
Chairmanship: Finland**744th PLENARY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL**

1. Date: Thursday, 11 December 2008

Opened: 10.05 a.m.

Closed: 11.55 a.m.

2. Chairperson: Mr. A. Turunen

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

Agenda item 1: REPORT BY THE HEAD OF THE HIGH-LEVEL
PLANNING GROUP

Chairperson, Head of the High-Level Planning Group (CIO.GAL/179/08 OSCE+), France-European Union (with the candidate countries Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey; the countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate countries Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia; the European Free Trade Association countries Iceland and Norway, members of the European Economic Area in alignment) (PC.DEL/1056/08), Azerbaijan (PC.DEL/1068/08 OSCE+), Russian Federation (PC.DEL/1061/08 OSCE+), United States of America (PC.DEL/1064/08), Armenia (PC.DEL/1062/08 OSCE+)

Agenda item 2: REVIEW OF CURRENT ISSUES

(a) *Current situation in Georgia:* Russian Federation (PC.DEL/1060/08 OSCE+), United States of America (PC.DEL/1067/08), Georgia (PC.DEL/1075/08)

(b) *Recent case of shooting at an OSCE vehicle in Georgia:* Director of the Conflict Prevention Centre, France-European Union (with the candidate countries Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey; the countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate countries Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro; the European Free Trade Association countries Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, members of the European Economic Area; as well as Moldova and

Ukraine, in alignment) (PC.DEL/1057/08), United States of America (PC.DEL/1069/08), Georgia, Chairperson

- (c) *Search of the St. Petersburg premises of the organization Memorial:* France-European Union (PC.DEL/1058/08), United States of America (PC.DEL/1065/08), Russian Federation

Agenda item 3: REPORT ON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE
 CHAIRMAN-IN-OFFICE
 Chairperson

Agenda item 4: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL

Outstanding adoption of the Unified Budget for 2009: Director of the Conflict Prevention Centre

Agenda item 5: ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- (a) *Extension of the mandate of the OSCE Office in Minsk:* France-European Union (with the candidate countries Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey; the countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate countries Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro; as well as Moldova, in alignment) (Annex 1), United States of America (Annex 2), Canada (also on behalf of Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland) (Annex 3), Russian Federation (Annex 4), Belarus
- (b) *European Union initiatives in Central Asia:* France-European Union
- (c) *Proposal by the United States of America for a draft decision on OSCE activities in Georgia:* United States of America (PC.DEL/1055/08 Restr.), Chairperson, Russian Federation, France-European Union
- (d) *Matters of protocol:* Dean of the Permanent Council (Liechtenstein), Italy, Bosnia and Herzegovina (PC.DEL/1072/08), Chairperson
- (e) *Organizational matters:* Chairperson (CIO.INF/64/08)

4. Next meeting:

Thursday, 18 December 2008, at 10 a.m., in the Neuer Saal



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

PC.JOUR/744
11 December 2008
Annex 1

Original: ENGLISH

744th Plenary Meeting

PC Journal No. 744, Agenda item 5(a)

**STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF FRANCE
(ON BEHALF OF THE EUROPEAN UNION)**

With reference to the interpretative statement by the delegation of Belarus in connection with the Permanent Council's decision to extend the mandate of the OSCE Office in Minsk the European Union would like to state the following:

The EU does not share the view of the delegation of Belarus that the OSCE Office in Minsk "should focus primary attention on transferring its tasks and experience to Belarusian State institutions". To narrow the focus of the work of the Office in this way is certainly not in line with its mandate. The EU wishes to stress again that OSCE missions should be able to implement programmes and projects in all areas defined in their mandates, thus assisting the host governments to implement their OSCE commitments.

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

The candidate countries Turkey, Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*, the countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate countries Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro, as well as the Republic of Moldova, align themselves with this statement.

* Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.



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

PC.JOUR/744
11 December 2008
Annex 2

Original: ENGLISH

744th Plenary Meeting
PC Journal No. 744, Agenda item 5(a)

**STATEMENT BY
THE DELEGATION OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson,

Our government does not agree with the interpretative statement that was made by the delegation of Belarus with relation to PC Decision No. 874 extending the mandate of the OSCE Office in Minsk. The United States government believes that one of the greatest strengths of this organization is the flexibility and dynamic action of our field missions under the political direction of the Chairman-in-Office. The OSCE's field missions are given the mandate to undertake broad programme responsibilities, and not to have individual projects micro-managed. The heads of mission should be free to develop projects based on their overall mandate, and to operate in all of the OSCE's interdependent areas of work. That is the strength of this organization, and that is the added value of our missions. Mission-reporting should be honest; it should reflect the best judgment of the head of mission and should not be subject to censorship or editing by other actors.

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

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.



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

PC.JOUR/744
11 December 2008
Annex 3

Original: ENGLISH

744th Plenary Meeting

PC Journal No. 744, Agenda item 5(a)

**STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF CANADA
(ALSO ON BEHALF OF ICELAND, LIECHTENSTEIN, NORWAY
AND SWITZERLAND)**

Mr. Chairperson,

I am taking the floor on behalf of Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, Switzerland and Canada on this discussion in the Permanent Council to outline our position with respect to OSCE field missions.

We believe that OSCE missions and their field activities are the front line of this Organization's work. They give this organization an active presence in participating States that require assistance and are the vehicle through which OSCE decisions are translated into concrete action and assistance. The mandates, composition, size, duration and operation of OSCE missions and their field activities are varied and based on the needs in the participating State in question.

We firmly believe that OSCE field missions should be able to implement programmes and projects in all areas defined in their mandates, thus assisting the host governments to implement their OSCE commitments.

We do not accept any interpretation that would be a narrowing of these field missions mandates.

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/744
11 December 2008
Annex 4

ENGLISH
Original: RUSSIAN

744th Plenary Meeting
PC Journal No. 744, Agenda item 5(a)

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

In connection with the decision adopted at the meeting of the Permanent Council on 27 November to extend the mandate of the OSCE Office in Minsk until the end of 2009, we should like to make the following comment.

We assume that in carrying out its work the OSCE Office in Minsk will strictly adhere to its existing mandate. In accordance with this mandate, the Office is called upon to focus priority attention on project activities, which must in turn be implemented with the consent of the Government of the Republic of Belarus and be carried out in a transparent and impartial manner in accordance with the country's national laws. The ultimate goal of this work must be to strengthen the national potential of the Republic of Belarus to resolve those problems that are the focus of the Office's attention on its own. This approach, which applies to all OSCE field operations, is enshrined in the Charter for European Security.

We request that this statement be attached to the journal of today's meeting.