

PC.DEL/722/12  
17 July 2012

ENGLISH  
Original: RUSSIAN

Delegation of the Russian Federation

**STATEMENT BY MR. ANDREY KELIN,  
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,  
AT THE 920th MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

16 July 2012

**Regarding the 17th anniversary of the events in Srebrenica**

Mr. Chairperson,

We should like to make the following remarks concerning the events in Srebrenica in 1995.

The position of Russia, as a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council and guarantor of the Dayton Agreement on Bosnia and Herzegovina, remains unchanged. Pursuant to relevant Security Council resolutions, all those accountable for war crimes in the former Yugoslavia must appear before a court regardless of their ethnicity or citizenship. We should like to stress that the blame for crimes is individual and cannot be placed on States or ethnic entities.

Unfortunately, the fact is that the difficult socio-economic situation remains one of the main obstacles to the return of refugees and stable national reconciliation in Srebrenica.

Mr. Chairperson,

The establishment in the municipality of Srebrenica of exceptional conditions for one of the national constituent groups in the elections of the mayor has only harmed healthy electoral competition and has not resulted in an improvement in the situation.

The decision of the Peace Implementation Council Steering Board on the municipal elections to be held this autumn represents an important step towards restoring normal life in Srebrenica. Pursuant to this decision, the electoral process in the municipality will be subject to exactly the same rules and standards as in Bosnia and Herzegovina as a whole, within the framework of the electoral laws.

In light of this, the plans of the OSCE Mission to carry out work to facilitate the pre-election process only in Srebrenica are baffling. The mandate of the presence does permit it to participate in elections, but only at the request of the Bosnians themselves and in the form determined by the OSCE participating States. The reasons for the OSCE Mission to conduct election activities in a region treated individually only for political reasons, and this

for the first time in 17 years without the formal consent of the authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina are not clear to us.

We trust that in this matter the Mission will act in accordance with its existing mandate, in line with the decision of the Peace Implementation Council Steering Board, guided by the opinion of the OSCE participating States, and with the consent of the host country.

Thank you for your attention.