

Chairmanship: Sweden

1345th PLENARY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

1. Date: Thursday, 18 November 2021 (in the Neuer Saal and via video teleconference)

Opened: 10.05 a.m.
Suspended: 1.05 p.m.
Resumed: 3 p.m.
Closed: 5.50 p.m.

2. Chairperson: Ambassador U. Funered
Ambassador T. Lorentzson

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

Agenda item 1: ADDRESS BY THE CO-CHAIRS OF THE MINSK GROUP

Discussion under agenda item 3

Agenda item 2: ADDRESS BY THE PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE OF
THE CHAIRPERSON-IN-OFFICE ON THE CONFLICT
DEALT WITH BY THE OSCE MINSK CONFERENCE

Discussion under agenda item 3

Agenda item 3: REPORT BY THE HEAD OF THE HIGH-LEVEL
PLANNING GROUP

Chairperson, Co-Chair of the Minsk Group (United States of America),
Co-Chair of the Minsk Group (Russian Federation), Co-Chair of the Minsk
Group (France), Personal Representative of the Chairperson-in-Office on the
Conflict Dealt with by the OSCE Minsk Conference, Head of the High-Level
Planning Group (CIO.GAL/132/21 OSCE+), Slovenia-European Union (with
the candidate countries Albania, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia;
the country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential
candidate country Bosnia and Herzegovina; the European Free Trade
Association countries Iceland and Liechtenstein, members of the European

Economic Area; as well as Andorra, San Marino and Ukraine, in alignment) (PC.DEL/1803/21), Russian Federation (PC.DEL/1795/21 OSCE+), United Kingdom, Turkey, United States of America (PC.DEL/1786/21), Switzerland, Norway (PC.DEL/1787/21), Canada, Iceland, Armenia (Annex 1), Azerbaijan (Annex 2)

Agenda item 4: DECISION ON AMENDING OSCE FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

Chairperson

Decision: The Permanent Council adopted Decision No. 1419 (PC.DEC/1419) on amending OSCE Financial Regulations, the text of which is appended to this journal.

Agenda item 5: DECISION ON FORWARDING OF A DRAFT AGENDA TO THE MINISTERIAL COUNCIL

Chairperson

Decision: The Permanent Council adopted Decision No. 1420 (PC.DEC/1420) on forwarding of a draft agenda to the Ministerial Council, the text of which is appended to this journal.

Agenda item 6: REVIEW OF CURRENT ISSUES

Chairperson

- (a) *Russia's ongoing aggression against Ukraine and illegal occupation of Crimea:* Ukraine (PC.DEL/1796/21), Canada, Slovenia-European Union (with the candidate countries Albania, Montenegro and North Macedonia; the European Free Trade Association countries Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, members of the European Economic Area; as well as Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine, in alignment) (PC.DEL/1804/21), Turkey (PC.DEL/1797/21 OSCE+), United Kingdom, United States of America (PC.DEL/1789/21), Switzerland
- (b) *Deteriorating situation in Ukraine and continued non-implementation by the Ukrainian authorities of the Minsk agreements:* Russian Federation (PC.DEL/1794/21), Ukraine
- (c) *Response by Belarus to the Vienna Mechanism:* France (also on behalf of Albania, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Montenegro, the Netherlands, North Macedonia, Norway, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland, Ukraine, the United Kingdom and the United States of America) (Annex 3), Slovenia-European Union (with the candidate countries Albania, Montenegro and North Macedonia; the European Free Trade Association country Liechtenstein, member of the European Economic

Area; as well as Ukraine, in alignment) (PC.DEL/1805/21), Poland, Belarus (PC.DEL/1793/21 OSCE+), Russian Federation (PC.DEL/1790/21 OSCE+)

Agenda item 7: REPORT ON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE
 CHAIRPERSON-IN-OFFICE

- (a) *Meeting of the Chairperson-in-Office with the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, H.E. Mr. D. Kuleba, held on 15 November 2021: Chairperson*
- (b) *Ambassadorial retreat to be held in Vienna on 22 November 2021: Chairperson*
- (c) *Situation on the border between Armenia and Azerbaijan: Chairperson*
- (d) *Update on the COVID-19 situation with respect to the conduct of OSCE meetings in Vienna: Chairperson*

Agenda item 8: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL

- (a) *Announcement of the distribution of a written report of the Secretary General: Secretary General (SEC.GAL/163/21 OSCE+)*
- (b) *Thematic report on the implications of the evolving situation in Afghanistan: Secretary General (SEC.GAL/164/21 OSCE+), Russian Federation, Turkmenistan, France, Turkey, Switzerland, Uzbekistan, United Kingdom, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, United States of America (PC.DEL/1792/21), Canada, Slovenia-European Union*

