

176th Plenary Meeting

PC Journal No. 176, Agenda item 4

DECISION No. 241

The Permanent Council,

Recalling Decision No. 4 of the Sixth Ministerial Council Meeting, which recognized the need to strengthen and increase the efficiency of the OSCE implementation meetings on Human Dimension issues, and

Underlining the need for closer integration of Human Dimension issues in the activities of the Permanent Council,

- Recommends to the Ministerial Council that it adopt the attached modalities for OSCE meetings on Human Dimension issues.

Modalities for OSCE Meetings on Human Dimension Issues

I. Human Dimension Implementation Meetings

The following modalities amend and complement the provisions of Chapter VI, paragraph (9), of the Helsinki Document 1992,

1. Every year in which a Review Conference does not take place, the ODIHR will organize a meeting (Human Dimension Implementation Meeting) of all participating States at its seat to review implementation of OSCE Human Dimension commitments. Such meetings will last ten working days, unless otherwise decided by participating States. Each meeting will start with a short plenary session. As a rule, the first eight days will be devoted to discussions in working groups, while the last two days will be reserved for plenary sessions.
2. Participating States will endeavour to be represented at such meetings, in particular at the closing plenary sessions, at a high level by those responsible for shaping their policies regarding Human Dimension issues. The High Commissioner on National Minorities, the Representative on Freedom of the Media and the Director of the ODIHR are encouraged to participate in such meetings.
3. All participants will have equal access to the list of speakers to allow them to make their contributions on each agenda item addressed by the meeting. Their contribution under each item should not exceed ten minutes. In addition, participating States are entitled to exercise their right of reply in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 87 (Chapter 6) of the Final Recommendations of the Helsinki Consultations.
4. The ODIHR will be responsible for the distribution of written contributions and information material made available before the meeting, which it will endeavour to circulate well in advance for consideration by participants.
5. Following discussions in the working groups, the rapporteurs will prepare reports on the proceedings to be presented to the last plenary session of the meeting.
6. The Chairman-in-Office with the assistance of the Director of the ODIHR, taking into account the proceedings and the key substantive concerns raised at the previous Human Dimension Implementation Meeting or Review Conference, will prepare a list for the Permanent Council of themes that might be considered in the context of the following year's Human Dimension Seminar(s) and of Supplementary Human Dimension Meetings.

The remaining provisions of Chapter VI of the Helsinki Document 1992 will continue to apply in their entirety.

II. Supplementary Human Dimension Meetings

1. The Chairman-in-Office will organize each year in the framework of the Permanent Council, as a rule, three informal Supplementary Human Dimension Meetings lasting one working day in order to discuss key substantive concerns raised at the previous Human Dimension Implementation Meeting or Review Conference and to ensure follow-up for them as well as for the OSCE Human Dimension seminars.
2. These meetings will be held in Vienna. With the consent of the host State, they may also be organized elsewhere, provided that their impact would be increased thereby.
3. The topics to be discussed at such meetings will be established by the Chairman-in-Office after extensive consultations with the participating States, as well as the High Commissioner on National Minorities, the Representative on Freedom of the Media and the Director of the ODIHR.
4. A schedule of meetings, indicating prospective themes for these meetings and their suggested dates, will be presented to the Permanent Council by the Chairman-in-Office as soon as possible after the completion of these consultations and no later than the end of the first quarter of each year. This would furthermore provide sufficient time for visa applications from participants to be processed in a timely fashion.
5. The agenda of each meeting will be made available at least 30 days before it takes place, unless otherwise decided by participating States.
6. The ODIHR will assist the Chairman-in-Office in preparing such meetings. The resources of the Secretariat will be drawn upon for logistical support.
7. The partners for co-operation and the Mediterranean partners for co-operation will be invited to attend such meetings. They will be invited to contribute to meetings with respect to their co-operation and links with the OSCE in the relevant field of the Human Dimension.
8. International organizations having relevant experience in the field of the Human Dimension will be invited to participate in such meetings.
9. All non-governmental organizations having relevant experience in the field of the Human Dimension will be invited to participate in such meetings, subject to the provisions contained in Chapter IV, paragraph (16), of the Helsinki Document 1992, following registration with the ODIHR.
10. The Chairman-in-Office will provide the Permanent Council with a presentation on the proceedings of each meeting.
11. The ODIHR will be tasked with compiling statements made at these meetings and distributing them in advance of the next Human Dimension Implementation Meeting or Review Conference.

III. General issues

1. The participating States will endeavour to ensure appropriate participation in OSCE meetings devoted to Human Dimension issues, particularly from recently admitted participating States, including from the NGO community.
2. Partners for co-operation, Mediterranean partners for co-operation, international organizations and institutions, as well as non-governmental organizations are invited to ensure appropriate participation in OSCE meetings devoted to Human Dimension issues.
3. Further contributions to the Voluntary Fund to foster the integration of recently admitted participating States are encouraged in order to promote appropriate participation in OSCE meetings devoted to Human Dimension issues.