

**Chairmanship: Sweden**

**SPECIAL MEETING OF THE PERMANENT COUNCIL  
(1333rd Plenary Meeting)**

1. Date: Monday, 30 August 2021 (in the Neuer Saal and via video teleconference)

Opened: 2.05 p.m.

Closed: 3.05 p.m.

2. Chairperson: Ambassador U. Funered

3. Subjects discussed – Statements – Decisions/documents adopted:

Agenda item 1: UPDATE BY THE CHAIRPERSONSHIP ON THE  
HUMAN DIMENSION IMPLEMENTATION MEETING

Chairperson (Annex 1), Slovenia-European Union, France (Annex 2), Germany (Annex 3), Poland, United States of America (Annex 4), United Kingdom (Annex 5), Netherlands (also on behalf of Albania, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Ukraine, the United Kingdom and the United States of America) (Annex 6), Canada (Annex 7), Norway (Annex 8), Bosnia and Herzegovina (Annex 9), Switzerland (Annex 10), Russian Federation (Annex 11), Belarus

Agenda item 2: REVIEW OF CURRENT ISSUES

None

Agenda item 3: ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None

4. Next meeting:

Thursday, 2 September 2021, at 10 a.m., in the Neuer Saal and via video  
teleconference



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

PC.JOUR/1333  
30 August 2021  
Annex 1

Original: ENGLISH

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**1333rd Plenary Meeting**  
PC Journal No. 1333, Agenda item 1

## **STATEMENT BY THE CHAIRPERSON**

Distinguished colleagues,

It is with great regret that we have to conclude that there is still no consensus on holding Europe's largest annual human rights conference, the Human Dimension Implementation Meeting (HDIM). This is a meeting of paramount importance to the OSCE and it constitutes the main annual event in the third dimension.

Although we were all committed to adopting the agenda four months before the meeting at the latest, we have continued the discussions until now, when there is only one month left. Regrettably, one delegation is still unable or unwilling to join consensus. It has reiterated its position that it was not about it joining the other 56: it was the other 56 that needed to accommodate at least three preconditions of that one delegation, all of which would have set significant precedents.

Many have demonstrated flexibility and readiness to make concessions in order to accommodate the very few. But bringing an ever-changing list of demands to the table and insisting these must be fulfilled and in accordance with their own unilateral approach in order to let the decisions pass, is to hold others to ransom. It is one thing to lament that all one's priorities do not meet with the consensus to be included. I think that many of us could easily think of topics closer to our hearts than what we have in front of us. It is quite another thing to take the position that if I cannot have the HDIM topics I want reflected in the agenda, then no one else should have the HDIM either.

Dear colleagues,

It is the responsibility of all of us to engage in good faith in bringing about the timely adoption of decisions in order to help facilitate the planning, preparation and organization of our mandated meetings and the work of our organization. The HDIM is organized by the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), and in order for the ODIHR to be able to conduct this meeting, it needs time, predictability, and guidance from the Permanent Council. Predictability is also of the highest importance for civil society, plan and facilitate their participation in the HDIM. If there is no will, further consultations will be futile. It would be irresponsible towards the other 56 participating States, towards the civil

society organizations that wish to hold us to account, and towards the ODIHR as the mandated organizer.

It is therefore a source of great sadness to us that after we exhausted every effort and made further efforts during what should have been the summer recess, one delegation is still not ready or willing to join the rest of us in consensus and adopt these already long overdue decisions in order to provide Permanent Council guidance for the organization of this year's HDIM.

We have all recognized that respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, democracy and the rule of law is at the core of the OSCE concept of comprehensive security. The pandemic has further exacerbated the worrying trend of democratic backsliding and decline in respect for human rights and the rule of law in the OSCE region. This year we also mark the 30th anniversary of the 1991 Moscow Document, in which we declared “categorically and irrevocably” that “the commitments undertaken in the field of the human dimension are matters of direct and legitimate concern to all participating States and do not belong exclusively to the internal affairs of the State concerned.” In this context, it is deeply worrying that one delegation has blocked consensus on the decisions for this year's HDIM. It is of vital importance to safeguard the third dimension, the work of the OSCE autonomous institutions, and the latter's ability to continue assisting the participating States in the implementation of their commitments on human rights, fundamental freedoms, democracy and the rule of law. Respect for these rights and freedoms constitutes one of the foundations of the international order and is a prerequisite for a lasting order of peace, security, justice and co-operation in Europe and throughout the OSCE region.