Agenda item 9: ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- (a) *Eighth Summit of the Organization of Turkic States, held in Istanbul on 12 November 2021: Turkey (PC.DEL/1798/21 OSCE+), Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan (PC.DEL/1802/21 OSCE+), Azerbaijan (PC.DEL/1800/21 OSCE+)*
- (b) *United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP26), held in Glasgow, United Kingdom, from 31 October to 12 November 2021: United Kingdom*

4. Next meeting:

Thursday, 25 November 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/1345
18 November 2021
Annex 1

Original: ENGLISH

1345th Plenary Meeting
PC Journal No. 1345, Agenda item 3

STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF ARMENIA

Madam Chairperson,

We thank the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chairs for their appearance at the Permanent Council here in Vienna, and for their address, which we listened to carefully.

We also welcome the new Co-Chairs Igor Khovaev of the Russian Federation and Brice Roquefeuil of France and express our hope that their tenures will be successful. This delegation stands ready to provide all necessary support to that end.

For the record, Armenia fully supports the format of the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chairs as the only internationally mandated mechanism dealing with resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. It hardly needs repeating that, unlike other conflicts, Nagorno-Karabakh is the only conflict in the OSCE area which the OSCE has a full mandate to deal with. The success of the process also very much depends on the readiness, willingness and determination of the OSCE, the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chairmanship, and the Co-Chair countries to make full use of the toolkits and instruments available to them to promote and contribute to the peaceful and lasting resolution of this conflict.

Regarding the report of the Co-Chairs, it is clear that both the substance and the format of the report presented have clearly been influenced by the absence of the Co-Chairs from the region.

During the reporting period there was only one limited visit to the region. As the distinguished Co-Chairs will confirm, the last time the Co-Chairs conducted a full-fledged visit to the region, including Stepanakert, was more than two years ago – 25 months, to be exact – and this despite the military flare-up in July 2020, despite the 44 days of war of aggression unleashed by Azerbaijan against Artsakh, and despite the attack by Azerbaijan on sovereign territory of Armenia that occurred two days ago on 16 November.

The meetings between the foreign ministers of Armenia and Azerbaijan that took place in New York and Paris under the auspices of the Minsk Group Co-Chairs allowed for a very small degree of optimism and a certain, if limited, enthusiasm about the revitalization of the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chairs format, first and foremost on account of the agreement in principle on finally conducting the long overdue full-fledged mission to the region.

This agreement was possible thanks to the co-operative attitude once again shown by Armenia in order to ensure the Co-Chairs unhindered access to Artsakh.

Two months later we have yet to hear any plausible argument and justification for the constant delay of this much-awaited visit to the region.

Now let me say a few words about the report of the Personal Representative of the Chairperson-in-Office, Ambassador Andrzej Kasprzyk. We have taken note of the report and the statement. Likewise taking into account the recent attack and incursion, it was expected that Ambassador Kasprzyk, who is a well-known personality in the region and apparently has useful contacts and connections, would have travelled to the mission area, not least in order to be able to provide first the Chairperson-in-Office of the OSCE and then the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chairs and the participating States with updated information. We consider his absence from the region as a missed opportunity, which in fact limits the ability of the Organization, the Chairperson-in-Office and the participating States to take advantage of updated and verifiable information from the ground.

In relation to the High-Level Planning Group, the position of Armenia remains the same. Let me say that the main handicap of the High-Level Planning Group was and remains its current staff composition and we call on the incoming OSCE Chairmanship to be cognizant of and rectify this unacceptable situation.

Distinguished Co-Chairs,

In the absence of proper international reaction, the continuous ceasefire violations by Azerbaijan are becoming more and more brazen.

On 9 October, in the neighbourhood of the city of Martakert, the civilian Aram Tepnants was fatally wounded by an Azerbaijani sniper while carrying out agricultural works under the supervision of peacekeepers.

On 14 October, in another gross violation of the ceasefire by the Azerbaijani armed forces, six soldiers from the Artsakh defence army were wounded near the village of Norshen in Artsakh. The Azerbaijani military continued its ceasefire violations on the next day, 15 October, by opening fire at a medical vehicle of the defence army in the north-east of Artsakh.

On 8 November, Azerbaijani authorities initiated another attack on civilians carrying out construction works near the Stepanakert-Shushi road. It should be noted that the Azerbaijani military authorities were properly notified about the construction work. But this did not prevent peaceful workers from being shot at by an Azerbaijani officer in cold blood and at point-blank range. As a result of this crime, one civilian was killed, Martik Yeremyan, aged 22, and three others were seriously wounded.

These deliberate and cynical acts by the armed forces of Azerbaijan constitute a gross violation of its commitments, notably under the ceasefire statement of 9 November signed by the leaders of Armenia, Azerbaijan and the Russian Federation, and indicate the real intention of Azerbaijan, namely, to undermine the realization of the trilateral statement.

