

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

**Vienna, February 22, 2013**

During the February 2006 Winter Meeting in Vienna, President Alcee Hastings appointed me Special Representative on South East Europe. This appointment was renewed by President Lennmarker in July 2006, President Soares in July 2008, President Efthymiou in July 2010, and President Migliori in July 2012. In renewing my mandate, the Presidents have enabled the practice of observing developments in **South East Europe** to continue. One of the main objectives of my post is to facilitate 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 make a contribution 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 in conjunction 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 regional issues.

*1. My Recent activities*

Since our last meeting in Tirana I led the short term OSCE observer mission in Podgorica for the 14 October Parliamentary elections. Our delegation consisted of 29 parliamentarians and was supported by Ambassador Andreas Nothelle and Marc Carillet from the Vienna Liaison Office. The gist of our assessment for this election was that they took place in a peaceful and pluralistic environment with respect for fundamental rights.

During the same month of October (15-17) I also participated, together with Ambassador Nothelle, in the 14<sup>th</sup> Parliamentary Forum of Cetinje, held within the framework of the NATO's 81<sup>st</sup> Roth Rose Seminar entitled "Anchoring Stability in the Western Balkans: Fulfilling the Promise of Euro-Atlantic Integration". This seminar was hosted by the Parliament of Montenegro and supported by the Swiss Government.

In this seminar I used the opportunity for a number of bilateral talks with participants, in which I voiced concern about several EU Member States proposing to reintroduce visa requirements for countries of the Western Balkans because of the rising numbers of asylum seekers.

*2. Future activities*

Next week I will go back to Montenegro with President Migliori for a country visit and to participate at the President's address to the Montenegro Parliament. I also intend to continue my attempts to re-invigorate our involvement with the missions in Kosovo and in Bosnia-Herzegovina and participate in the regional Heads of Missions in May. Finally, before the Summer Session, the PA will observe the general elections in Albania.