



Organization for Security and
Co-operation in Europe
Presence in Albania

**HEAD OF PRESENCE'S REMARKS TO JOURNALISTS
ON POLITICAL SITUATION IN ALBANIA**

11 April 2013

Q: How do you comment on the latest events on the CEC about the discharge of the SMI member?

Ambassador Wollfarth: “The OSCE Presence has a mandate, including, as one of the core issues, the rule of law. Let me focus on that aspect. Political aspects depend on the camp you are looking at these items, but legal aspects should be equal for all sides. It will be very important to have further explanations on which legal basis any decision is taken or should be taken. Some political actors, but also legal experts have approached us expressing doubts on the legal basis. Therefore, from our point of view, we would clearly invite to clarify the legal basis on which is acted. This requires time and therefore any further decision should only be taken with great care and hopefully also with consensus.”

Q: Do you think that this movement at the CEC will violate the credibility created with lots of difficulties among the political parties and will be a serious precedent for the transparency of the 2013 elections?

Ambassador Wollfarth: “The CEC should be seen as a technical body. At the time when they were elected, and nominated, and confirmed by the Assembly, they reflected the situation in the parliament by the opposition and on the government side. When assuming then the duty they assumed an apolitical duty. I just said it a couple of days ago: they performed a very good, also technical job, in not-so-easy circumstances here in the country. Again, let me highlight: it will be very, very important to explain the legal basis for any step taken changing the composition of the CEC.”

Q: One of the parties says the movement was legal, the other says it was illegal. How would you explain this: was the removal of a CEC member legal? How do you read the Electoral Code?

Ambassador Wollfarth: “I do not see it as a fact. We were just in the meeting [referring to the conference on narcotics]. I do not see it as a fact yet. There was a discussion in one of the committees, I understand in the legal committee yesterday in parliament, but the final word on that, at least to my knowledge, does not seem to be spoken yet.”

Ends