Madam Chairperson,
Colleagues,

Unfortunately, the present report of the Co-Chairs to the Permanent Council comes at a time when the already extremely fragile situation in the region has yet again been disrupted: on 16 November, Azerbaijani armed forces made a further attack on and incursion into the sovereign territory of the Republic of Armenia.

On 16 November, the armed forces of Azerbaijan, using artillery, armoured combat vehicles and special forces units, launched an attack on the eastern border of the Republic of Armenia and penetrated into Armenian sovereign territory. It is already known that this large-scale armed attack by Azerbaijan has led to numerous casualties on both sides.

The Armenian Ministry of Defence has confirmed the death of one serviceman, the fate of 24 missing Armenian servicemen still remains unknown, and 13 servicemen were taken prisoner of war. And I would like to thank all those colleagues who have extended their condolences on the loss of life.

Even though the ceasefire established with the mediation of the Russian Federation still holds, the situation nevertheless continues to remain volatile.

The 16 November military attack and incursion were accompanied by Azerbaijan's massive disinformation campaign, which is aimed at turning everything upside down in a clumsy attempt to justify its aggressive actions and portray Azerbaijan as the champion of peace while both the words and the deeds of Azerbaijani authorities for the last decade or so have spoken loudly, clearly and unequivocally about their true intentions.

It is also indicative that on 16 November, the very day of the attack and incursion, Azerbaijan's national air carrier AZAL carried out flights from Baku to Nakhijevan and then to Syria and back. This information should be of particular interest to the relevant OSCE structures dealing with advanced passenger data exchange issues or with terrorism and foreign terrorist fighters.

Madam Chairperson,

This latest attack on Armenia is a continuation of Azerbaijan's policy of creeping occupation of Armenian territories, which began on 12 May 2021 with the incursion of Azerbaijani troops in the direction of the Syunik and Gegharkunik provinces of Armenia.

For more than six months now, Armenia has been striving to use peaceful, diplomatic means to resolve the issue of the incursion by Azerbaijani armed forces and their continued illegal presence in its territory. Azerbaijan, by contrast, has deliberately aggravated the situation, moving further into the territory of Armenia, demonstrating that its only goal is to seize more territories and that it is not interested in a peaceful process.

As a result of these incursions, 41 square kilometres of sovereign Armenian territory are currently under Azerbaijani occupation.

By its aggressive actions and attempts to encroach on the sovereign territory of Armenia, Azerbaijan is flagrantly violating the Charter of the United Nations, its own obligations under international law, and the principles of the Helsinki Final Act. Needless to say, Azerbaijan's actions also violate its obligations under the trilateral statement of 9 November, the first provision of which provides for a complete ceasefire and termination of all hostilities, and stipulates that the sides shall stop in the positions held at the time of signing of the statement.

Moreover, Azerbaijan is attacking the Armenian borderline territories from adjacent regions of Nagorno-Karabakh which fell under the control of Azerbaijan as a result of implementation of the trilateral statement of 9 November by the Armenian side. As we see, Armenia's commitment to peace and to implementation in good faith of provisions of the statement is being strongly abused by Azerbaijan.

Dear colleagues,

By distorting and putting an arbitrary interpretation on the provisions of the trilateral statements on unblocking regional transport infrastructure, Azerbaijan continues to entertain the idea of the so-called "corridor" and threatens to use force. Not only does its far-fetched interpretation contradict the letter and spirit of the trilateral statements, but it is also indicative of an intention to undermine efforts towards de-escalation in the region.

In this context let me recall, as an example, the outrageous statement made by the President of Azerbaijan in April this year in which he said, among other things: "The creation of the Zangazur corridor fully corresponds to our national, historical and future interests. We are implementing the Zangazur corridor, whether Armenia wants it or not. If they do, it will be easier for us to implement, if not, we will implement it by force. Just as before and during the war, I said that they must get out of our lands or we will expel them by force. And so it happened. The same will apply to the Zangazur corridor."

It is obvious that following the 44-day war of aggression, Azerbaijan shed its last, already thin layer of civilized behaviour, thus revealing its true intentions.

Moreover, Azerbaijan's aggressive actions contradict the spirit of the 9 November statement, as does its closure of roads connecting Armenian towns and villages, which has likewise further disrupted transport communications and severely affected the everyday life of people in the region.

The very fact that such blatant recourse to the use or threat of force has become a common feature of the policy pursued by Azerbaijan should leave the OSCE and its participating States in no doubt as to who is the aggressor and the main hindrance to the establishment of peace in the region.

Madam Chairperson,

The Armenian government has repeatedly stated its readiness to engage in good faith in the discussions with a view to addressing the issue of demarcation and delimitation, stressing at the same time that any such process should be conducted by diplomatic means and never through the use or threat of force or through unilateral actions. It was with this in

mind that the Government of Armenia gave its consideration to the proposals of the Russian Federation. But these proposals were apparently not acceptable to Azerbaijan, which has opted for further military escalation instead.

