
Chairmanship: Sweden**1318th PLENARY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL**

1. Date: Thursday, 3 June 2021 (in the Neuer Saal and via video teleconference)

Opened: 10 a.m.
Suspended: 1 p.m.
Resumed: 3 p.m.
Closed: 5.30 p.m.

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

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

Agenda item 1: REPORT BY THE HIGH COMMISSIONER ON NATIONAL MINORITIES

Chairperson, High Commissioner on National Minorities (HCNM.GAL/3/21 Corr.1), Portugal-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, Georgia and Moldova, in alignment) (PC.DEL/874/21), Russian Federation (PC.DEL/854/21), United States of America (PC.DEL/847/21), Turkey (PC.DEL/880/21 OSCE+), United Kingdom, Hungary (PC.DEL/848/21 OSCE+), Kazakhstan (PC.DEL/857/21 OSCE+), Kyrgyzstan, Belarus (PC.DEL/852/21 OSCE+), Ukraine (PC.DEL/861/21), Azerbaijan (PC.DEL/850/21 OSCE+), Norway (PC.DEL/849/21), Georgia (PC.DEL/878/21 OSCE+), Uzbekistan, Bosnia and Herzegovina (PC.DEL/863/21 OSCE+), Switzerland (PC.DEL/877/21 OSCE+), Serbia (Annex 1) (Annex 2), Holy See (PC.DEL/851/21 OSCE+), Croatia (Annex 3), Turkmenistan, Canada, North Macedonia (PC.DEL/866/21 OSCE+), Latvia (PC.DEL/862/21), Estonia (PC.DEL/853/21 Restr.), Armenia (PC.DEL/873/21), Tajikistan (PC.DEL/855/21 OSCE+)

Agenda item 2: DECISION ON THE DATES AND AGENDA OF THE 2021
ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL DIMENSION
IMPLEMENTATION MEETING

Chairperson

Decision: The Permanent Council adopted Decision No. 1403 (PC.DEC/1403) on the dates and agenda of the 2021 Economic and Environmental Dimension Implementation Meeting, the text of which is appended to this journal.

Agenda item 3: DECISION ON THE DATES AND VENUE OF THE 2021
OSCE ASIAN CONFERENCE

Chairperson

Decision: The Permanent Council adopted Decision No. 1404 (PC.DEC/1404) on the dates and venue of the 2021 OSCE Asian Conference, the text of which is appended to this journal.

Agenda item 4: DECISION ON THE AGENDA, TIMETABLE AND
ORGANIZATIONAL MODALITIES OF THE 2021 OSCE
ASIAN CONFERENCE

Chairperson

Decision: The Permanent Council adopted Decision No. 1405 (PC.DEC/1405) on the agenda, timetable and organizational modalities of the 2021 OSCE Asian Conference, the text of which is appended to this journal.

Albania

Agenda item 5: REVIEW OF CURRENT ISSUES

Chairperson

- (a) *Russia's ongoing aggression against Ukraine and illegal occupation of Crimea:* Ukraine (PC.DEL/858/21), Portugal-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 and Moldova, in alignment) (PC.DEL/875/21), Canada, Turkey (PC.DEL/870/21 OSCE+), Switzerland (PC.DEL/872/21 OSCE+), United States of America (PC.DEL/856/21), United Kingdom
- (b) *Deteriorating situation in Ukraine and continued non-implementation by the Ukrainian authorities of the Minsk agreements:* Russian Federation (PC.DEL/860/21)
- (c) *Statement by the Co-Chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group issued on 28 May 2021:* France (also on behalf of the Russian Federation and the United

States of America), Portugal-European Union (with the candidate countries Albania, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia; the European Free Trade Association countries Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, members of the European Economic Area; as well as Andorra, in alignment) (PC.DEL/876/21), United Kingdom, Canada, United States of America (PC.DEL/859/21), Azerbaijan (Annex 4) (Annex 5), Armenia (Annex 6), France (Annex 7)

- (d) *Update on the investigation of criminal acts by Armenian armed forces in Azerbaijan: Azerbaijan (Annex 8)*

Agenda item 6: REPORT ON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE
 CHAIRPERSON-IN-OFFICE

- (a) *Briefing on the priority of the Swedish OSCE Chairpersonship for June 2021: Chairperson*
- (b) *Seminar on “Conflict resolution within the OSCE: Opportunities of the OSCE Court of Conciliation and Arbitration”, held in Vienna and via video teleconference on 1 June 2021: Chairperson*
- (c) *Second Preparatory Meeting for the 29th OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum on “Promoting comprehensive security, stability and sustainable development in the OSCE area through women’s economic empowerment”, to be held via video teleconference on 10 and 11 June 2021: Chairperson*
- (d) *Ambassadorial social event to be held in Vienna on 22 June 2021: Chairperson*
- (e) *Ambassadorial retreat to be held near Vienna on 13 July 2021: Chairperson*

Agenda item 7: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL

- (a) *Visit by the Secretary General to Ukraine from 26 to 30 May 2021: Secretary General (SEC.GAL/76/21 OSCE+), United Kingdom*
- (b) *Meetings between the Secretary General and the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Denmark, H. E. Mr. J. Kofod, and the heads of the OSCE institutions and the Secretary General of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, held in Denmark between 31 May and 1 June 2021: Secretary General (SEC.GAL/76/21 OSCE+)*
- (c) *Update on the COVID-19 situation across the OSCE executive structures: Secretary General (SEC.GAL/76/21 OSCE+), Albania*
- (d) *Activities relating to young people; and meeting of the OSCE Group of Friends of Youth and Security, to be held in Vienna and via video teleconference on 4 June 2021: Secretary General*

- (e) *Participation of the Secretary General via video teleconference on 3 June 2021 in the 24th St. Petersburg International Economic Forum, being held from 2 to 5 June 2021: Secretary General (SEC.GAL/76/21 OSCE+)*

Agenda item 8: ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- (a) *Parliamentary elections in Iceland, to be held on 25 September 2021: Iceland (PC.DEL/881/21 OSCE+)*
- (b) *Adoption of a law on amendments to the electoral code of Uzbekistan: Uzbekistan*

4. Next meeting:

Thursday, 10 June 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/1318

3 June 2021

Annex 1

Original: ENGLISH

1318th Plenary Meeting

PC Journal No. 1318, Agenda item 1

**STATEMENT BY
THE DELEGATION OF SERBIA**

Thank you, Madam Chairperson,

Serbia aligns itself with the statement delivered by the European Union. However, allow me to add a few remarks in a national capacity.

