europe. This appointment was renewed by President Lenmarker in 2006, President Soares in 2008, President Efthymiou in 2010, as well as by President Migliori in 2012, President Krivokapic in 2013 and President Kanerva in 2014. In renewing my mandate, the Presidents have ensured the continuity of observing developments in South East Europe. A main objective of my functions as Special Representative is the facilitation of parliamentary dialogue in the region.

My mandate also includes:

- Promoting dialogue in all segments of society, in particular at the parliamentary level, so as to encourage reconciliation and rehabilitation in the region, most especially in the Western Balkans, and to contribute to the transformation and construction of democratic institutions.
- Maintaining close contact with, and serving as a focal point for, the Assembly's work in the region in general and with the Regional Cooperation Council.
- Advising and reporting back to the President on the situation in the region, with a focus on developments pertaining to Kosovo.
- Communicating with relevant actors within the OSCE that work on South East Europe regional issues.

Summarizing since my last report to the Standing Committee in Geneva:

In October last year we observed the General Elections in Bosnia and Herzegovina. For these elections I was appointed as the Chairperson-in-Office's Special Coordinator and our colleague Marietta Tidei as Head of our Parliamentary Delegation. Our Parliamentary Assembly deployed some 38 Members of Parliament representing 16 participating States. Our observation exercise was a joint undertaking which also saw the participation of a Parliamentary Delegation from the Council of Europe and the ODIHR.

Together we concluded that the elections were held in a competitive environment. They were also generally well administered by the Central Election Commission. This despite the complex institutional and electoral system which foresaw six (6) separate contests in one (1) election cycle. However, we also witnessed a deep-rooted interethnic divide across all segments of society, including the media. We concluded that the lack of a shared vision in the country's future and co-operation among the three constituent peoples continues to hinder progress.

This year we also have an OSCE Chairmanship from the region. This provides ample opportunities for enhanced cooperation on regional issues and developments. We have, for instance, witnessed some unrest in Kosovo earlier this year which, coupled with the protracted political stalemate witnessed last year, will continue to warrant our attention. It is also in light of these developments that I am planning to visit Belgrade and Pristina in the foreseeable future.