It is also indicative that Azerbaijan is still continuing its blockade of Nagorno-Karabakh, preventing the access of international humanitarian organizations, including those who have requested a fact-finding mission to determine the state of the cultural heritage of the region.

Madam Chairperson,

For almost a year, our delegation has been persistently raising the issue of Armenian prisoners of war and civilian hostages held by Azerbaijan. However, not only does Azerbaijan continue to ignore the calls of the international community for the immediate and unconditional release of all Armenian prisoners of war and civilian hostages, but on 16 November its armed forces also captured 13 more military personnel in the course of the attack on the eastern border of Armenia and infiltration into Armenian territory.

At the beginning, Azerbaijan made the release of Armenian prisoners of war conditional on obtaining maps of minefields from the Armenian side. But when Armenia offered to provide all maps of minefields in exchange for the release of all captured Armenians, Azerbaijan took a step back, questioning the reliability of the maps.

We have on numerous occasions underlined the unacceptability of using the Armenian prisoners of war as a bargaining tool. We once again wish to stress that the immediate and unconditional release of all prisoners of war and other captives is a commitment clearly stipulated in the trilateral statement, whereas Armenia has no obligations under the statement or otherwise in relation to landmines.

Dear colleagues,

The willingness of Armenia to go beyond the commitments it undertook under the trilateral statement clearly attests to Armenia's genuine efforts in the cause of peace, as do all the above-mentioned actions on our part. On the other hand, it is equally obvious that Azerbaijan is continuing to escalate the situation. In these circumstances, general calls to both sides may indicate a certain indifference and lack of commitment on the part of our international partners.

Therefore, urgent and effective steps are needed to prevent further escalation and ensure the unconditional and complete withdrawal of the Azerbaijani armed forces from the territory of Armenia.

We reiterate that Armenia is ready for negotiations aimed at achieving lasting peace and stability in the South Caucasus. However, peace cannot be achieved on the basis of the good will of two parties to the conflict while the third party is hell-bent on continuing its anti-Armenian policy. It is hardly possible to imagine lasting peace in the region with a so-called "trophy park" in Baku, continued hate speech and xenophobia by top officials of Azerbaijan, the continued imprisonment of Armenian prisoners of war and civilian hostages, numerous cases of enforced disappearance, and continued attacks, encroachments and the

presence of Azerbaijani troops on and in the sovereign territory of Armenia. While Armenia expresses its readiness for de-escalation, Azerbaijan continues to make provocations in Nagorno-Karabakh and on the Armenian borders, causing unnecessary human losses, including civilian losses. While Armenia is calling for the re-opening of regional communications, Azerbaijan uses the pretext of the so-called “corridor” issue to continue its aggression.

The pronouncements of the Azerbaijani delegation here and in other fora about their continuous and relentless striving for peace in the South Caucasus are empty claims that ring particularly hollow against the backdrop of Azerbaijan’s actions on the ground, which cannot by any stretch of the imagination be construed as being aimed at bringing peace.

Madam Chairperson,

In conclusion, I would like to state that lasting peace and stability in the region can only be achieved through the full implementation of the trilateral statements of 9 November 2020 and 11 January 2021 – including the solution of urgent humanitarian issues, first of all the immediate release and repatriation of all prisoners of war, hostages and other detained persons, the clarification of the fate of the missing persons, and investigation of the cases of enforced disappearance – the protection of Armenian historical and religious heritage and the full resumption of the peace process for a final and comprehensive settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

The current situation in Nagorno-Karabakh is the result of the flagrant violation by Azerbaijan of several core principles of the Helsinki Final Act, namely, refraining from the threat or use of force; the peaceful settlement of disputes; equal rights and self-determination of peoples; and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. No one should be under any illusion that the results of the use of force, accompanied by war crimes and violations of international humanitarian law, can ever become the basis for a lasting and sustainable peace. Such peace can be achieved in the region only through a comprehensive settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, which must include the determination of the status of Artsakh on the basis of the realization by the people of Artsakh of their inalienable right to self-determination; the ensuring of the safe and dignified return of displaced population to their homes; and the preservation of the region’s historical and religious heritage.

Madam Chairperson,

I would like to conclude my statement with a question to the distinguished Co-Chairs. Why, after the meetings in New York and Paris, are the distinguished Co-Chairs still discussing the possibility of the visit to the region? What – or, perhaps, which side – is delaying and creating impediments to the Co-Chairs’ visit, thus hindering their mandated activities?

Madam Chairperson, I kindly ask you to attach this statement to the journal of today’s meeting.

I thank you.