Serbia warmly welcomes the High Commissioner on National Minorities, Ambassador Kairat Abdrakhmanov, and thanks him for his report.

The Office of the High Commissioner offers valuable support to participating States in addressing challenges and implementing OSCE commitments related to protecting and promoting national minorities' rights and to facilitating the integration of diverse societies. We support the role of the High Commissioner on National Minorities in monitoring new risks and trends and in providing early warning and early action to prevent ethnic tensions from developing into conflicts.

We commend the High Commissioner's insistence on a constructive and depoliticized approach to resolving national minority issues within and between States and on sharing examples of good practices in managing inter-ethnic diversity. We are thankful to the High Commissioner for referring to Vojvodina as an example of positive bilateral co-operation on national minority issues and we are ready to share our positive practices with other participating States.

Allow me to also highlight the following:

We are deeply devoted to the protection and constant improvement of individual and collective rights of our more than 20 national minority communities and are constantly advancing our institutional and legal framework and its effective implementation. This is an important aspect of our commitment to peace and stability in the region, to good neighbourly relations, and to reconciliation policies.

In 2020, the new Government of Serbia established the Ministry for Human and Minority Rights and Social Dialogue. Together with other relevant ministries, as well as the Co-ordination Body for Presevo, Bujanovac and Medvedja, the Social Inclusion and Poverty

Reduction Unit, and the Co-ordination Body for Monitoring Social Inclusion of Roma, the new Ministry is continuously working to promote minority rights.

National Councils of national minorities advise State bodies on issues important for the exercise of their collective rights. The Councils are elected directly, which makes Serbia one of the few States that thus provide conditions for the election of representatives of national minorities. There are currently 23 national councils operating in Serbia, including the Union of Jewish Municipalities. We are proud that the whole system of minority protection is based on the principle of free self-identification and the right of minorities to choose their own representatives.

Furthermore, the 2020 amendments to the relevant laws provide for the distribution of mandates for national minority parties or minority lists regardless of the three per cent threshold, and furthermore for counting each vote for minorities as 1.35 of a vote, which makes it easier for minority parties and coalitions to win seats in the National Assembly.

Serbia particularly encourages tolerance and intercultural dialogue in education, culture and information, based on the promotion of mutual respect, understanding and co-operation among people, regardless of their ethnic, cultural, linguistic or religious identity.

In order to support inclusiveness and stability we continuously promote the learning of the Serbian language while at the same time protecting the languages of national minorities. While complete education is provided in eight minority languages, the programme of learning the mother tongue with elements of national culture is organized in 16 languages. The official use of 11 minority languages and scripts is guaranteed. In addition, every year the Ministry of Culture and Information publishes a call for the co-financing of projects in the field of public information in national minorities' languages, which not only provides for the basic right to information in the mother tongue, but also encourages the media to produce programmes dedicated to preserving the cultural and linguistic identity of national minorities. Last year, around 70 projects in 17 languages were co-financed in this way.

Madam Chairperson,

We strongly believe that the promotion of minority communities' rights is beneficial to stability and prosperity throughout the whole OSCE area. Therefore, it is important that all participating States translate the existing recommendations into practice and make good use of the expertise provided by the High Commissioner and his office.

In concluding, we would like to wish Ambassador Abdrakhmanov every success in his future work and fruitful discussions during his forthcoming visit to Serbia.



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

PC.JOUR/1318

3 June 2021

Annex 2

Original: ENGLISH

1318th Plenary Meeting

PC Journal No. 1318, Agenda item 1

**STATEMENT BY
THE DELEGATION OF SERBIA**

Madam Chairperson,

Having heard the intervention of the distinguished Ambassador of Croatia, I feel obliged to point out how interesting it is that Croatia chose this particular tone and approach, which is based on false premises, particularly given the treatment of the Serbian community in Croatia.

As far as the Bunjevci community is concerned, I repeat that Serbia is proud that its whole system of minority protection is based on the principle of free self-identification and the right of minorities to choose their own representatives. Neither Belgrade nor anybody else can tell its citizens how to declare themselves, nor can they tell members of the autochthonic Bunjevci community to declare themselves as Croats just because Zagreb would prefer them to. We respect the Bunjevci and Croatian minorities equally, as we do all others.

A word on the official use of the Serbian language and script in Croatia. The threshold for the official use of national minority languages and scripts in Croatia is 30 per cent. In Serbia it is 15 per cent. There are municipalities in Croatia in which 27 per cent of the population are Serbs, who are thus not permitted to use their language and script in official communications. Even where this possibility exists, signs in Cyrillic script are viciously smashed and defaced. Apparently, even the script is intolerable to Croatia.

Allow me now to quote the statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia of 7 May:

“Building good-neighbourly relations between states implies, first of all, the ability to refrain from inflammatory rhetoric In that sense, the Croatian diplomacy has departed from benevolent and friendly restraint.

If we are to talk about the position of the Croatian national minority in Serbia using the language of argumentation, we will remind that last year Serbia bought Ban Jelačić's house and handed it over to the Croatian National Council, to which the Serbian Government also provided quality premises in the centre of Belgrade.

In the field of the right to education and fostering cultural identity, we contributed to the preservation of the Croatian class in primary school in Bački Breg, expanding the profiles in Croatian language schools, establishing the lectorate in Croatian, supported the “Jelačić” Association from Petrovaradin, reconstruction of the House of Culture in Tavankut, etc.

