PC.DEL/987/12 5 November 2012

ENGLISH

Original: RUSSIAN

Delegation of the Russian Federation

STATEMENT BY MR. ANDREY KELIN, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION, AT THE 928th MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL

1 November 2012

Under agenda item "Any other business": improving the order of statements by heads of delegations at OSCE Ministerial Council meetings

In connection with the joint statement distributed on 10 October 2012 by the member States of the Collective Security Treaty Organization on improving the preparations for and holding of OSCE Ministerial Council meetings and also in view of the forthcoming drawing of lots to establish the order of statements by heads of delegations at the ministerial meeting in Dublin, we should like to draw attention to a point made in that statement regarding the need to improve the current procedure which is far from perfect.

In this connection, a matter of interest is the practice of other organizations, in particular the United Nations and the Council of Europe, based on the principle of protocol precedence.

The order of statements by heads of delegations at the United Nations General Assembly during the general debate (the so-called Ministerial Week) is more regulated than within the OSCE. As a way of obtaining information regarding the level of representation of United Nations member States (on average two months prior to the start of the event), the General Assembly Secretariat draws lots to determine the order of statements within several groups of speakers – heads of State or government and monarchs; vice-presidents, crown princes and princesses; ministers for foreign affairs, deputy ministers for foreign affairs and permanent representatives to the United Nations. In the event that the level of representation of a member State is reduced, the statement by the new head of delegation is automatically transferred to the bottom of the relevant group.

At sessions of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe speaking time is allotted only to participants at a political level – members of government or political figures. Other delegations are encouraged to make written contributions (decision of the 108th session of the Committee of Ministers CM (2001)72 of 7 May 2001). The list of speakers at ministerial sessions is drawn up by the Secretariat without the participation of delegations. In accordance with established practice, speaking time is allotted to State representatives at governmental level on the basis of the principle of protocol precedence: ministers, secretaries of state and deputy ministers for foreign affairs, including the criteria of the length of time in

office in that post for each category. Permanent representatives of the Council of Europe member countries and other staff of the permanent missions are not allotted speaking time.

It seems to us that the current practice employed in these organizations could be of practical interest for the OSCE as well. We call on the Chairmanship and our partners to return to this question at a convenient time, to carefully study it and, if consensus is achieved, to draft and adopt a separate decision as an annex to the existing Rules of Procedure of the OSCE.

Thank you for your attention.