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

PC.JOUR/1345
18 November 2021
Annex 2

Original: ENGLISH

1345th Plenary Meeting
PC Journal No. 1345, Agenda item 3

**STATEMENT BY
THE DELEGATION OF AZERBAIJAN**

Madam Chairperson,

The delegation of Azerbaijan welcomes the Co-Chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group, the Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office on the conflict dealt with by the OSCE Minsk Conference and the Head of the High-Level Planning Group to the Permanent Council and takes note of their respective statements.

The position of Azerbaijan in the post-conflict period, including on the possible role and contribution of the Co-Chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group is well known and has been conveyed to counterparts and to the Permanent Council on a number of occasions. But, given that we have two new Co-Chairs, from Russia, Mr. Igor Khovaev, and from France, Mr. Brice Roquefeuil, appearing before the Permanent Council for the first time, we would like to reiterate our position once again.

Your appearance at the Permanent Council almost coincided with the first anniversary of the signing of the trilateral statement on 10 November 2020 by Armenia, Azerbaijan and the Russian Federation that put an end to the armed conflict and set the agreed parameters for establishing durable peace in the region. The patriotic war that lasted for 44 days put an end to Armenia's nearly 30-year-long policy of aggression. Azerbaijan ensured its territorial integrity, and the fundamental rights of nearly one million displaced Azerbaijanis were restored. Azerbaijan alone ensured the implementation of the relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions of 1993.

Despite Armenia's international wrongdoings and despite the devastating consequences and unhealed wounds of the almost three-decade-old war and occupation, the post-conflict realities offer a unique opportunity and real prospects for building peace, consolidating stability, restoring peaceful co-existence, advancing the reconciliation agenda and investing in economic development and co-operation.

The OSCE, including the Co-Chairs, the Personal Representative of the Chairperson-in-Office and the High-Level Planning Group can play a meaningful role, provided that they stay relevant and abreast of the new reality on the ground. We welcome that the Co-Chairs in their statements accepted that there are new realities on the ground that need to be taken into account. Other participating States who spoke today should also follow

suit. The discussions on future potential programmatic activities of the Minsk Group and its Co-Chairs, the Personal Representative of the Chairperson-in-Office and the High-Level Planning Group in light of the aforementioned trilateral statements are still ongoing, including within the OSCE Unified Budget process. It is clear that there can be no business as usual. Repeating obsolete narratives, assumptions and concepts is counterproductive and will not contribute to building peace in the region. It is our firm view that at the post-conflict stage, all the efforts of the OSCE and its structures must be directed towards support for the full implementation of the trilateral statements and practical engagement with the sides in order to seize a unique opportunity to consolidate peace, build confidence and trust and stability in the region.

The exchange of views by my Minister with his Armenian counterpart in New York, Minsk and Paris on the normalization of relations between the two States based on the new realities demonstrated that Azerbaijan is ready to discuss the issues that fall within the scope of the bilateral relations that includes normalization of relations between the two States signing a peace treaty. However, meetings should not be for the sake of meetings. For such exchanges to be productive, a concrete agenda is necessary. All other issues pertaining to the domestic jurisdiction of Azerbaijan shall be dealt with in accordance with the legislation and Constitution of Azerbaijan.

Peace is within reach for the first time after nearly three decades of failed negotiations and there is a unique opportunity to consolidate it. Now that the conflict has been resolved, the Government of Azerbaijan has already initiated practical steps aimed at eliminating the consequences of decades-long occupation followed by massive destruction. The priorities of Azerbaijan at the current post-conflict stage include the soonest and most effective post-conflict rehabilitation, reconstruction and reintegration work in the liberated territories, which will ensure the safe and dignified return of hundreds of thousands of displaced Azerbaijanis to their homes. Only this year 1.3 billion US dollars has been allocated from the State budget. We have already accomplished the construction of some needed infrastructure and facilities, including roads, airport, power lines, residential and other social facilities.

At the highest level Azerbaijan declared its determination that all cultural and religious monuments in the liberated territories regardless of their origin will be duly preserved and restored. Azerbaijan will continue to build upon these ideals and values, and guarantees all the rights for all its citizens, irrespective of their ethnic or religious affiliation.

As far as access by international humanitarian organizations to the conflict-affected territories of Azerbaijan is concerned, mentioned by the Co-Chairs and some delegations, Azerbaijan actively co-operates with international organizations, including humanitarian organizations, and creates all necessary conditions for their work in Azerbaijan. Azerbaijan proceeds from the norms and principles of international law as well as international standards set by the United Nations with regard to the provision of international humanitarian aid. The activities of all international organizations in the conflict-affected territories of Azerbaijan must be conducted exclusively by the consent of Azerbaijan in full respect to its sovereignty and territorial integrity and implemented in co-ordination with the relevant authorities of Azerbaijan. Their access to these territories can only be ensured through the territory of Azerbaijan along the routes designated by the Azerbaijani authorities. Such an approach is fully in line with the relevant United Nations General Assembly resolution. As to the use of the Lachin road, the 10 November 2020 statement clearly identifies for which purposes this

route can be used and it does not envisage the use of this route by international humanitarian organizations. Paragraph 6 of the statement envisages transportation of citizens, vehicles and goods via this route.