When it comes to the political representation of Croats in the institutions and authorities of the Republic of Serbia, parallels with Croatia cannot be made, because neither in number nor in percentage can comparisons be made between the Serb minority in Croatia and the Croat in Serbia, but Serbia is open to, in cooperation with the Croatian National Council, make well-intentioned and friendly steps in order to make concessions to Croats in that area as well.

In light of the recent threats to Serbs in Borovo and the chanting of ‘Kill a Serb’ and ‘Oh, Croatia, mother, we will slaughter Serbs’, we must emphasize something like that is inconceivable in Serbia and that anyone who dared to threaten our fellow citizens of Croatian nationality in a similar way was most drastically sanctioned.”

We invite the High Commissioner to visit Croatia, talk to the Serb representatives, and assess the situation of minorities in Croatia for himself, just as he will be doing in talking with the representatives of various minorities in Serbia. No participating State should be exempt from the scrutiny of the High Commissioner on National Minorities or of the OSCE.



1318th Plenary Meeting
PC Journal No. 1318, Agenda item 1

**STATEMENT BY
THE DELEGATION OF CROATIA**

Croatia aligns itself fully with the statement made by the European Union and would like to make the following remarks in its national capacity.

Distinguished High Commissioner on National Minorities,

We welcome your intention to visit Serbia and to engage with a range of interlocutors and observe first hand the situation of national minorities there.

Unfortunately, the situation in Serbia is far from the positive picture that you presented in your report, particularly where you refer to Vojvodina as “a model of how to accommodate the interests of national minorities and an example of positive bilateral co-operation on national minority issues”.

This is certainly not the case when it comes to the Croatian minority in Vojvodina and we would therefore like to draw your attention to several key issues:

- The Serbian authorities continue to interfere with the identity of the Croatian community in Serbia and to actively promote divisions between Bunjevci, who are effectively split into two groups within the Croatian minority. Serbia provides significant political, cultural, media, scientific and other support to that part of the Bunjevci community which denies its affiliation to the Croatian nation, while at the same time ignoring the interests of the remaining vast majority of Bunjevci who consider themselves part of the Croatian nation.
- Another issue of great concern is hate speech. Permanent anti-Croat sentiment is nourished in the public sphere by the use of pejorative terms and negative stereotyping, but also by the denial of war crimes and the glorification of convicted war criminals. This has devastating consequences for the Croatian minority, directly affecting the attitude to the local Croat community in Serbia and leading to threats and verbal attacks against Croats. It is most worrying that hate speech is not only ignored, trivialized and condoned, but also actively used and promoted by politicians and the media.

- A further issue of concern is the under-representation of the Croatian minority in decision-making processes and public affairs. This problem continues, despite the fact that remedying it is an obligation emanating directly from the 2004 bilateral agreement between Croatia and Serbia on the protection of national minorities, which provides for political representation at all levels – local, regional and State level, including the national parliament.

We invite you to address these and other issues of importance for the Croatian minority in Serbia, and to discuss them also with the representatives of the Croatian minority when you visit the country.

Respect for and protection of the rights of the Croatian national minority in Serbia is essential to bilateral relations between Croatia and Serbia, and it is also one of the key political criteria in Serbia's accession negotiations with the European Union.

Regarding Montenegro, another country with a significant Croatian minority, we fully agree with you on the importance of maintaining effective policies and institutions and ensuring the continuity of positive inter-ethnic relations. We are looking forward to your report after visiting the country.

Finally, much as we commend your interest in Bosnia and Herzegovina, it is vitally important to stress that neither Bosniaks, nor Serbs nor Croats are national minorities but constituent peoples throughout the State territory, as laid down by the Constitution.

With that general principle in mind, we can discuss the issue of education that you mention in your report. We wish to emphasize that addressing segregation should not come at the expense of everyone's right to receive education in the language of their choice. All three constituent peoples in Bosnia and Herzegovina must be able to exercise their right to equal educational opportunities in all three official languages, in accordance with the applicable national legislation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Furthermore, the educational system should also strongly promote multiculturalism, reconciliation and social inclusion.



1318th Plenary Meeting

PC Journal No. 1318, Agenda item 5(c)

**STATEMENT BY
THE DELEGATION OF AZERBAIJAN**

Madam Chairperson,

We took note of the statements made by the delegations of France, the European Union and seven aligned countries, the United Kingdom, Canada and the United States of America. The Republic of Azerbaijan has repeatedly stated its position on the issues mentioned in the recent statement of the Co-Chairs of the Minsk Group, including in the commentary by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan dated 31 May in response to the statement of the Co-Chairs.

In accordance with the joint statement signed by the leaders of Azerbaijan, Armenia and Russia on 10 November 2020 the Russian peacekeeping forces deployed in certain areas of Azerbaijan together with the Turkish-Russian Monitoring Centre are observing the implementation by the sides of the trilateral statement. The awkward attempts to limit the agreements reached between Azerbaijan and Armenia to a mere ceasefire are beyond comprehension. No matter how many times the Co-Chairs and others will refer to them as “ceasefire”, this will not alter the basic reality that the trilateral statements are not simply a “ceasefire declaration”, but contain a number of other important provisions that go beyond a mere cessation of hostilities and are aimed at building peace in the region.

With regard to the repeated calls to release so-called prisoners of war and other detainees, we would like to remind that Azerbaijan has a solid track record of being throughout the conflict in favour of exchanging all prisoners of war on an all-for-all basis. However, we reiterate that those forces deployed by Armenia to the territory of Azerbaijan with the aim of engaging in sabotage and terrorist activities in the period after the signing of the trilateral statement of 10 November are not and cannot be considered prisoners of war in accordance with international humanitarian law and are liable under the criminal law of the Republic of Azerbaijan. The investigation of unlawful acts by Armenian servicemen is ongoing and we urge the Co-Chairs and other participating States to respect the rule of law and refrain from interfering with due process.

