

179th Plenary Meeting

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DECISION No. 243

The Permanent Council,

Recalling its Decision No. 231 of 11 June 1998, and welcoming the willingness of the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan to intensify OSCE activities in that country, decides:

1. To establish, preferably during the last quarter of 1998, an OSCE Centre in Almaty, which will perform the following tasks:
 - Given the OSCE role as primary instrument for early warning, conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict rehabilitation, promote the implementation of OSCE principles and commitments as well as the co-operation of the Republic of Kazakhstan within the OSCE framework, with special emphasis on the regional context, in all OSCE dimensions, including the economic, environmental, human and political aspects of security and stability;
 - Facilitate contacts and promote information exchange with the Chairman-in-Office, other OSCE institutions and the OSCE participating States in Central Asia as well as co-operation with international organizations and institutions;
 - Establish and maintain contacts with local authorities, universities, research institutions and NGOs;
 - Assist in arranging OSCE regional events, *inter alia*, regional seminars and visits to the area by OSCE delegations, as well as other events with OSCE participation;
 - Perform other tasks deemed appropriate by the Chairman-in-Office or other OSCE institutions and agreed on between the Republic of Kazakhstan and the OSCE.
2. To hold annual reviews of the implementation of this mandate and the activities of the Centre. The first such review will be undertaken by the Permanent Council after the summer recess in 1999.
3. To instruct the OSCE Centre in Almaty, once established, to liaise and co-operate closely with the OSCE Liaison Office in Central Asia and other OSCE Centres in the region, in order to maintain the coherence of the regional approach of the OSCE.

4. Furthermore, the Permanent Council:
 - (a) Envisages that the OSCE Centre in Almaty will be led by a Head of Centre assisted by a team of three experts seconded by OSCE participating States.
 - (b) Appreciates the readiness of the host country to offer premises for the Centre.
 - (c) Recalling its Decision No. 182 of 17 July 1997 concerning the establishment and related modalities of a Contingency Fund, as well as taking note of the cost estimate for the activities of the OSCE Centre in Almaty in 1998, and pending the early adoption of a budget for the Centre, which will be financed within current financial possibilities, in accordance with the established procedures,
 - authorizes the release of ATS 560,000 from the Contingency Fund in order to finance the initial activities of the Centre on an interim basis.