



Second day of the Thirtieth Meeting
MC(30) Journal, Agenda item 7

DECISION No. 5/23
EXTENSION OF THE APPOINTMENT OF THE
OSCE HIGH COMMISSIONER ON NATIONAL MINORITIES

The Ministerial Council,

Recalling the decision of the CSCE Helsinki Summit 1992 to establish a High Commissioner on National Minorities,

Reaffirming the necessity that the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities carries out his functions in full compliance with the OSCE principles, commitments and decisions as well as with the mandate of the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities,

Considering that the term of office of the current OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities, Mr. Kairat Abdrakhmanov, comes to an end on 3 December 2023,

Decides that, as an exceptional temporary measure aimed at ensuring an essential level of leadership for the institution of the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities when appointment for the regular period is not feasible, Mr. Kairat Abdrakhmanov shall remain in office as the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities until 3 September 2024.

MC.DEC/5/23
1 December 2023
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 the United States of America:

“In connection with the adoption of the decision on the appointment of the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities (HCNM), 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 welcomes the extension of the term of High Commissioner on National Minorities Kairat Abdrakhmanov. While we joined consensus on this decision as an exceptional temporary measure in the interest of ensuring continued leadership of the OSCE, this should have been a regular three-year extension. This decision does not set a precedent for future appointments or extensions of the term of the HCNM.

We fully respect the autonomy and support the work of the HCNM. Unfortunately, in recent years, there has been pressure from some participating States to weaken the OSCE’s autonomous institutions and cut resources for them. Nothing in this decision should be interpreted to diminish the autonomy of or restrict the work of the High Commissioner on National Minorities in the full exercise of his or her mandate.

Finally, the United States underscores that it is the OSCE participating States which have adopted the OSCE’s principles, commitments and decisions and it is first and foremost the responsibility of participating States to implement them.

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

MC.DEC/5/23
1 December 2023
Attachment 2

ENGLISH
Original: RUSSIAN

**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 Russian Federation:

“Having joined the consensus regarding the extension of the term of office of the High Commissioner on National Minorities, the Russian Federation emphasizes the exceptional nature of this decision, which does not relieve the head of this OSCE executive structure of the responsibility for strict compliance with its mandate as approved by the participating States of the Organization.

It is our understanding that the incoming Maltese Chairmanship will launch without delay in early 2024 a competition procedure to fill the position in question.

I request that this interpretative statement be attached to the adopted decision and included in the journal of today’s meeting.”

MC.DEC/5/23
1 December 2023
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**

The delegation of Spain, in its capacity as EU Presidency, passed the floor to the representative of the European Union, who delivered the following statement:

“In connection with the adoption of the decision on the extension of the mandate of the High Commissioner on National Minorities, Mr. Kairat Abdrakhmanov, the European Union would like to make the following interpretative statement under paragraph IV.1(A)6 of the OSCE Rules of Procedure:

The European Union fully supports the extension of the mandates for all four top leadership positions. This approach ensures the proper functioning of the Organization and its comprehensive approach to security, especially in these challenging times, marked by Russia’s ongoing war of aggression against Ukraine.

The European Union welcomes the extension of the mandate for Mr. Kairat Abdrakhmanov. We fully support the work of the High Commissioner on National Minorities.

However, we express deep regret that, due to the position of one participating State, consensus was blocked for both a three-year renewal as provided by the Rules of Procedure and a one-year extension proposed by the Chairmanship as a compromise solution.

We consider that a nine-month extension is an exceptional measure that falls short of ensuring the necessary continuity and an essential level of sound administration. We emphasize that this, in no way, sets a precedent for the future.

We call upon all participating States to recognize the importance of providing the OSCE with continuity under strong leadership, particularly when its principles, commitments and values are more crucial than ever for our common security.

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

The candidate countries North Macedonia¹, Montenegro¹, Albania¹, Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, and Bosnia and Herzegovina¹, the potential candidate country Georgia, as well as Andorra align themselves with this statement.”

¹ North Macedonia, Montenegro, Albania, and Bosnia and Herzegovina continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

MC.DEC/5/23
1 December 2023
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 Canada (also on behalf of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Iceland, Monaco, Montenegro, Norway, Liechtenstein, Switzerland and Ukraine):

“I am speaking on behalf of the following countries Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Iceland, Monaco, Montenegro, Norway, Liechtenstein, Switzerland, Ukraine, and my own country Canada – in relation to the decision on the extension of the appointment of the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities, Mr. Kairat Abdrakhmanov. In this context, we wish to make the following interpretative statement under paragraph IV.1(A)6 of the OSCE Rules of Procedure:

Our delegations endorse these decisions and reiterate our gratitude to North Macedonia’s Chairmanship for their exceptional leadership in forging consensus on critical issues, thereby enhancing the OSCE’s effectiveness.

We would like to express appreciation for and our trust in the current leadership of the executive structures. Our position has long been that we would support a full renewal of all four mandates for three years.

We deeply regret that consensus for a three-year renewal could not be reached. In the spirit of co-operation, we support the current shorter extension as a temporary and exceptional measure but this should in no way be seen as setting a precedent for future decisions in relation to the leadership of the Organization.

The consensus principle, fundamental to the OSCE, forms the foundation of our collaborative decisions. We must guard against its misuse for individual agendas, as this undermines our shared trust and co-operation.

We would like to request that this statement be attached to the decision and reflected in the journal of the day.”

MC.DEC/5/23
1 December 2023
Attachment 5

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 Kingdom:

“Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.

In connection with the approval of the Ministerial Council decision on the extension of the appointment of the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities, the United Kingdom would like to make the following interpretative statement under paragraph IV.1(A)6 of the OSCE Rules of Procedure.

The United Kingdom joins the consensus on the extension of the appointment of the OSCE High Commissioner and wishes him every success. We particularly appreciate his willingness to continue in this important role – at such a late stage. We offer the United Kingdom’s full support and encourage others to do the same.

The United Kingdom regrets that we have had to adopt these decisions as exceptional temporary measures.

However, we note that, along with the new Chairmanship and other leadership positions, this decision supports the predictability and stability of the OSCE, at a particularly difficult time.

Mr. Chairperson, I request that this interpretative statement be attached to this decision and included in the journal of the day.”