



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

PC.DEC/837  
27 December 2007

Original: ENGLISH

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**693rd Plenary Meeting**

PC Journal No. 693, Agenda item 10

**DECISION No. 837  
EXTENSION OF THE MANDATE OF THE  
OSCE OFFICE IN MINSK**

The Permanent Council,

Decides to extend the mandate of the OSCE Office in Minsk until 31 December 2008.

PC.DEC/837  
27 December 2007  
Attachment 1

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 Belarus:

“In connection with Decision No. 837 of the Permanent Council to extend the mandate of the OSCE Office in Minsk until 31 December 2008, our delegation would like to make the following statement:

The Republic of Belarus wishes to stress once more that the procedure for the implementation by the OSCE Office in Minsk of all projects and programmes in accordance with Permanent Council Decisions Nos. 486 of 28 June 2002 and 526 of 30 December 2002 envisages prior consultations and co-operation with the Government of the host country. The Republic of Belarus considers that the result of such consultations must be the Government’s agreement regarding the implementation of each project or programme. No activity financed from extrabudgetary funds may be carried out without the agreement of the host country. The project activities of the OSCE Office in Minsk must meet the real needs of Belarus. The OSCE Office in Minsk should focus primary attention on transferring its tasks and experience to Belarusian State institutions.

The OSCE Office in Minsk must carry out monitoring activities in the areas where it is to provide assistance to the Government of Belarus on the basis of factual data, using all sources of information in a balanced manner. The coverage of any particular events and facts without presenting the official opinion of the Government of the host country is inadmissible. In its reports the Office must, first and foremost, report on the work it is actually carrying out with a view to implementing its mandate. It must refrain from political assessments of events or predictions regarding the development of the situation in the host country.

In their activities, the staff of the OSCE Office in Minsk must be strictly guided, *inter alia*, by the principle of political neutrality and non-interference in the internal affairs of Belarus.

The Republic of Belarus has repeatedly drawn attention to the fact that there are no objective grounds for the presence of an OSCE field mission in Belarus. What is more, we have regularly pointed out that OSCE missions are not permanent institutions and that plans must be made to gradually close them down as they fulfill their mandates. In consenting to the extension of the mandate of the OSCE Office in Minsk for another one-year period, the Republic of Belarus firmly takes this position and will continue to work in that direction.

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

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.”

**INTERPRETATIVE STATEMENT UNDER  
PARAGRAPH IV.1(A)6 OF THE RULES OF PROCEDURE  
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By the delegation of Slovenia on behalf of the European Union:

“With reference to the interpretative statement by the delegation of Belarus in connection with the Permanent Council’s decision to extend the mandate of the OSCE Office in Minsk the European Union would like to recall its comment delivered in the Permanent Council on 18 January 2007 and state the following:

The EU does not share the view of the delegation of Belarus that the OSCE Office in Minsk ‘should focus primary attention on transferring its tasks and experience to Belarusian state institutions’. To narrow the focus of the work of the Office in this way is certainly not in line with its mandate. The EU wishes to stress again that OSCE missions should be able to implement programmes and projects in all areas defined in their mandates, thus assisting the host governments to implement their OSCE commitments.

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

The candidate countries Turkey, Croatia\* and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia\*, the countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate countries Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia, the European Free Trade Association countries and members of the European Economic Area Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, as well as Ukraine align themselves with this declaration.”

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\* Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

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Attachment 3

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**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. Chairman.

The United States does not agree with the interpretative statement that was just now made by the delegation of Belarus. There is much work yet to be done for this office. My government believes that one of the greatest strengths of this organization is the flexibility and dynamic action of our field missions under the political direction of the Chairman-in-Office. The OSCE’s field missions are given the mandate to undertake broad program responsibilities, and not to have individual projects micro-managed. The Heads of Mission should be free to develop projects based on their overall mandate, and to operate in all of the OSCE’s interdependent areas of work. That is the strength of this organization, and that is the added value of our missions. Mission-reporting should be honest; it should reflect the best judgment of the Head of Mission and should not be subject to censorship or editing by other actors.

I would like to request that this interpretative statement be attached to the journal of the day.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.”