I once more express my regret that after all our efforts and despite our very clear OSCE principles and commitments, including a ministerial mandate, all three draft decisions for the HDIM remain blocked. For those who advocate the necessity of reform of the OSCE in general and of the human dimension in particular, they need not look much further.

I once again regret that there is no consensus on the dates, agenda and topics for the second half of the 2021 Human Dimension Implementation Meeting. We have informed the ODIHR accordingly. Therefore, the Chairmanship will reflect on the way forward regarding the 2021 HDIM and we will come back to you in due course.

Thank you.

Please note that this statement will be added to the journal of the day.



**Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe  
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ENGLISH  
Original: FRENCH

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**1333rd Plenary Meeting**  
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**STATEMENT BY  
THE DELEGATION OF FRANCE**

Madam Chairperson,

France aligns itself with the statement by the European Union and wishes to reiterate its full support for the Chairmanship in its tireless efforts aimed at securing the adoption of the three decisions on the annual Human Dimension Implementation Meeting (HDIM).

We keenly regret that no consensus could be reached today on these draft decisions, despite several months of intense negotiations and the spirit of compromise displayed by all the participating States, except Russia, with regard to the format and content of the HDIM.

The HDIM is the principal event in the OSCE's human dimension and the largest regional meeting devoted to human rights. It fully contributes to the comprehensive approach to security promoted by this Organization. It was in this very spirit that our Heads of State or Government, in the Helsinki Document, provided for a meeting to be held in Warsaw every year to review the implementation of human dimension commitments. It would therefore be particularly lamentable if, for a second consecutive year, the HDIM cannot be held this year, now that all the conditions are in place for convening this meeting with due account taken of the requirements of public health safety.

We reaffirm our readiness to support today, alongside our partners, the three draft decisions proposed by the Swedish Chairmanship and exhort those other participating States that have not yet done so to join the consensus, so as to give the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights sufficient time to organize the HDIM this year in the best possible conditions and enable the participation of civil society representatives on as large a scale as possible.

I thank you for your attention and request that this statement be attached to the journal of today's meeting.



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

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ENGLISH  
Original: GERMAN

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**1333rd Plenary Meeting**  
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**STATEMENT BY  
THE DELEGATION OF GERMANY**

Madam Chairperson,

I fully endorse the statement by the European Union. I should like to add the following on behalf of the Federal Government.

Germany deeply regrets that today, too, we have again failed to reach agreement on the dates, topics and agenda of this year's Human Dimension Implementation Meeting (HDIM).

The HDIM is the main conference in the OSCE's third dimension of security. Its convocation every year is based on a decision by the Heads of State or Government. We are all bound by that decision. The conference is an important forum for identifying shortcomings in terms of respect for human rights in the OSCE area and for eliminating these shortcomings. Last year the HDIM could not take place owing to the COVID situation at the time. This makes it all the more important to hold this year's HDIM – at a time when political participation rights are being massively eroded in a few participating States.

As far as we are aware, today marks the end of the period within which the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) could have booked the conference venue for the dates indicated in the relevant draft decision. The HDIM will therefore probably not be able to take place at the end of September as planned. The ODIHR staff had made all the necessary preparations for the event. I should like to take this opportunity to expressly thank the ODIHR for these efforts.

Madam Chairperson,

The Swedish Chairmanship has done everything in its power to achieve consensus among the participating States on the three draft decisions. I thank you, your delegation and your Government for your tireless endeavours since the start of your Chairmanship and even during the shortened summer recess.

Dear colleagues,

All of us here are diplomats. It is our job to negotiate in order to find joint solutions.