In this context, Azerbaijan in its efforts of post-conflict rehabilitation is looking forward to co-operation with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. Over the past months since the end of the conflict Azerbaijan and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization have been actively engaged into dialogue with a view of dispatching a technical mission to the liberated territories. The two sides have agreed on several complex technical, legal, and political aspects of the mission, which will ensure its effectiveness and independence.

The assessment of the unprecedented damage inflicted upon our cultural heritage is a priority for our Government and we are ready to host an independent technical mission as soon as possible. Unfortunately, Armenia is trying to block and politicize the mission, which is detrimental to its successful accomplishment. Armenia must refrain from interfering into this process and cease exploiting this organization for its own political purposes.

In the post-conflict period, Azerbaijan has repeatedly expressed its readiness for the reconciliation and normalization of inter-State relations with Armenia based on mutual recognition and respect for each other's sovereignty and territorial integrity within their internationally recognized borders, including through signing a peace treaty based on these principles.

Unfortunately, we have not seen yet any positive reaction from Armenia regarding our proposal. On the contrary, in the course of the past weeks we witnessed a series of provocations by Armenia.

Thus, on 8 November former Defence Minister of Armenia, Arshak Karapetyan, illegally visited the territory of Azerbaijan, where a Russian peacekeeping contingent is temporarily deployed to, held meetings with unlawful Armenian formations and inspected their so-called "combat readiness". The illegal visit of the Armenian official to the sovereign territory of Azerbaijan on the eve of the anniversary of the trilateral statement is a broad daylight provocation and a serious blow to the peacebuilding efforts. This is also a clear violation of the trilateral statement, which stipulates that the Lachin road can be used for the transportation of citizens, vehicles and goods. The Ministry of Defence of Azerbaijan issued a warning to the politico-military leadership of Armenia with regard to such illegal visits.

On the same day, about 60 personnel of the Armenian armed forces attempted to advance to the positions of the Azerbaijani armed forces in the Lachin district. With mediation from the Russian side, Azerbaijan demonstrated goodwill and allowed those surrounded Armenian servicemen to return to their previous positions.

On 13 November, a citizen of Armenia, driving along the Khankendi-Lachin highway near the city of Shusha of Azerbaijan, threw a grenade towards the Azerbaijani servicemen and Russian peacekeepers stationed there. As a result of the attack, three Azerbaijani servicemen were injured to varying degrees. The perpetrator of this attack was captured by the Russian peacekeepers.

On 16 November, Armenian armed forces having accumulated additional forces in the Basarkechar and Garakilsa regions, using mortars of various calibres and artillery pieces launched a sudden military operation and attacked the positions of the Azerbaijani armed forces in the direction of the State border in the Lachin and Kalbajar districts of Azerbaijan. As a result of this attack seven Azerbaijani servicemen were killed and ten were wounded. The Military Prosecution Office of Azerbaijan has launched a criminal case with regard to this armed attack and murder of the Azerbaijani servicemen. Azerbaijani units in response to this provocation took countermeasures to suppress the combat activity of the Armenian armed forces. We would like to underline that by responding to Armenia's large-scale provocations on the State border Azerbaijani servicemen fulfilled their duties on the sovereign territory of Azerbaijan. As a result of the decisive measures, the attacking Armenian servicemen were disarmed and detained, weapons of various calibres and ammunition were seized as trophies. Thus, this military adventure of Armenia turned into another failure.

Azerbaijan has previously offered to Armenia to launch the process of delimitation and demarcation of the State border and supported the proposal to establish an inter-State commission to this end. The recent tensions at the State border caused by Armenia's irresponsible military adventurism demonstrate once again that Armenia is not interested in delimitation and demarcation of the State border and, instead, attempted to resolve the issue through the use of force. Armenia also still refuses to implement its commitment to return to Azerbaijan eight exclaves along the border, which are still under the unlawful occupation of Armenia. Unlike Armenia, Azerbaijan relies on the resolution of this issue through political means.

