
415th Plenary Meeting
PC Journal No. 415, Agenda item 2

DECISION No. 498
TIMETABLE AND ORGANIZATIONAL MODALITIES OF THE
TENTH MEETING OF THE OSCE MINISTERIAL COUNCIL

(Porto, 6 and 7 December 2002)

I. Timetable

Friday, 6 December 2002

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| 9.30 a.m. | Formal opening |
| | Address by the host country |
| | Address by the OSCE Chairman-in-Office |
| | First plenary session |
| 12.45 p.m. | Family photo |
| 1.15 p.m. | Working luncheon of the ministers for foreign affairs/heads of delegation |
| 3 p.m. | Second plenary session |
| 8 p.m. | Dinner for ministers for foreign affairs/heads of delegation |
| | Reception for other members of delegations |

Saturday, 7 December 2002

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| 9.30 a.m. | Third plenary session |
| | Adoption of Ministerial Council documents |
| | Formal closure of the Tenth Meeting of the OSCE Ministerial Council |
| 12.30 p.m. | Press conference of the OSCE Troika ministers |

II. Organizational Modalities

1. The Tenth Meeting of the OSCE Ministerial Council will be conducted in accordance with the relevant decisions of the Helsinki 1992, Budapest 1994, Lisbon 1996 and Istanbul 1999 Summit Meetings. The opening and concluding sessions will be open to NGOs, the press and the public.

All the other sessions, with the exception of those dealing with agenda items which are subject to discussion and possible decision, will be broadcast live in all six OSCE languages to the Media Centre and the NGO Centre by closed-circuit television.

Delegations of participating States will be provided with a total of eight seats - one at the table, four behind and three in the auditorium. The European Union (EU) will have one additional seat next to the participating State holding the EU Presidency.

Seats will be reserved for invited organizations, institutions and countries.

2. The meeting will be chaired by the Chairman-in-Office. In order to ensure that work on the entire agenda can be completed, no statement should exceed five minutes. The order of the statements to be made by the representatives of those participating States that have indicated to the Chairman-in-Office their intention of making a statement will be established by the drawing of lots.

3. The President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly will be invited to attend and address the Meeting.

4. Japan, the Republic of Korea and Thailand (Partners for Co-operation) will be invited to attend the Meeting and make contributions.

5. Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia (Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation) will be invited to attend the Meeting and make contributions.

6. The following international organizations and institutions will be invited to attend the meeting and make contributions:

United Nations, Council of Europe, North Atlantic Treaty Organization, Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe.

The following international organizations, institutions and initiatives will be invited to attend the meeting and, if they so wish, make written contributions:

Adriatic-Ionian Initiative, African Union, Arab League, Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), ASEAN Regional Forum, Barents Euro-Arctic Council, Central Asian Cooperation Organization, Central European Initiative, Commonwealth of Independent States, Conference on Interaction and Confidence-building Measures in Asia, Council of the Baltic Sea States, Economic Cooperation Organization, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, European Investment Bank,

Europol, GUUAM, International Atomic Energy Agency, International Committee of the Red Cross, International Criminal Police Organization, International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, International Monetary Fund, International Organization for Migration, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Organization of the Black Sea Economic Co-operation, Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, Organization of the Islamic Conference, Southeast European Cooperative Initiative, South East European Co-operation Process, United Nations Development Programme; United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, United Nations Environment Programme, United Nations Children's Fund, United Nations Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention, the World Bank, the Euro-Asian Economic Commonwealth and the Collective Security Treaty Organization.

7. The Meeting will be held at the Edifício da Alfândega do Porto (Old Customs building), in Porto.

A. Activities in parallel to the Ministerial Council

The day before the meeting of the Ministerial Council, 5 December, the OSCE Troika ministers and the ministers of foreign affairs of the Partners for Co-operation will have a meeting at 12 p.m., followed by lunch at 1 p.m. The same day, the OSCE Troika ministers and the ministers of foreign affairs of the Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation will have a meeting at 7 p.m., followed by dinner at 8 p.m.

The Organizational Modalities foreseen for the Tenth Meeting of the Ministerial Council will not apply to the parallel activities.

PC.DEC/498
17 October 2002
Attachment

ENGLISH
Original: RUSSIAN

INTERPRETATIVE STATEMENT UNDER PARAGRAPH 79 (CHAPTER 6) OF THE FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE HELSINKI CONSULTATIONS

By the Delegation of Belarus:

“In connection with the adoption by the OSCE Permanent Council of the decision on the timetable and organizational modalities of the tenth meeting of the OSCE Ministerial Council, I should like to make the following interpretative statement on behalf of the Republic of Belarus.

At meetings of the Permanent Council, we have repeatedly set out the position of the Republic of Belarus regarding the fact that for a period of five years the Belarusian Parliament has been illegally deprived of its right to participate in a fully fledged manner in the work of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly. By barring representatives of the National Assembly of the Republic of Belarus from the deliberations of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, the Assembly’s leadership has committed a most flagrant violation of its own Rules of Procedure and of the principles of the OSCE as a whole.

Despite the fact that the Secretariat of the Parliamentary Assembly delivered an unambiguous finding confirming the full and unconditional legitimacy of participation by a delegation from the National Assembly of the Republic of Belarus in the work of the Parliamentary Assembly, in July 2002 in Berlin our delegation was once again deprived of its right to participate fully in a Parliamentary Assembly session.

At the meeting of the Permanent Council on 11 July 2002, we drew the attention of the Chairman-in-Office to the fact that democratic principles were being blatantly flouted in the work of the Parliamentary Assembly and that a policy of discrimination was being pursued *vis-à-vis* one of the participating States. We called upon the Chairman-in-Office to protect our rights, to show commitment to the Organization’s principles and to take a position regarding the actions of the Parliamentary Assembly with regard to the representation of the Parliament of the Republic of Belarus in that organization. We regret to note that that appeal has gone unanswered.

The Rules of Procedure make no provision for any kind of preconditions for the participation of national delegations in the work of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly. Nevertheless, the Assembly leadership at the present time is tying in the question of participation by the Belarusian Parliament with a resolution of the issue regarding the OSCE Advisory and Monitoring Group in Belarus, an issue that lies within the competence of the

executive authorities of Belarus. In this way, the fundamental principle of the separation and independence of the executive and legislative branches is being ignored.

In the light of the above, we believe that at the present time the Parliamentary Assembly is not a genuine OSCE institution since the Republic of Belarus is not represented in it and the Assembly leadership is flagrantly violating the Assembly's Rules of Procedure, on which the work of that organization must be based. In these circumstances, we see no grounds for an invitation to the President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly to attend the ministerial meeting in Porto and to address it.

At the same time, taking into account a number of signals indicating a certain interest on the part of the Chairman-in-Office in seeking a solution to the question of the participation of the Belarusian Parliament in the work of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, and considering also the importance of adopting in good time a decision on the modalities so as to ensure the successful preparation of the Ministerial Council meeting, we have today joined the consensus on that decision.

This does not mean that there has been a change in our position of principle. We call upon the leadership of the Parliamentary Assembly to adopt, before the convening of the Ministerial Council meeting, a decision requiring strict adherence to the Rules of Procedure and a cessation of the discussions regarding the legitimacy of participation by representatives of the National Assembly of the Republic of Belarus in the work of the Assembly. This is a *sine qua non* if we are to support the inclusion of a statement by the President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly in the agenda of the Ministerial Council meeting.

We request that this interpretative statement be attached to the Journal of the meeting."