The overwhelming majority of the participating States have shown themselves willing to negotiate and compromise in the negotiations during the past few months. But one delegation, that of the Russian Federation, continues to insist on its maximalist demands and has even expanded or lumped them together time and again. This is not in the spirit of negotiations. Negotiations in good faith – with the aim of reaching agreement – presuppose the determination of all those involved to find compromises.

It is difficult to comprehend why the Russian Federation readily accepts a blended physical virtual format in the case of the main conferences in the first and second dimensions, namely the Annual Security Review Conference and the Economic and Environmental Forum, but insists categorically on a physical meeting in the case of the HDIM. Especially if we want to give civil society the broadest possible opportunity to participate, a hybrid format would seem the obvious choice at a time when the further evolution of the COVID epidemic (including virus variants) cannot be foreseen. Nevertheless, all of us, including the host State of the ODIHR, Poland, and the ODIHR itself, are willing to meet this demand. And I should like to take this opportunity to expressly thank our Polish colleagues for this. We all know from our national pandemic regulations that this is no easy undertaking.

Dear colleagues,

However, the countless rounds of negotiations at various levels have clearly shown that the Russian maximalist demands, considered in their entirety, are not amenable to consensus. The other participating States have already made considerable concessions over the past few months. It is high time that the Russian Federation, for its part, reconsiders its position. It is not only the Helsinki decision that obliges us all to hold an annual HDIM. We also owe it to our States' citizens, for whose security we have made commitments in the OSCE.

I request that this statement be attached to the journal of the day. Thank you.



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**1333rd Plenary Meeting**  
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**STATEMENT BY  
THE DELEGATION OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

The Chairmanship has worked ceaselessly and creatively for many months with a wide range of participating States to secure consensus on the procedural decisions regarding the 2021 Human Dimension Implementation Meeting (HDIM). My delegation and many others have responded with principled flexibility, and we very much appreciate all of the Chairmanship's efforts over the past eight months.

Today, the Chairmanship made clear the regrettable fact that one participating State – and we all know that State is the Russian Federation – remains the sole obstructor of the political will of all 56 other participating States that the 2021 HDIM be held, as notionally planned, beginning on 27 September. Moreover, Russia alone stands in the way of the 1992 Helsinki mandate of Heads of State or Government and subsequent ministerial tasking that the yearly HDIM be held. The HDIM is not an optional event.

Why does Russia continue to obstruct a thorough review of participating States' implementation of OSCE commitments on human rights, democracy, and the rule of law? The decision texts developed by the Chairmanship – and which all other participating States except Russia are prepared to accept right now – would provide ample opportunity for a comprehensive review of the performance of all participating States – including that of my own country. And I emphasize that the HDIM review – a hallmark of the OSCE – provides a unique platform for discussion not just among the participating States but also with civil society, whose important role our leaders have reaffirmed time and again.

Why does Russia seek to avoid such a review? Why is Russia trying to obstruct discussion of its implementation record? Does Russia fear that it lacks a credible response?

Russia's continued obstruction of the path to the 2021 HDIM unless its unilateral demands are met is not how a responsible participating State behaves. All other participating States are ready to move forward. It is time for Russia to do likewise.

Thank you, Madam Chairperson, and I ask that this statement be attached to the journal of the day.





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Original: ENGLISH

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**1333rd Plenary Meeting**  
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**STATEMENT BY  
THE DELEGATION OF THE UNITED KINGDOM**

Madam Chairperson,

At the last special Permanent Council on 20 August, we expressed regret that one delegation continued to block consensus on the decisions related to the 2021 Human Dimension Implementation Meeting (HDIM). We urged that delegation to join consensus to ensure we could hold a meaningful HDIM from 27 September. Ten days later, it is unfortunate that the same delegation – the Russian Federation – continues to block consensus.

Madam Chairperson,

We have all engaged in lengthy negotiations on these decisions, with many participating States, including the United Kingdom, making substantial concessions to help us reach consensus. Many of us have agreed, reluctantly, to the removal of topics that we would like to have seen reflected in the HDIM agenda. The United Kingdom, for example, wanted to prioritize democratic elections as a special topic – deserving special attention this year given the current challenges to democracy in the OSCE area. Other delegations had their own preferences, reflecting their own national priorities. We listened carefully to all proposals and commented on them respectfully.