We once again call on participating States, including the Co-Chair countries, to refrain from making statements that may further complicate an already sensitive situation. Such statements can in no way facilitate a peaceful solution of the issues, but, on the contrary, can produce the opposite effect by encouraging Armenia to revanchism. Recent

provocations, including the infiltration of 40 servicemen of the armed forces of Armenia into the territory of Azerbaijan in the direction of Armudlu village of the Kalbajar region of Azerbaijan on 1 June 2021 as well as the entering of the two reconnaissance-sabotage groups of Armenia's armed forces into the territory of Azerbaijan in the direction of the Yukhari Ayrim village of the Kalbajar district on 27 May and opening fire at the positions of Azerbaijan on the night of 27–28 May near the Ashagi Buzgov settlement in the Babek district of the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic of Azerbaijan, hundreds of kilometres away from the former conflict zone, wounding serviceman Elkhan Muradov is a direct result of provocations by the Armenian side, which, apparently, felt emboldened by the statements of some participating States. At a time, when landmines planted by Armenia in the liberated territories of Azerbaijan pose a threat to human life on a daily basis, Armenia's refusal to provide information on the location of landmines, as well as attempts to plant new mines in the area, are deplorable.

These provocations by Armenia represent a clear violation of the trilateral statement of 10 November 2020, the first clause of which envisages a complete ceasefire and a cessation of all hostilities in the former conflict zone. Against this background, calling to release Armenian servicemen, including six members of the sabotage groups recently disarmed and detained while planting mines and engaging in other sabotage activities against Azerbaijan in peacetime without even condemning this outrageous act will only further aggravate the situation and encourage Armenia to hold on to its unconstructive position. Before proposing to exchange detainees, the Co-Chairs should at least pay attention to the reasons for the detention of these servicemen and urge Armenia to refrain from such actions. This is not a hide-and-seek game. Those detained will be brought to justice.

With regard to the latest incidents at the Armenia-Azerbaijan State border, we reiterate that Azerbaijan is committed to consolidating peace, security and stability in the region as well as normalizing inter-State relations with Armenia based on the unconditional respect for each other's sovereignty, territorial integrity and the inviolability of internationally recognized borders, and urges Armenia to reciprocate by adopting a similarly constructive position. Border delimitation and demarcation is a bilateral issue and we proceed from the understanding that all questions, including issues related to the demarcation and delimitation process should be dealt with in strict compliance with the norms and principles of international law. To this end, we support the calls of the international community for the demarcation and delimitation of the border between the two States and welcome the proposal of the Russian Federation to establish a trilateral commission to begin this process. The best manifestation of Armenia's declared commitment to resolve the border issue peacefully will be reciprocating and supporting the proposal to establish a commission to this end. So far, we see only futile attempts by Armenia to increase tensions along the border and internationalize the issue. Armenia bears full responsibility for any escalation in the region.

As far as the access of humanitarian organizations to the conflict-affected territories of Azerbaijan is concerned, Azerbaijan proceeds from the norms and principles of international law as well as the international standards set by the United Nations with regard to the provision of international humanitarian aid. Activities of all international organizations in the conflict-affected territories of Azerbaijan must be conducted exclusively by the consent of Azerbaijan and implemented in co-ordination with the relevant structures of Azerbaijan. Their access to these territories can only be ensured through the territory of Azerbaijan. Such an approach is fully in line with the relevant United Nations General Assembly resolution.

With regard to the reference by the European Union delegation and seven aligned countries to the need to jointly agree upon rehabilitation and stabilization activities carried out in Azerbaijan, I wish to inquire from the European Union delegation with whom Azerbaijan has to negotiate and agree upon rehabilitation activities, and why do you believe that Azerbaijan has to agree on rehabilitation activities realized on its sovereign territory? I would really appreciate the answer. Otherwise, I would consider it as a technical mistake made by the 27 Member States with regard to Azerbaijan.

Azerbaijan is currently channelling efforts to sustaining peace, rehabilitation and reconstruction activities and the return of internally displaced persons. These are the absolute priorities for Azerbaijan in the post-conflict period. The Government of Azerbaijan has already identified and is actively engaged in the implementation of the comprehensive post-conflict rehabilitation and reconstruction measures on its sovereign territory and invited its partners to assist us in this endeavour. If the European Union is interested in rendering practical support to Azerbaijan in this process, it is most welcome to do so.

And finally, since the current issue was raised by the delegation of France and in light of the recent statements made by the President of this country in the meeting with the acting Prime Minister of Armenia, we took note of the revelations that France has a special sympathy for Armenia. But as a Co-Chair of the OSCE Minsk Group, this country must maintain neutrality and impartiality. Otherwise, France cannot claim any role as mediator.

We have repeatedly stated that at the current post-conflict stage there is a need for stronger OSCE support for the full implementation of the trilateral statements and practical engagement with the sides in order to seize a unique opportunity to sustain peace and stability in the region. Azerbaijan is engaged in comprehensive post-conflict rehabilitation and reconstruction efforts and invites its partners to assist in this endeavour. We stress once again that the role of the Co-Chairs of the Minsk Group in the current context in our region depends on their support to the full implementation of the trilateral statements as well as their respective contributions to building peace in the region. Attempts to impose obsolete narratives based on false assumptions that proved wrong will not be productive. We still expect that the OSCE Minsk Group and its Co-Chairs will demonstrate that they are part of the solution and are capable of much more than issuing biased statements.

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

Thank you, Madam Chairperson.



1318th Plenary Meeting

PC Journal No. 1318, Agenda item 5(c)

**STATEMENT BY
THE DELEGATION OF AZERBAIJAN**

Madam Chairperson,

The delegation of Azerbaijan thanks the delegation of France for clarifying its position as a co-chairing country of the OSCE Minsk Group. We reiterate that Azerbaijan values the contribution by all the Co-Chairs of the Minsk Group who are supposed to represent the Organization in their mediation activities to the best of their capacity in an impartial, neutral and unbiased manner. We hope that the intervention by the delegation of France brings clarity to the matter and taking it into account, we would consider the recent revelations made in Paris as not adequately reflecting the position of France as a Co-Chair country.

