

OSCE Academy Intervention at the Permanent Council on 22 May 2014

Mr. Chairman, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The OSCE Academy in Bishkek has the honor to present to the Permanent Council its major achievements over the past year, since the last address of Dr. Maxim Ryabkov, then director of the OSCE Academy in May 2013. The report will address of the latest developments and also outline a few elements of plans for the future. The latest developments are summarized on the basis of the Academy's activity whereas the plans are based on my meetings at the OSCE Centre in Bishkek, interviews with colleagues, including the faculty, exchange of views with the students of the two MA courses and will be complemented on the basis of this meeting and the meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Academy.

It is the most important achievement that the Academy has completed a successful year, including the completion of the 9th Master in Politics and Security and of the 2nd Master in Economic Governance and Development. The 10th Master in Politics and Security and the 3rd Master in Economic Governance is well under way. It is fortunate that the demand for our MA courses continues to be significant as demonstrated by the number of applicants. However, it would be to the benefit of the students and of the OSCE Academy if applications would be similarly intensive from all the six states, the five OSCE participating states and Afghanistan as one of the cooperation partners of the organization. It would also be great to attract more students with some relevant work experience as this would certainly further contribute to the quality and the level exchanges in the courses. This was very much the case in the first years of the existence of the Academy whereas now the MA courses are more often part of a regular post-graduate educational process. Still we have an excellent student body at both courses. It is essential that students would associate with the OSCE Academy beyond teaching.

It is apparent that the course on Economic Governance and Development, which is in its 3rd year, cannot have the same long-standing achievement as the other one with 10 years of history. Still it is the desire of the Academy to achieve that the recognition of the two courses, the excellent colleagues who teach them and the demand for them would reach the same level.

By May 2014 the number of alumni of the Academy's MA courses reached 268 and we shall be hearing more about their successes and career following their studies at the Third Alumni Conference in September.

The OSCE Academy organizes some shorter courses, which are demand driven. They include the Central Asian School of Contemporary Journalism supported by the Deutsche Welle Akademie and Finland, the Public Policy Analysis on Regional Impact Assessment and the Certificate Training Programme in Conflict Sensitive Development. The duration of the latter

has been reduced to two weeks in order to attract participants who are in decision-making position and who would find it difficult to join the training for a longer time. The OSCE Academy is also making its contribution to the raising of the capacity of Central Asian states in providing good governance. It is for the fourth year that the Academy is running a regional training in regulatory impact analysis thus contributing to capacity-building in the Central Asia states. Due to the high demand for the course, it has taken place twice in close sequence and the second one will end tomorrow. We are very glad that the group of participants covers the region fully.

The OSCE Academy regularly organizes some expert meetings, conferences, roundtables, including the annual conference on regional security. The coming conference planned for September 2014 will combine Central Asian (Eurasian) security matters with the Helsinki +40 of the OSCE in light of the fast evolving European and Eurasian security situation. For the first time, we try to have a „paper-based“ rather than a non-paper conference and plan to publish the best papers. (In the past the OSCE Academy and the Geneva Centre for Security Policy published a conference report that was made widely available both in hard copies and on the world wide web.)

It is an achievement that the participation of Afghanistan at our courses has reached matching level with citizens of other countries in the region. We will continue to work hard that this achievement could be retained irrespective of eventual political developments.

The OSCE Academy will make further efforts to put the initiative and the very sound proposal to study the relations between Afghanistan and Central Asia in the framework of a research centre. The analysis aims to go beyond the security implications and address the development of Afghanistan and its impact on Central Asia more broadly. It is essential to create a sound financial basis for the proposal in order to guarantee that it would be lastingly sustainable.

We are working hard on the engagement of Mongolian students in our courses. Although the interest has been significant the results are not conclusive, yet and require further effort.

The OSCE Academy would like to gain more visibility and we are considering options for this. One of them certainly is to host Ph.D. students and young post-Ph.D-s that are doing research on Central Asia and ask them in turn to contribute to our publication (Policy Paper) series, to the teaching including thesis supervision of our MA students. (The first Ph.D. student has just arrived to the OSCE Academy from Canada working on „Afghantsi“.) We also would like to achieve that those prominent experts that travel in Central Asia for research purposes would find the Academy a good address to reach out to the local and local international community in Bishkek.

The facilities of the OSCE Academy are adequate and we are very grateful to our host country, Kyrgyzstan for this. We hope the contribution of Kyrgyzstan in providing premises will be extended beyond June 2016. However, our IT and other technical infrastructure is fast getting dated. This is essential to remain competitive as well as to offer a competitive research facility for those who teach at the Academy. This would require an one time investment in the near future.

With this I have arrived to the point concerning funding. We are extremely grateful to our donors, several OSCE participating states, including Norway, the U.S., Finland, Denmark, Germany, Austria, Belgium and to our two important partner institutions, the Norwegian Institute of International Affairs and the Geneva Centre for Security Policy for the unceasing support. Without their support and without the support from the Unified Budget we could not carry out our, I think, all the more important task in the region. It would certainly contribute to long term financial stability of the OSCE Academy if the funding could be further diversified and other participating states would also find it a good investment to contribute, according to their load-bearing capacity to the OSCE Academy, as a regional initiative.

Let me last but not least thank the OSCE Centres, first to the Centre in Bishkek that provides us with essential and continuous support in our work and in every other Central Asian capital where we can always rely on support with our work in the region. I very much hope that we will continue with this essential, close and successful cooperation.

Thank you for your attention.

Pal Dunay

Director, OSCE Academy in Bishkek