Ultimately, after many months of discussions, the Chairmanship proposed the current set of texts as the best way to achieve consensus. They are a fair and reasonable compromise, which draw heavily on precedent and language from previous years. The United Kingdom joined other participating States in confirming we can accept them.

Madam Chairperson,

Consensus decision-making requires compromise. No single country should hold the rest hostage by demanding that their priorities, or their specific language, must hold sway over the views of all others. Yet, this is what we see with the approach currently being taken by the Russian delegation. It is an approach which is at odds with our shared goal of using the OSCE as a vehicle to build mutual understanding and trust.

We ask the Russian delegation to join consensus today on the draft decisions.

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



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Original: ENGLISH

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**1333rd Plenary Meeting**  
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**STATEMENT BY  
THE DELEGATION OF THE NETHERLANDS (ALSO ON BEHALF OF  
ALBANIA, AUSTRIA, BELGIUM, BULGARIA, CANADA, CROATIA,  
CYPRUS, THE CZECH REPUBLIC, DENMARK, ESTONIA, FINLAND,  
FRANCE, GEORGIA, GERMANY, GREECE, HUNGARY, ICELAND,  
IRELAND, ITALY, LATVIA, LITHUANIA, LUXEMBOURG, MALTA,  
MOLDOVA, MONTENEGRO, NORTH MACEDONIA, NORWAY,  
POLAND, PORTUGAL, ROMANIA, SLOVAKIA, SLOVENIA, SPAIN,  
SWEDEN, UKRAINE, THE UNITED KINGDOM AND THE  
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA)**

Thank you, Madam Chairperson,

I have the honour of making this statement on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, Albania, Canada, Georgia, Iceland, Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Norway, Ukraine, the United Kingdom and the United States.

Madam Chairperson,

We deeply regret that consensus has not been reached on the three procedural decisions regarding the Human Dimension Implementation Meeting (HDIM) this year.

We commend the Swedish Chairmanship for their relentless efforts to find reasonable accommodations for the differing positions during long, open and inclusive consultations. The revised proposals presented by the Chairmanship reflect a good and fair balance of the different positions expressed by the participating States. We are ready to support the proposals.

Since the beginning of this year, we have devoted considerable time and effort to reaching consensus on the procedural decisions regarding the Human Dimension Implementation Meeting. Throughout the negotiations, we have been constructive and flexible, making significant concessions to facilitate agreement. This is the nature of multilateral diplomacy: compromise. We deeply regret that the flexibility, constructiveness, and good faith that we have shown have not been reciprocated by the Russian Federation.

The Human Dimension Implementation Meeting is the largest human rights event in the area. OSCE Heads of State or Government have given a clear mandate to hold a HDIM every year. Reviewing OSCE human dimension commitments in an open and genuine dialogue with civil society organizations from across the area is an important part of holding participating States accountable to their citizens.

The Human Dimension Implementation Meeting is the common responsibility of all participating States. For our part, we have done our utmost to reach consensus. However, the Russian Federation consistently evades its responsibility. This is unacceptable, and we urge that delegation to revisit its position and finally join consensus on the three decisions today.

Dear colleagues,

I would like to inform all delegations that this statement is open for additional alignments until the end of this day.

Madam Chairperson, I kindly request that this statement be attached to the journal of the day.



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**1333rd Plenary Meeting**  
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**STATEMENT BY  
THE DELEGATION OF CANADA**

Madam Chairperson,

We should be very clear in understanding the current situation. This morning, at the Preparatory Committee, the Russian Federation blocked the three Permanent Council decisions on the Human Dimension Implementation Meeting (HDIM) as set out in Permanent Council Decision No. 476. These decisions had the support of nearly all participating States. The Russian delegation has and will try and twist the perception of this event, but there is no ambiguity in what has happened. It is Russia that is refusing to join consensus, and it is not credible, in any way, to understand this as anything other than Russia blocking these decisions. This is deeply disappointing, and further evidence of the significant challenges we face at the OSCE, where the consensus principle has been weaponized to such a degree. When the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, the OSCE's precursor, was created, and the consensus principle was established, surely participating States never intended that it be used in this way, for one delegation to withhold support until its every demand is met. That is not what consensus is, it is not a sustainable way forward, and this ongoing weaponization of consensus poses tremendous risk to the effectiveness of this Organization.

