

**Second day of the Twenty-Third Meeting**  
MC(23) Journal No. 2, Agenda item 7

**DECISION No. 3/16  
OSCE'S ROLE IN THE GOVERNANCE  
OF LARGE MOVEMENTS OF MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES**

The Ministerial Council,

Recognizing that the benefits and opportunities of safe, orderly and regular migration are substantial and often underestimated, whilst noting that irregular migration in large movements often presents complex challenges, and recognizing the substantial economic and social contribution that migrants and refugees can make for inclusive growth and sustainable development,

Recognizing the leading role of the United Nations,

Commending efforts made since 2015 by the Serbian and German OSCE Chairmanships to address issues related to the governance of these movements more effectively in the OSCE,

Acknowledging the many specific activities linked to migration and refugees already undertaken by OSCE executive structures, within existing mandates, as well as by participating States, based on existing OSCE commitments, relevant United Nations documents and national policies,

Building on in-depth discussions conducted at the OSCE, especially during the hearings of the Informal Working Group Focusing on the Issue of Migration and Refugee Flows in spring 2016 and during a special meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council held on 20 July 2016,

1. Acknowledges the work of the Informal Working Group Focusing on the Issue of Migration and Refugee Flows and the output discussed at the special meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council of 20 July 2016;
2. Encourages the OSCE executive structures, within existing mandates and available resources, to continue their work on the issue of migration, including by reinforcing activities leading to the exchange of best practices and enhancing dialogue and co-operation with Partners for Co-operation, in a manner that complements the activities undertaken by other relevant international organizations and agencies;

3. Encourages participating States also to use the OSCE platform, including appropriate OSCE working bodies, to continue addressing migration-related issues where the OSCE has developed its expertise, and improve dialogue on migration-related matters with regard to developing possible effective measures and common approaches to address them.

MC.DEC/3/16  
9 December 2016  
Attachment 1

Original: ENGLISH

**INTERPRETATIVE STATEMENT UNDER  
PARAGRAPH IV.1(A)6 OF THE RULES OF PROCEDURE  
OF THE ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY AND  
CO-OPERATION IN EUROPE**

By the delegation of Turkey:

“In connection with the Ministerial Council decision just adopted on the OSCE’s role in the governance of large movements of migrants and refugees, the Republic of Turkey wishes to make the following interpretative statement under paragraph IV.1(A)6 of the OSCE Rules of Procedure:

Turkey joined consensus on this text. We did so in order to pay tribute to the value of the significant work done at the OSCE throughout the year on this important issue.

As the country hosting the highest number of refugees and asylum seekers not only in the OSCE but in the entire world, we regret that the only text which could achieve consensus is lacking considerably in substance, and does not reflect such key notions as ‘solidarity’, ‘compassion’, ‘empathy’ and ‘dignity’ which govern our approach to the question.

Regardless of our sad inability to adopt a text more worthy of both the matter and our collective efforts pertaining thereto, Turkey will continue to address this humanitarian issue in the exemplary manner it has done until now.

I request that this interpretative statement be attached to the journal of the day and to the decision in question.”

MC.DEC/3/16  
9 December 2016  
Attachment 2

Original: ENGLISH

**INTERPRETATIVE STATEMENT UNDER  
PARAGRAPH IV.1(A)6 OF THE RULES OF PROCEDURE  
OF THE ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY AND  
CO-OPERATION IN EUROPE**

By the delegation of the United States of America:

“Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.

In connection with the Ministerial Council decision just adopted on the OSCE’s role in the governance of large movements of migrants and refugees, the United States would like to make the following interpretative statement under paragraph IV.1(A)6 of the OSCE Rules of Procedure.

The United States believes that this phenomenon is truly a multi-dimensional, cross-cutting challenge that will affect security throughout the OSCE for the foreseeable future. As we have made clear throughout our negotiations, we would like to have seen a stronger decision adopted by the Ministerial Council today.

Many of the OSCE executive structures and field missions are already active, within their mandates, on humane migration management and combatting trafficking in human beings.