Azerbaijan underlined on a number of occasions, including in this Permanent Council that the armed forces of Azerbaijan will be taking appropriate resolute measures to repel any provocations of Armenia. Armenia bears full responsibility for aggravating the situation. Azerbaijan reserves the right to adequately respond to Armenia's provocations and to protect its sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Armenia's most recent destructive behaviour fits well into its notorious track record of provocations carried out on the eve, in the course or in the immediate aftermath of the meetings between the two countries when the conflict was still ongoing. The series of provocations that took place after the exchange of views between the foreign ministers of both countries held in New York, Minsk and Paris are indicative of Armenia's policy of deliberately aggravating the situation in the region. It also demonstrates once again that a revanchist attitude is still prevailing in Armenia in the post-conflict period, undermining the prospects for consolidating peace and stability in the region.

The recent provocations of Armenia testify to an urgent need for ensuring the full implementation of the trilateral statements. Azerbaijan implemented provisions related to it in these statements and expects the same from Armenia. In particular, Armenia must comply fully with Article 4 of the statement, which requires Armenia to withdraw its armed forces from the territories of Azerbaijan in parallel with the temporary deployment of the Russian Federation's peacekeeping contingent.

Armenia must also implement its obligations under Article 9 of the 10 November 2020 trilateral statement, which envisages restoration of all economic and

transport links in the region supplemented by another trilateral statement signed on 11 January 2021. This is one of the areas that can serve the cause of irreversible peace and co-operation in the region. In this context, the Zangazur corridor connecting mainland Azerbaijan with its inseparable part – the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic – and Turkey will create new opportunities for the whole region.

Another serious challenge is posed by landmines planted by Armenia on a massive scale in the formerly occupied territories of Azerbaijan. Since the signing of the trilateral statement of 10 November 2020, around 30 Azerbaijani citizens, including two journalists, were killed, and around 130 citizens were wounded. Presently Azerbaijan is among the most heavily mined countries in the world. It slows down the rehabilitation and reconstruction process in the liberated territories and poses a significant barrier to the return of internally displaced persons to their homes. It is deplorable that Armenia still refuses to release accurate maps of the minefields. The statement by the Armenian delegation that this country allegedly has no obligations to release these maps is indicative of the value that it attaches to the lives of civilians. The international community, including the OSCE, must put additional pressure onto Armenia to provide accurate mine maps of all the liberated territories of Azerbaijan, in line with Armenia's obligations under customary international law.

Furthermore, Armenia has yet to implement its obligations with regard to identifying the whereabouts of close to 4,000 Azerbaijanis missing since the armed hostilities in the beginning of the 1990s. It is of urgent necessity to ensure that their fates are finally established and all those who committed serious war crimes against these Azerbaijanis are brought to justice. This is important for healing the wounds of the former conflict.

The recent provocations of the Armenian side confirm for another time that apparently this country feels emboldened by statements which attempt to reanimate obsolete assumptions that proved wrong and concepts that are not viable. Such signals encourage Armenia to believe in an alternative to solidifying peace and normalizing relations with its neighbours, to divert from implementing the provisions of the trilateral statements in good faith and to undertake large-scale provocations, which we witnessed this week.

It is highly alarming that Armenia did not draw lessons from the recent past and its defeat on the battlefield last year. We reiterate that it is essential for Armenia to soberly assess the new realities and not to rely on miscalculations or false expectations that could jeopardize the fragile peace in the region established with the signing of the trilateral statements. Instead, Armenia should reciprocate the constructive offer of Azerbaijan and seize the historic opportunity to normalize its relations with neighbouring countries, which will open up immense opportunities for this country and for the broader region.

In conclusion, in response to the comments of the Armenian delegation I would like to stress that the mandate of the Co-Chairs of the Minsk Group to which this delegation referred contains reference to the United Nations Security Council resolutions of 1993. In these resolutions, the Security Council condemned the use of force against Azerbaijan and the occupation of its territories, reaffirmed respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan, the inviolability of international borders and the inadmissibility of the use of force for the acquisition of territory. The Security Council demanded the immediate, complete and unconditional withdrawal of the occupying forces from all the occupied territories. In response to the numerous provocations by the Armenian side, including to the

one that occurred in September 2020, Azerbaijan took countermeasures on its sovereign territory and restored its territorial integrity and ensured the withdrawal of the Armenian armed forces from its territories, thus implementing the aforementioned resolutions. These are the realities, acknowledged by the Co-Chairs, that need to be taken into account. The Armenian delegation will probably continue to recite its conflict narratives, but the realities in the region are different. Instead, Armenia must accept and reconcile with these new realities and focus on the implementation of the trilateral statements.

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

Thank you, Madam Chairperson.



1345th Plenary Meeting
PC Journal No. 1345, Agenda item 6(c)

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

Madam Chairperson,

I am delivering this statement on behalf of the following 35 participating States that invoked the Vienna (human dimension) Mechanism on 4 November: Albania, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Montenegro, the Netherlands, North Macedonia, Norway, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland, Ukraine, the United Kingdom and the United States of America.