Madam Chairperson,

As we have stated previously, our commitments from the 1992 Helsinki Summit are unambiguous. The HDIM will take place every year that there is no review conference. As there is no review conference this year, our commitments are clear that there must be a HDIM. Last year, responding to the extraordinary circumstances of the pandemic, we decided by consensus not to hold the HDIM. That is not the case today. Extensive good faith efforts have been undertaken by the Chairperson-in-Office, as well as by the vast majority of participating States, including my own, to reach consensus on these decisions. Negotiations on these decisions have spanned almost half a year at this point. These good faith efforts have been met by an ever-growing and ever-changing list of demands by Russia, and by Russia's intransigence and unwillingness to compromise and act in the same good faith. Despite a number of concessions and accommodations on the part of all other participating States, Russia continues to demand more, and has made it abundantly clear that it views its narrow interests as more important than our collective commitment to the HDIM.

Madam Chairperson and fellow representatives,

We must meet our Helsinki Summit commitments to hold an annual HDIM. Helsinki 1992 and Permanent Council Decision No. 476 are clear on ODIHR's responsibility to organize the HDIM. Permanent Council Decision No. 476 assumes good faith; participating States did not write in processes for resolving situations where one participating State refuses to join consensus. Failing to hold the HDIM would clearly run counter to the OSCE's objectives and to the political commitments made by leaders of participating States. It cannot be justified that one participating State has blocked the HDIM decisions simply because they are trying to wring yet another concession out of the other participating States.

Russia's blocking of these Permanent Council decisions, which we must assume is being done with the intention of preventing the holding of the HDIM, is a violation of our commitments, is in direct contravention of a Summit decision, and is a serious violation of our *acquis*.

Thank you, Madam Chairperson, and we would ask that this statement be attached to the journal of the day.



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Original: ENGLISH

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**1333rd Plenary Meeting**  
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**STATEMENT BY  
THE DELEGATION OF NORWAY**

Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Norway is fully aligned with the statement made by the Ambassador of the Netherlands, and I would like to add a few points.

First, let me join others in again thanking the Swedish Chairmanship for its tireless efforts, constructive approach and, not least, patience in trying to reach consensus on the Human Dimension Implementation Meeting (HDIM). I also wish to thank the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights and Poland as its host country for their tireless planning efforts. We regret that it has not been possible to achieve consensus.

The Chairmanship and many participating States, including my own, have actively sought common ground and shown willingness to make concessions in search of a compromise. We have for a long time been ready to agree on the three decisions, even though parts of the draft decision text are quite far from where our preferences lie. But in an organization based on consensus no single participating State can expect to have all its priorities fulfilled.

One State is blocking the HDIM this year. Claiming anything else is simply disrespectful to colleagues who have engaged in discussions in good faith over such a long period of time.

This is not the first time this year that the work of a large number of participating States and our entire organization has been hampered as a result of unilateral interests. This unwillingness to find compromise must come to an end.

Norway cannot and will not stop trying to find common ground. Norway's delegation is ready to engage in any constructive dialogue on sensitive issues and will continue to work in the best interest of the OSCE and all its participating States. We expect the same from all other participating States.

I ask that this intervention be attached to the journal of the day.

Thank you.



**Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe  
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Annex 9

Original: ENGLISH

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**1333rd Plenary Meeting**  
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**STATEMENT BY  
THE DELEGATION OF BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA**

Madam Chairperson,

Bosnia and Herzegovina deeply regrets that consensus has not been reached regarding the Human Dimension Implementation Meeting (HDIM) this year.