As regards the statement by the Armenian delegation, it once again invoked a number of elements effectively protesting to the signature of the Armenian Prime Minister put under the trilateral statements. This must be of concern not only for Azerbaijan, but also for the OSCE and its participating States as a whole. The silence by the OSCE encourages the Armenian delegation to insist on its obsolete narratives, keep rejecting a unique chance to consolidate peace in our region and normalize inter-State relations with Azerbaijan. There is no alternative to capitalizing on this unique opportunity for peace and stability in the region to take hold. If the Armenian delegation still claims that the implementation of the trilateral statements is not the basis for peace and stability, then, I wonder, which alternative does it consider?

Such a non-constructive approach of Armenia poses a real problem for the OSCE, its Minsk Group and Co-Chairs. By not looking into this problem and adequately assessing the implications, the OSCE becomes hostage of this position and devalues itself of the potential to contribute to peace and security in the region. It is not a secret that Azerbaijan is unhappy with the approaches currently pursued by the Minsk Group Co-Chairs. The Armenian delegation explicitly protests to the compliance with the trilateral statements, while the Co-Chairs turn a blind eye on this. If the mediation format does not take due account of the new reality, if it sticks to three-decade old narratives disregarding the drastic changes on the ground, then we – as the Organization – are losing a sense of reality. That is not a blow for Azerbaijan, but for the OSCE it undoubtedly represents a gradual loss of the Organization's role in the region. It is an outright mistake to view the entire OSCE through the prism of the

Minsk Group and its Co-Chairs. And this must be rectified if the Organization wants to preserve its role in the processes going on in the region.

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

Thank you, Madam Chairperson.



1318th Plenary Meeting

PC Journal No. 1318, Agenda item 5(c)

**STATEMENT BY
THE DELEGATION OF ARMENIA**

Madam Chairperson,

Let me start by thanking the delegation of France for having raised this current issue entitled “Statement by the Co-Chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group issued on 28 May”. We also thank the delegations for their constructive remarks and at the same time take note of the statements made by other delegations on this issue.

In their statement of 28 May, the Co-Chairs referred to, among other things, the “detention of six Armenian soldiers on May 27” and called for “the release of all prisoners of war and other detainees on an all-for-all basis”.

We welcome this more specific and targeted call by the Co-Chairs urging Azerbaijan to release all Armenian prisoners of war, including the six Armenian soldiers abducted from the sovereign territory of Armenia, who continue to remain in Azerbaijani captivity in flagrant violation of all norms and principles of international humanitarian law. We note the Co-Chairs’ emphasis on the “obligation to treat detainees in accordance with international humanitarian law” and their call to “lift all restrictions on humanitarian access to Nagorno-Karabakh immediately”.

We fully agree with the Co-Chairs on the principle that the use or threat of force to resolve any dispute, including disputes related to demarcation and delimitation, is unacceptable. Moreover, such behaviour seriously undermines the fundamental principles of the OSCE.

We once again reiterate that the process of delimitation and demarcation is not an exercise to be conducted through the use of force, infiltration across borders in various directions up to five kilometres, or the attempt to seize a significant portion of borderline territories but, rather, a political and legal process that requires first of all stability and security and, of course, an environment of mutual trust. While numerous OSCE participating States have not completed the process of delimitation and demarcation, they do not use this fact as a pretext to infiltrate another State’s territory with thousands of troops. Therefore, we consider the claims that field commanders and military personnel may somehow be engaged in delimitation and demarcation activities, or may be authorized or may have been tasked to

carry out such activities, as preposterous and as attempts to justify these blatant acts of aggression and clear violation of Armenia's territorial integrity.

Unfortunately, we have also seen some States using references to delimitation and demarcation as a convenient excuse for their indifference and ambivalent stance. We would like to once again draw their attention to the seriousness of the situation and to the fact that only principled and firm positions can prevent its further aggravation.

Armenia reiterates its readiness to continue efforts to resolve this situation through political and diplomatic means. In this regard, we believe that there is a need for more resolute and effective measures, given that Azerbaijan continues to ignore all the calls and efforts of the international community and is undertaking new provocative actions on a daily basis, such as, to name just a few, the continued illegal presence of Azerbaijani armed forces in the Gegharkunik and Syunik provinces of Armenia, the killing and abduction of Armenian servicemen on the sovereign territory of Armenia, intimidation and attacks on residents of the border villages of Armenia, and mock trials of Armenian prisoners of war.

We have also observed that Azerbaijan is trying to link its current infiltration into the sovereign territory of Armenia with the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict in a clear attempt to impose its perception of the status quo upon the Armenian side. This will not work. Under no circumstances will any government of Armenia cease to support the people of Nagorno-Karabakh in the exercise of their inherent right to self-determination.

Through its actions, Azerbaijan is continuing to derail the political process under the auspices of the Co-Chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group, despite the latter's numerous calls for it to be reactivated.

We also would like to use this opportunity to once again call on the OSCE and the Co-Chairs of the Minsk Group to take concrete steps to deter Azerbaijan from this aggressive behaviour and to put additional pressure on Baku to immediately and unconditionally release all Armenian prisoners of war and civilian hostages from Azerbaijani captivity and withdraw its armed forces from the sovereign territory of Armenia. I believe those acts constitute the minimum that needs to be done in order to create an environment for meaningful dialogue.

Madam Chairperson,

The realities created by the use of force cannot be legitimate. Occupation of the territories of Nagorno-Karabakh, war crimes, ethnic cleansing, threats and aggressive posturing – these things cannot become the basis for a lasting and sustainable settlement of the conflict. The trilateral statement of 9 November 2020 should be regarded without prejudice to the final political settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. Only a negotiated political settlement that respects the rights of all can bring peace and reconciliation to the South Caucasus region. Therefore, we encourage the Co-Chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group to intensify their mediation efforts to achieve a long-term political settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict on the basis of the agreed principles for the settlement of the conflict, which have not yet been implemented, in particular that of equal rights and self-determination of peoples. The delegation of Armenia once again underscores that the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict is about the recognition of the right of the people of Artsakh to live freely in their historical homeland and decide their own destiny without external

interference and coercion, and that it is now high time to focus on the final, comprehensive and lasting settlement of this long-standing conflict.