In our letter of 4 November 2021 to the delegation of Belarus, and our statement to the Permanent Council on the same day, we stressed our concerns about the serious human rights violations and abuses taking place in Belarus. We highlighted specific areas of concern around (i) freedom of peaceful assembly; (ii) media freedom; (iii) continued arbitrary or unjust arrests or detentions; (iv) the targeting of opposition figures; (v) torture; and (vi) migration. In accordance with the provisions of the Vienna Mechanism, we posed a number of questions to the Belarusian authorities.

The delegation of Belarus has now replied by letter, with annex, dated 12 November 2021.

Whilst we welcome that the delegation of Belarus responded within the ten days mandated under the Vienna Mechanism, we regret that the content of their letter does not indicate a material change in the approach of the Belarusian authorities.

We will, of course, study the full contents of the letter in detail. However, we take this early opportunity to reject firmly some of the comments made in that letter, such as the suggestion that our concerns are groundless, and that the raising of those concerns through OSCE mechanisms undermines trust.

The Vienna Mechanism was invoked to express our concerns about the implementation of human dimension commitments in Belarus. But it also offered another opportunity for Belarus to reassess its current direction, and to consider the opportunities for serious and meaningful engagement through the unique set of tools and instruments that are available through the OSCE.

In that regard, we remind the delegation of Belarus of the offers of the current Chairmanship, together with the previous and subsequent Chairmanships, to facilitate a true national dialogue between the Belarusian authorities and representatives of the opposition and civil society. We underscore our call for the Belarusian authorities to implement the 2020 Moscow Mechanism report's recommendations. We also call on Belarus to make full, proper and meaningful use of the OSCE's institutions, bodies and mechanisms to help resolve the ongoing crisis.

Madam Chairperson,

In their previous statements to the Permanent Council, and now in their reply to our Vienna Mechanism letter, the delegation of Belarus has repeatedly claimed that the Belarusian authorities are open to dialogue. So far, those words have not been reflected in their actions and behaviours.

We yet again call on the Belarusian authorities to reconsider their current approach to this crisis. And we reconfirm our commitment to continue to work together to help resolve the current crisis for the sake of the Belarusian people.

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



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

PC.DEC/1419
18 November 2021

Original: ENGLISH

1345th Plenary Meeting
PC Journal No. 1345, Agenda item 4

**DECISION No. 1419
AMENDING OSCE FINANCIAL REGULATIONS**

The Permanent Council,

Acting in accordance with the relevant provisions of Financial Regulation 10.01,

Recalling Decision No. 705 (PC.DEC/705) of 1 December 2005 on the Common Regulatory Management System,

1. Takes note of the proposed revision to implement recommendation No. 5 of the Report of the External Auditor on the OSCE Financial Statements for 2020, as communicated under PC.ACMF/60/21;
2. Approves the enclosed amendment to the OSCE Financial Regulations as highlighted in the annex.

AMENDING OSCE FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

External audit report recommendation No. 5

In order to avoid any further ambiguity concerning the scope of his opinion on the OSCE's financial statements, the External Auditor recommends the Permanent Council to replace Article 7.02 (vi) of the Financial Regulation by a provision stating that, in addition to the five usual financial statements and related notes, segment reporting is to be provided, in compliance with established practices.

Amendment to the OSCE Financial Regulations

Please note that the amendment below is made only to reflect the recommendation of the External Auditor. Only those subparagraphs affected by this change are shown below.

Current text	Proposed revised text
<p>Regulation 7.02 – Content of the Annual Financial Statements</p> <p>(a) The annual financial statements shall contain:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) A statement of financial position; (ii) A statement of financial performance; (iii) A cash flow statement; (iv) A statement of changes in net assets; (v) A statement of comparison of budget and actuals; (vi) Segment reporting by Fund. <p>(b) The annual financial statements shall be accompanied by such other information as may be requested by the Permanent Council or deemed necessary or useful by the Secretary General.</p>	<p>Regulation 7.02 – Content of the Annual Financial Statements</p> <p>(a) The annual financial statements shall contain:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) A statement of financial position; (ii) A statement of financial performance; (iii) A cash flow statement; (iv) A statement of changes in net assets; (v) A statement of comparison of budget and actuals; <p>(b) The annual financial statements shall be accompanied by segment reporting by Fund and such other information as may be requested by the Permanent Council or deemed necessary or useful by the Secretary General.</p>



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

PC.DEC/1420
18 November 2021

Original: ENGLISH

1345th Plenary Meeting
PC Journal No. 1345, Agenda item 5

**DECISION No. 1420
FORWARDING OF A DRAFT AGENDA
TO THE MINISTERIAL COUNCIL**

The Permanent Council,

Decides to request the Chairperson of the Permanent Council to transmit to the Chairperson of the Ministerial Council a draft agenda for the Twenty-Eighth Meeting of the OSCE Ministerial Council.