We commend the Swedish Chairmanship for its tireless efforts and constructive but also responsive consultations aimed at reaching consensus on the decisions necessary to hold the HDIM in 2021. That the consultations were so responsive has resulted in the latest proposals reflecting a good balance of the different positions held by the participating States.

The Human Dimension Implementation Meeting is the largest human rights event in the OSCE area, making it possible to assess human dimension commitments in open dialogue together with civil society organizations from across all our regions. If it proves impossible to achieve consensus on the HDIM this year, we sincerely hope that the Chairmanship will find alternative ways to compensate for the loss of dialogue.

Thank you, Madam Chairperson.



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Annex 10

Original: ENGLISH

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**1333rd Plenary Meeting**  
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**STATEMENT BY  
THE DELEGATION OF SWITZERLAND**

Madam Chairperson,

In 1992 in Helsinki, our Heads of State gave us a clear mandate to hold a Human Dimension Implementation Meeting (HDIM) every year in which a review conference does not take place. It is our obligation to follow this decision. Moreover, assessing the state of implementation of our common human dimension commitments from governmental and civil society perspectives alike is crucial. We owe it to our citizens. This is why Switzerland insisted on having a Human Dimension Implementation Meeting last year. In 2020, the HDIM did not take place due to the unprecedented, extraordinary and unpredictable circumstances caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. It is therefore even more important that we reach consensus to have a HDIM this year.

We commend the Swedish Chairmanship's leadership and efforts to find a compromise and consensus on the procedural decisions regarding the HDIM. For many months, we have been discussing these issues in open and inclusive consultations led by the Chairmanship. Most participating States showed flexibility and made sometimes difficult concessions to accommodate specific demands.

As we all know, this Organization works by consensus. Consensus requires that all participating States demonstrate political will and the readiness to compromise. If these elements are lacking, the OSCE cannot function. By not joining consensus in spite of all the efforts over the past months, and in spite of the demonstrated will to compromise, delegations risk weakening this Organization in ways that go beyond the issue at stake here. We therefore call on those delegations who have not yet joined consensus to put our common interest first and to join consensus without further delay.

Madam Chairperson,

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

Thank you.





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

PC.JOUR/1333  
30 August 2021  
Annex 11

ENGLISH  
Original: RUSSIAN

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**1333rd Plenary Meeting**  
PC Journal No. 1333, Agenda item 1

**STATEMENT BY  
THE DELEGATION OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION**

Madam Chairperson,

Russia regards the Human Dimension Implementation Meeting (HDIM) as the key event of the year in the OSCE's human dimension. In view of that, the accusations levelled against Russia make one wonder whether it is not in fact those voicing them that are seeking, under a spurious pretext, to do away with this major human rights forum of our Organization.

The lack of a compromise underlines the acute need for the third "basket" to be reformed. The very fact that there is disagreement over how our commitments are to be interpreted testifies eloquently to the long-overdue necessity of such reform.

Arbitrary interpretations of the fundamental Permanent Council Decision No. 476 are unacceptable. We have heard the arguments of some countries, including the Chairmanship. One gets the impression that they are deliberately distorting the sense of what is set out in that document. Allow us to refresh your memory. In paragraph 11 of Section I of the aforementioned decision it says:

"The Chairmanship will organize a discussion in the Permanent Council within two weeks after the HDIM in order to discuss further the follow-up to the HDIM. The Director of the ODIHR [Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights] will present a report from the HDIM. This Permanent Council will provide further direction required with regard to the follow-up to the results of the HDIM and to the recommendations made, in particular with a view to the preparations for the next OSCE Ministerial Council Meeting. It will also provide topics for the next three Supplementary Human Dimension Meetings (SHDMs), to be decided by 1 February."

Paragraph 12 reads:

"In January, the Director of the ODIHR will present proposals to the Permanent Council for the specific topics to be prepared for discussions during Working Sessions III–VIII of the second part of the HDIM. These proposals will take into account the results of the previous OSCE Ministerial Council Meeting and of the meeting of the

Permanent Council referred to in paragraph 11, above. They will be presented following consultations with the Chairmanship and, as appropriate, with Heads of OSCE institutions. The Permanent Council will decide on the topics by 1 February. By the same date, it will also decide on the date of the HDIM. The Chairmanship will then task the Director of the ODIHR and Heads of other OSCE institutions, as appropriate, with carrying out preparations required to facilitate a result-oriented discussion of these topics at the HDIM.”