For a comprehensive settlement of the conflict to ensure lasting and sustainable peace in the region, it should also include the de-occupation of the territories of Nagorno-Karabakh; the ensuring of the safe and dignified return of the displaced population of Artsakh to their homes; and the protection and preservation of the Armenian cultural and religious heritage in the territories currently under the control of Azerbaijan.

With this in mind, Armenia reiterates its readiness to engage in high-level political dialogue under the auspices of the Co-Chairs of the Minsk Group and in this connection considers it necessary that an environment conducive to such dialogue should be created, by, among other things, abandoning belligerent rhetoric and provocative actions and fully implementing the agreements reached. Unfortunately, we still see no signs that Azerbaijan is ready for such a dialogue.

Finally, I also wish to reiterate that the Armenian authorities are ready to receive the Co-Chairs in due course, in accordance with the established practice of their regional visits.

I kindly ask you to attach this statement to the journal of today's meeting.

Thank you.



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

PC.JOUR/1318

3 June 2021

Annex 7

ENGLISH

Original: FRENCH

1318th Plenary Meeting

PC Journal No. 1318, Agenda item 5(c)

**STATEMENT BY
THE DELEGATION OF FRANCE**

Since France was mentioned by our distinguished colleague representing Azerbaijan, I should like to exercise my right of reply.

With perseverance and a keen sense of the particular responsibilities incumbent upon it, France has exercised since 1997, alongside Russia and the United States of America, its functions as a Co-Chair country of the Minsk Group and ensured that the neutrality and impartiality required by this position are observed. Irrespective of this mediating role, France maintains long-standing and friendly bilateral relations with both Azerbaijan and Armenia.

This explains the scale of our country's engagement and the resolute commitment of our highest authorities from the very first day of the outbreak of serious armed clashes in Nagorno-Karabakh and its environs between September and November 2020, with our diplomats maintaining constant links and conducting negotiations with the parties. In addition to political contacts in both Baku and Yerevan and in the major capitals involved, France has spared no effort in helping the populations during these trials.

Rest assured that France, true to its historical commitment and in the spirit of impartiality by which our country is inspired, remains fully committed to a comprehensive and just settlement of the conflict, for that alone will make it possible to ensure the conditions for lasting peace in the region.

Madam Chairperson, I kindly ask you to attach our statement to the journal of the day.



1318th Plenary Meeting

PC Journal No. 1318, Agenda item 5(d)

**STATEMENT BY
THE DELEGATION OF AZERBAIJAN**

Madam Chairperson,

The delegation of Azerbaijan would like to update the Permanent Council on the investigation of criminal acts committed by the Armenian armed forces in Azerbaijan.

Firstly, we would like to reiterate that Azerbaijan is committed to upholding the international rule of law, including its obligations under international humanitarian law and international human rights law as applicable to its detention operations and disposition of detainees. We further remind that Azerbaijan has released and repatriated all the Armenians in its custody who were entitled to prisoner-of-war status, as it was envisaged by our obligations under international humanitarian law and the trilateral statement of 10 November 2020 signed by the leaders of Armenia, Azerbaijan and the Russian Federation.

The Armenian detainees remaining in Azerbaijan's custody, who were illegally transferred by Armenia into the territory of Azerbaijan in order to engage in sabotage and terrorist activities in the period after the signing of the trilateral statement, are not and cannot be considered prisoners of war in accordance with international humanitarian law. They are liable under the criminal law of the Republic of Azerbaijan. Currently Azerbaijan continues to conduct a detailed review of all individuals who were detained after the signing of the trilateral statement to assess the evidence against them.

In this regard, we recall that a sabotage group, consisting of 62 members, was transferred into the territory of Azerbaijan in late November 2020 and committed a series of terrorist attacks against Azerbaijani military servicemen and civilians in the Khojavand district, causing the deaths of four servicemen and serious injury to one civilian. The group was detained on 13 December after an anti-terrorist operation of Azerbaijan. As the result of the most recent investigation, 14 members of this sabotage group were charged under the relevant articles of the Criminal Code of Azerbaijan with perpetration of terrorist acts by a group of persons, an organized group or a criminal group, including with the use of firearms and objects used as weapons; illegal acquisition, transfer, storage, transportation of weapons, their components, ammunition and explosive devices by an organized group; attacks on enterprises or individuals by armed formations and groups not provided for by law; and premeditated collusion by a group of persons or an organized group for illegally crossing the State border of Azerbaijan. The investigation of this criminal case was completed and sent to

court for consideration together with the indictment approved by the Deputy Prosecutor General of the Republic of Azerbaijan. As to the other members of this sabotage group, the preliminary investigation into the criminal cases against them has been completed and currently the case materials are being reviewed.

We further remind that Azerbaijan, as a humanitarian gesture, initially released ten detained members of the aforementioned sabotage group. Furthermore, on 4 May, Azerbaijan released and repatriated to Armenia three more detainees without pressing charges against them.

Moreover, as we informed the Permanent Council last week, on 27 May two more reconnaissance-sabotage groups of the Armenian armed forces, consisting of 9 and 15 servicemen, infiltrated into the territory of Azerbaijan in the direction of the Yukhari Ayrim village of the Kalbajar district in an attempt to plant mines on the supply routes and passages leading to the posts of the Azerbaijani army and commit other acts of sabotage. As a result of urgent operational measures taken by Azerbaijan's armed forces against both groups, six Armenian servicemen were neutralized, disarmed and detained.

We call on Armenia to abandon its futile approach of distorting facts and misrepresenting information on the circumstances and reasons for the detention by Azerbaijan of the members of the aforementioned sabotage groups, claiming for them the non-applicable status of prisoners of war and falsely accusing Azerbaijan of not honouring its obligations under the trilateral statement and international humanitarian law. Such an approach is counterproductive and undermines the fragile peace that emerged after the signing of the trilateral statement.

