



**Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
Permanent Council**

PC.DEC/429

19 July 2001

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348th Plenary Meeting

PC Journal No. 348, Agenda item 7

**DECISION No. 429
PLACE, DATE AND OVERALL THEME FOR THE
TENTH MEETING OF THE ECONOMIC FORUM**

The Permanent Council,

Taking into account the Chairperson's Summary of the Ninth Meeting of the Economic Forum,

- Decides that the Tenth Meeting of the Economic Forum will take place in Prague from 28 to 31 May 2002. The overall theme of the Forum will be "Co-operation for the sustainable use and the protection of quality of water in the context of the OSCE".

Discussions of the Forum should benefit from input provided by deliberations in various international organizations, other OSCE bodies and relevant meetings, including seminars.

Moreover, taking into account its tasks, the Economic Forum will review the implementation of commitments in the economic dimension.

The organizational modalities, including the sub-themes of the Forum, will be further elaborated and submitted to the Permanent Council for adoption in due time.

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Attachment 1

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Original: RUSSIAN

**INTERPRETATIVE STATEMENT
UNDER PARAGRAPH 79 (CHAPTER 6) OF THE
FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE HELSINKI CONSULTATIONS**

By the Delegation of Turkmenistan:

“The Delegation of Turkmenistan has taken the floor to make an interpretative statement on the question under discussion. Our Delegation has frequently, both formally and informally, expressed to the Chairman-in-Office and to the Delegation of Portugal our objections and fears regarding certain aspects of the whole complex of problems relating to water.

Water problems, particularly in the Central Asian region, have traditionally constituted a very important factor for the development of various intra-regional processes over the centuries, and the same remains true today. For the peoples of our region, water and the distribution of water have been and still are one of the main instruments underpinning relations between our States. In our region water is regarded not only as a natural resource belonging in the ecological and economic category, but also as a political category in its own right. This being so, it is essential, when considering any initiative relating to water, to take into account, in an extremely cautious and balanced way, all nuances, new realities and geopolitical and other elements in order to forestall undesirable tendencies.

As regards individual water problems of an ecological nature, joint work among the countries of the region is already underway, in particular with a view to solving the problems of the Aral Sea Basin. Furthermore, in collaboration with individual countries, international organizations and funds, a number of projects designed to bring about a radical improvement in the utilization of water and other resources, as well as enhanced efficiency and an improved culture of environmental management, are in progress.

We feel that the most important and effective direction that activities aimed at the solution of water problems can take lies in active dialogue among the countries of the region themselves, including those which are not members of the OSCE. It is precisely this type of approach that will enable us to work out arrangements for specific activities and strategies which should lead to rational utilization of the region's water resources. In this context, discussion of water problems and, *a fortiori*, the adoption of any kind of decision within the framework of the OSCE or other international organizations without taking due account of the interests of the region, is bound to be counter-productive; international collaboration in solving such problems must be handled with extreme caution and precision and must take into account the interests of all and sundry.

We are prepared, on the whole, to support the theme of the Tenth OSCE Economic Forum as presented to us provided that the following questions are not raised and discussed:

1. Transboundary water management regimes;
2. Questions regarding the utilization of water resources in the basins of shared waterways;
3. Distribution and management of water resources.

We should like to stress once more that these questions are extremely sensitive and significant for the States of our region. Many of them have been solved or are in the process of being solved - quite successfully in fact - at the level of bilateral inter-State treaties and agreements. However, if such questions are to be solved on the regional plane it is essential that all States of the region should be aware of them and display the necessary political will, themselves devising the conceptual principles that are to underlie the solution of water problems. Only then can the various international institutions (political, financial and others) be drawn into the process in order to consolidate efforts to solve all of these water problems.

The Delegation of Turkmenistan reserves the right to revert once more, if necessary, to the discussion of these questions.

We request the Secretariat to attach this interpretative statement of the Delegation of Turkmenistan to the documentation relating to this meeting.

Thank you for your attention.”

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Attachment 2

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Original: RUSSIAN

**INTERPRETATIVE STATEMENT
UNDER PARAGRAPH 79 (CHAPTER 6) OF THE
FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE HELSINKI CONSULTATIONS**

By the Delegation of the Russian Federation:

“In connection with today’s decision adopted by the Permanent Council of the OSCE concerning “The location, date and theme of the Tenth Meeting of the Economic Forum”, the Russian Federation states the following.

We believe that the theme “Co-operation for the sustainable use and the protection of quality of water in the context of the OSCE” is of equal importance to all regions in the OSCE area, including Western Europe and North America. The Russian Federation trusts that this consideration will be taken into account during preparations for the forthcoming Forum and the establishment of its agenda.

The Russian Federation, not wishing to upset the consensus, gave its consent to the theme proposed by Portugal for the 2002 Economic Forum. At the same time, we believe that the issue of the socio-economic consequences of disarmament, which was earlier recommended as a theme for discussion, is extremely important and remains as topical as ever. We accordingly propose that the socio-economic consequences of disarmament should constitute the theme for the Economic Forum in 2003.

The Russian Federation requests that this interpretative statement be attached to the journal of the OSCE Permanent Council meeting.”

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Attachment 3

Original: ENGLISH

**INTERPRETATIVE STATEMENT
UNDER PARAGRAPH 79 (CHAPTER 6) OF THE
FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE HELSINKI CONSULTATIONS**

By the Delegation of the Republic of Turkey:

“We have just adopted the decision on the place, date and overall theme for the Tenth Meeting of the Economic Forum, which foresees that the overall theme will be “Co-operation for the “Sustainable Use and the Protection of Quality of Water in the Context of the OSCE”.

As we have repeatedly stated earlier, Turkey is in principle against the notion of discussing water issues at the OSCE Economic Forum, since OSCE does not have the necessary expertise to deal with such issues. However, taking into consideration that trans-boundary water issues, which must be resolved by riparian countries, are not included in the theme and as such will not be addressed during the Forum, and in a spirit of co-operation, we have decided to join the consensus. It is our firm expectation that the conclusions of the Tenth Economic Forum will be prepared with this understanding. However, in any case, we will not be bound by such conclusions, since Economic Forums are not decision-making bodies.

I would like to request this interpretative statement be annexed to the decision just adopted.”