We believe the Conflict Prevention Centre and OSCE field missions should intensify their migration-related work, including through joint regional activities with other international organizations, as well as monitoring and early warning.

The Secretary General should engage with participating States to recruit secondees to work on migration-related projects, reprioritize to have staff dedicated to co-ordinating migration-related activities, and create a network of migration focal points.

The OSCE, and in particular the ODIHR, can assist participating States with the integration of migrants and refugees.

As recommended in the report by the chairperson of the Informal Working Group on Migration and Refugee Flows, OSCE executive structures should, within their respective mandates, mainstream the issue of migration into the larger OSCE agenda, assist with sharing of best practices, strengthen co-operation and co-ordination among themselves, increase outreach to OSCE Partners for Co-operation as well as to civil society, and contribute to capacity-building efforts to improve governance of large movements of migrants and refugees.

The Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combatting Trafficking in Human Beings should increase engagement in the protection of victims of trafficking in the context of refugees and migration. We would note, however, that we do not support any alteration of her mandate to encompass human smuggling.

The United States strongly urges the incoming Austrian Chairperson-in-Office to appoint a Personal Representative on this issue, in order to strengthen coherence across the OSCE and increase engagement with Partners for Co-operation, international organizations, and civil society.

Mr. Chairperson, we ask that this statement be attached to the decision we have just adopted and also included in the journal of the day.”

MC.DEC/3/16  
9 December 2016  
Attachment 3

Original: ENGLISH

**INTERPRETATIVE STATEMENT UNDER  
PARAGRAPH IV.1(A)6 OF THE RULES OF PROCEDURE  
OF THE ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY AND  
CO-OPERATION IN EUROPE**

By the delegation of the United States of America (also on behalf of Azerbaijan, Canada, Georgia, Latvia, Lithuania, Sweden and Ukraine):

“In connection with the adoption of the ministerial decision on the OSCE’s role in the governance of large movements of migrants and refugees, we would like to make the following interpretative statement under paragraph IV.1(A)6 of the OSCE Rules of Procedure:

The delegations of Azerbaijan, Canada, Georgia, Latvia, Lithuania, Sweden, Ukraine, and the United States are pleased that consensus has been reached on the OSCE’s role in the governance of large movements of migrants and refugees. We are concerned, however, that this decision does not address the important issue of protecting the rights of internally displaced persons.

We call on OSCE participating States, in parallel to actions being taken to address large movements of migrants and refugees, also to use the OSCE as a platform for elaborating a comprehensive OSCE response addressing the protection of the rights of internally displaced persons.

We also acknowledge language in the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants adopted by consensus at the High-Level Plenary Meeting of the United Nations General Assembly on addressing large movements of refugees and migrants on 19 September 2016, which reads:

‘We recognize the very large number of people who are displaced within national borders and the possibility that such persons might seek protection and assistance in other countries as refugees or migrants. We note the need for reflection on effective strategies to ensure adequate protection and assistance for internally displaced persons and to prevent and reduce such displacement.’

We request that this interpretative statement be attached to the decision and to the journal of the day.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.”

MC.DEC/3/16  
9 December 2016  
Attachment 4

Original: ENGLISH

**INTERPRETATIVE STATEMENT UNDER  
PARAGRAPH IV.1(A)6 OF THE RULES OF PROCEDURE  
OF THE ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY AND  
CO-OPERATION IN EUROPE**

By the delegation of Switzerland:

“Switzerland makes the following interpretative statement under paragraph IV.1(A)6 of the OSCE Rules of Procedure and asks that it be attached to this Ministerial Decision.

Mr. Chairperson,

Switzerland welcomes the adoption of a ministerial decision on the OSCE’s role in the governance of large movements of migrants and refugees.

Switzerland however regrets that the OSCE, as a regional arrangement under Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations, was not able to find consensus among its participating States to refer to the phenomenon of forced movement of people in its entirety, covering both large movements of internally displaced persons and large movements of migrants and refugees, as has been referred to by the Member States of the United Nations when they adopted the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants of 19 September 2016.

I kindly ask that this interpretative statement be attached to the journal of the day as well as to the decision in question.

Thank you, Mr Chairperson.”