Armenia also attempts to ascribe the status of prisoners of war to mercenaries and terrorists whom Armenia recruited and used in the course of the last year's 44-day war. In this regard, we recall the investigation conducted under the relevant articles of the Criminal Code of Azerbaijan, which established the fact of participation of Vicken Abraham Euljekjian, a citizen of Lebanon, in military operations and terrorist activities in the formerly occupied territories of Azerbaijan as a mercenary for material reward. He was indicted on charges of participation as a mercenary in a military conflict, commitment of terrorist acts by a group of persons upon prior conspiracy and illegal crossing of the State border of Azerbaijan. The indictment on the criminal case was approved and sent to court for consideration.

As it is known, Armenia also committed numerous war crimes and crimes against humanity during the war in the early 1990s. On 1 June the trial process started on the criminal cases of Ludvik Mkrtchyan and Alyosha Khosrovyan. The investigation has revealed the facts of hostage-taking, torture, cruel and inhumane treatment of Azerbaijani prisoners of war and civilians protected by international humanitarian law. Charges against the perpetrators, under the relevant articles of the Criminal Code of Azerbaijan, include torture, violation of laws and customs of war, creation of armed formations or groups not provided for by law, illegal crossing of the State border of Azerbaijan.

It must also be re-emphasized that those who remain detained in Azerbaijan are being treated with full respect to their dignity and human rights in accordance with international human rights law as well as Azerbaijani law. In view of Armenia's repeated

mischaracterization of this issue, Azerbaijan is doing its utmost to ensure greater transparency regarding their basis for detention, conditions of confinement and disposition. Azerbaijan remains committed to upholding its international obligations, including by ensuring that individuals it detains are treated humanely and are subject to just and lawful dispositions.

Furthermore, we remind that Armenia has yet to deliver on its obligation to release information on the whereabouts of close to 4,000 Azerbaijanis who went missing due to the war in the early 1990s. In this regard, we would like to draw attention to a criminal investigation into the mass burial of civilians massacred in April 1993 by the Armenian armed forces in Bashlibel village of the Kalbajar district, launched by the Prosecutor General's Office of Azerbaijan. On 3 April 1993, the Armenian armed forces attacked Bashlibel village, looted and burned the houses of the villagers, while 62 persons who could not leave the village took refuge in natural caves nearby. On 18 April 1993, the Armenian armed forces found and attacked unarmed civilians, deliberately killing 12 persons. According to a court decision on the exhumation of the bodies, relevant investigative actions have been carried out by the Investigation Department of the Prosecutor General's Office in Bashlibel village and the remains of 12 bodies were found.

It must also be added that following the attack of the Armenian armed forces, 14 more persons were taken hostage. Although they were later released from captivity, nine of them died of emotional and psychological trauma. The investigation also revealed that 7 out of 36 people who escaped from the criminal group members, died in various villages of the Kalbajar district from injuries received during the siege.

At present, other necessary investigative and search operations are under way to identify the surviving witnesses of the incident, interrogate them and determine the circumstances relevant to the case. The Prosecutor General's Office of the Republic of Azerbaijan will continue its activities to investigate the war crimes and crimes against humanity committed by Armenia against Azerbaijani citizens since the 1990s in order to identify the perpetrators and bring them to justice.

Having said this, we once again call onto Armenia to honour its obligations under international humanitarian law and engage in co-operation to determine the whereabouts of missing Azerbaijanis after the war in the early 1990s.

Moreover, Armenia should comply with its obligations under customary international humanitarian law by releasing maps of the mines planted by Armenia on a massive scale in the liberated territories of Azerbaijan. Failure to do so leads to further loss of innocent lives. In this regard, we remind that Azerbaijani servicemen, guided by humanitarian principles, have been risking and losing their lives due to the explosion of mines during search operations of the bodies of deceased Armenian servicemen alongside with Russian peacekeepers and the International Committee of the Red Cross. Thus far, the bodies of about 1,600 Armenian servicemen have been retrieved and handed over to the Armenian side.

Against this background, as it has recently been discovered and caused a big scandal in Armenia, the missing Armenian servicemen were disorderly hidden in a refrigerator in one of the morgues in the country. This belies the false accusations made by Armenia about the missing Armenian servicemen, disparages the dignity and feelings of the families of the

deceased servicemen, as well as exposes the futile attempts of Armenia to mislead the international community on this humanitarian issue for narrow political purposes. Such attempts of Armenia must be resolutely rejected and condemned.

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

Thank you, Madam Chairperson.



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

PC.DEC/1403
3 June 2021

Original: ENGLISH

1318th Plenary Meeting
PC Journal No. 1318, Agenda item 2

DECISION No. 1403
**DATES AND AGENDA OF THE 2021 ECONOMIC AND
ENVIRONMENTAL DIMENSION IMPLEMENTATION MEETING**

The Permanent Council,

Further to Permanent Council Decision No. 1011 on strengthening the effectiveness of the economic and environmental dimension of the OSCE, in which participating States agreed, *inter alia*, to hold the Economic and Environmental Dimension Implementation Meeting on an annual basis in accordance with the mandate and modalities established by Permanent Council Decision No. 995,

Decides to convene the 2021 Economic and Environmental Dimension Implementation Meeting on 18 and 19 October 2021 in Vienna, in accordance with the agenda contained in the annex to this decision.