Moreover, in paragraph 1 of Section III it says:

“By 15 February at the latest, the Chairmanship will distribute an over-all annual calendar of OSCE human dimension events, including the HDIMs, the SHDMs, the Human Dimension Seminar and other relevant events, in order to facilitate planning and participation by the participating States, OSCE institutions and field structures, other international organizations and NGOs.”

In that respect, one may legitimately ask: is this not the “package” the lack of which keeps being brought up by some? And why has the Chairmanship not fully implemented the provisions of Decision No. 476?

We kindly request all the participating States, including the future Polish Chairmanship, to adhere to the spirit and the letter of our commitments. That would also help to bring a compromise closer.

Furthermore, we consider it unacceptable to downplay the HDIM, not least through attempts to conduct it in an online format. The practice of many years shows that this meeting’s scale, the number of participants and its importance make physical attendance imperative. We urge our colleagues to take these realities into account and not to misrepresent Russia’s arguments.

The same applies to the content. The references to “numerous concessions” allegedly made to Russia with regard to the HDIM agenda do not stand up to criticism. Do you really seriously think that, for example, the safeguarding of economic and social rights during the pandemic is a matter that our country alone is concerned about? Why don’t you have a word about this with people out on the street in the cities of OSCE participating States? It would be interesting to hear what they reply to you. By the way, the topic of democratic elections remains on the agenda: it comes up immediately after the opening session.

Significantly, the HDIM agenda is loaded with topics that reflect very little the true aspirations of the general public in the OSCE area. We repeatedly flagged these during the numerous consultations, but in the end we decided to be accommodating.

However, Russia has been insisting and continues to insist on packing the HDIM agenda and indeed the human dimension as a whole with topics that really are relevant, one of which is undoubtedly combating neo-Nazism. It is not only Russia that speaks of this as a burning issue.

As the Secretary-General of the United Nations, António Guterres, emphasized at the opening of the 46th session of the United Nations Human Rights Council in February this

year: “We must also step up the fight against resurgent neo-Nazism, white supremacy and racially and ethnically motivated terrorism. ... White supremacy and neo-Nazi movements are more than domestic terror threats. They are becoming a transnational threat.”

Consider the remarks by the United States Secretary of State, Antony Blinken, with regard to the swastika that a few weeks ago was carved on to the wall of an elevator next to the office of the US Department of State’s Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Anti-Semitism. Similarly, the German Chancellor, Angela Merkel, openly stated that neo-Nazis had to be combated “without any taboos”.

There are clear commitments in that regard at the OSCE, along with several joint statements by participating States, including some adopted at the ministerial level.

Against this backdrop, the obstinate attempts by some countries to prevent such a pressing issue from being discussed at the OSCE seem odd, to put it mildly. Do they understand the catastrophic consequences that taking such a line could have? It is contrary to the spirit of the Charter of the United Nations and the Helsinki Final Act. This is even more true of the striving to consign to oblivion the verdicts of the Nuremberg Tribunal.

Thus, as we already stated at meetings of the Preparatory Committee, responsibility for not holding the HDIM on substantive grounds rests entirely with those States that cover up the glorification of Nazism and are not even willing to tackle the disgraceful phenomenon of neo-Nazism. But it also rests with the Swedish Chairmanship, which has not made sufficient efforts to find viable compromises.

Nevertheless, we do not lose hope that reason will prevail over political opportunism in these States. We once again exhort them to stop blocking the incorporation of the issue of neo-Nazism into the HDIM agenda, whereby they are blocking the conduct of the meeting as a whole. The Russian side is prepared to continue working constructively on reaching consensus on the entire “package” of decisions.

We request that this statement be attached to the journal of today’s special meeting of the Permanent Council.

Thank you for your attention.