AGENDA OF THE 2021 ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL DIMENSION IMPLEMENTATION MEETING

Vienna, 18 and 19 October 2021

Monday, 18 October 2021

- 9.30–11 a.m. Opening session: Taking stock of the implementation of the OSCE commitments in the field of anti-corruption and good governance
- 11–11.30 a.m. Coffee/Tea break
- 11.30 a.m.–1 p.m. Session I: Good governance, transparency and accountability as essential conditions for economic growth, trade, investment and sustainable development, thereby contributing to stability, security and respect for human rights in the OSCE area
- 1–2.30 p.m. Lunch break
- 2.30–4 p.m. Session II: Participation of the private sector, civil society and media, as well as academia, in efforts to prevent and combat corruption and enhance good governance
- 4–4.30 p.m. Coffee/Tea break
- 4.30–6 p.m. Session III: Promoting the full, equal and meaningful participation of women in the development and implementation of relevant anti-corruption activities, with the view to achieving gender equality, and taking into account that corruption disproportionately affects women and the vulnerable

Tuesday, 19 October 2021

- 9.30–11 a.m. Session IV: Promoting the exchange of best practices among all relevant stakeholders that contribute to good public and corporate governance, the promotion of transparency, and the prevention and combating of corruption, also in the sphere of the environment
- 11–11.30 p.m. Coffee/Tea break

- | | |
|-----------------------|--|
| 11.30 a.m.–12.30 p.m. | Closing session: Opportunities for strengthening dialogue and co-operation on preventing and combating corruption in the OSCE area |
| 12.30–1 p.m. | Closing remarks |



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

PC.DEC/1404
3 June 2021

Original: ENGLISH

1318th Plenary Meeting
PC Journal No. 1318, Agenda item 3

DECISION No. 1404
DATES AND VENUE OF THE 2021 OSCE ASIAN CONFERENCE

(20 and 21 September 2021, via Zoom)

The Permanent Council,

Welcoming the offer by Thailand to host the 2021 OSCE Asian Conference, and further to the discussion within the framework of the OSCE Asian Partners for Co-operation Group,

Decides to hold the 2021 OSCE Asian Conference on 20 and 21 September 2021, via Zoom.

The agenda, timetable and other organizational modalities of the Conference will be further elaborated in the framework of the OSCE Asian Partners for Co-operation Group and submitted to the Permanent Council for adoption.



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

PC.DEC/1405
3 June 2021

Original: ENGLISH

1318th Plenary Meeting
PC Journal No. 1318, Agenda item 4

DECISION No. 1405
AGENDA, TIMETABLE AND ORGANIZATIONAL MODALITIES OF
THE 2021 OSCE ASIAN CONFERENCE

(20 and 21 September 2021, via Zoom)

The Permanent Council,

Recalling PC.DD/9/21 of 31 May 2021 on the dates and venue of the 2021 OSCE Asian Conference, to be held via Zoom on 20 and 21 September 2021,

Further to the discussion within the framework of the OSCE Asian Partners for Co-operation Group,

Welcoming the offer by Thailand to host the 2021 OSCE Asian Conference,

Decides to hold the 2021 OSCE Asian Conference on the subject “Common responses to emerging challenges in advancing comprehensive security”;

Adopts the agenda, timetable and organizational modalities of the Conference as set out in the annex.

**AGENDA, TIMETABLE AND ORGANIZATIONAL MODALITIES
OF THE 2021 OSCE ASIAN CONFERENCE ON COMMON
RESPONSES TO EMERGING CHALLENGES IN
ADVANCING COMPREHENSIVE SECURITY**

20 and 21 September 2021, via Zoom

**Co-organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand,
the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs of Albania, and the
Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)**

I. Agenda

Monday, 20 September 2021

9.30–10.30 a.m.

Opening remarks

Addresses by:

- Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand
- Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs of Albania
- Representative of the OSCE Chairmanship (Sweden)
- Representative of the incoming OSCE Chairmanship (Poland)
- Secretary General of the OSCE
- Representatives of the OSCE Asian Partners for Co-operation
- Secretary General of ASEAN

10.30 a.m.–12 noon

Session 1: Strengthening the fight against transnational organized crime: adapting to the evolving situation

This session will focus on:

- Addressing new challenges arising from the spread of COVID-19 to combating transnational organized crime
- Building resilient communities through co-operation between stakeholders to develop comprehensive preventive measures and responses to transnational organized crime
- Building confidence and security through promoting interregional exchange on best practices related to

countering transnational organized crime in the midst of a global pandemic

- Promoting the full, equal and meaningful participation of women in the efforts to counter transnational organized crime

Discussion

12 noon–2 p.m.

Lunch break

2–3.30 p.m.

Session 2: The OSCE and sustainable development: Enhancing economic and environmental co-operation to promote security and stability

This session will focus on:

- Strengthening co-operation to reverse environmental degradation and the unsustainable use of natural resources
- Raising awareness and fostering co-operation to address climate change and its impact on the economy and the environment
- Enhancing partnerships on technology and innovation to promote economic and environmental co-operation

Discussion

Tuesday, 21 September 2021

9.30–11 a.m.

Session 3: Human rights and public health: Sharing experiences and lessons learned between Europe and Asia

This session will focus on:

- Promoting co-operation and dialogue in ensuring the promotion of human rights and the protection of public health
- Protection of human rights of migrants during the COVID-19 pandemic
- The role of women in the public health sector during the pandemic

Discussion

11 a.m.–12 noon

Closing remarks

12 noon

End of the Conference

II. Participation

The OSCE participating States are invited to participate in and contribute to the Conference.

The Partners for Co-operation will be invited to participate in and contribute to the Conference.

The OSCE executive structures and the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly will be invited to participate in and contribute to the Conference.

The following international organizations and institutions will be invited to participate in and contribute to the Conference: the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), Asia-Pacific Economic Co-operation (APEC), Central European Initiative (CEI), Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia (CICA), Council of Europe (CoE), Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU), Executive Committee of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), Organization for Democracy and Economic Development – GUAM, International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), United Nations (UN), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), UN Women, and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

Representatives of the members of the ARF may attend as guests of the host country. Other countries and organizations may also be invited by the host country.

Representatives of non-governmental organizations will be able to attend and contribute to the Conference in accordance with the relevant OSCE provisions and practices (advance registration required).

III. Timetable and other organizational modalities

The Conference will begin at 9.30 a.m. (opening remarks) on 20 September 2021 and end at 12 noon on 21 September 2021.

Each session will have a moderator and rapporteur. The consolidated summary will be forwarded to the Permanent Council.

The Rules of Procedure and working methods of the OSCE will be applied, *mutatis mutandis*, to the Conference.

The opening remarks and closing session will be open to the media. The Conference will be held via Zoom. The working language will be English.