

Delegation of the Russian Federation

**STATEMENT BY
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REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION, AT THE
1071st MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

15 October 2015

**In response to the reports by the
Chairpersons of the three Permanent Council committees**

Mr. Chairperson,
Ambassadors Cristian Istrate, Andreas Papadakis and Robert Kvile,

We thank you for the detailed reports on the activities of the committees you head and the work in preparing decisions for the forthcoming Ministerial Council meeting in Belgrade. We believe that this is the main task of these unofficial subsidiary structures of the Permanent Council.

We support the efforts of the Chairperson of the Security Committee, Ambassador Istrate, in implementing the strategic OSCE documents on countering transnational threats: the OSCE Concept for Combating the Threat of Illicit Drugs and the Diversion of Chemical Precursors, the OSCE Strategic Framework for Police-Related Activities and the OSCE Consolidated Framework for the Fight against Terrorism. We note the positive practice of the Committee's active co-operation with the Transnational Threats Department, which is the instrument for the co-ordination of all the OSCE's activities in this area.

The discussions on countering radicalization, foreign terrorist fighters and the financing of terrorism were relevant and timely. We trust that the experience gained during conferences and seminars on this topic will help to produce a balanced Ministerial Council decision on countering extremism.

We urge the Committee to continue to pay attention to stopping illicit drug trafficking, including in the context of a possible OSCE contribution to the preparations for the United Nations General Assembly Special Session on Drugs in 2016.

We intend to continue to play an active part in the considerations by the informal working group on confidence-building measures in the use of information and communication technologies. We note the work that has been done to implement an initial set of measures. Many of them unfortunately remain on paper only, and the degree to which

States are actively implementing them varies significantly. The prospects for drawing up new sets of confidence-building measures and further co-operation to that end depend largely on the success in implementing the initial set of measures.

We support the Chairperson's idea of closely monitoring the entire range of threats emanating from Afghanistan. In that connection, it is important to take into account the experience of regional organizations, primarily the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, the Collective Security Treaty Organization and the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia. We should not lose sight of the growing transnational threats posed by the southern Mediterranean either.

We take a positive view overall of the work of the Chairperson of the Economic and Environmental Committee, the Permanent Representative of Greece, Mr. Papadakis. We agree with his approach of filling the Committee's agenda with questions that are of relevance to all participating States. We believe it useful to continue the practice of holding thematic meetings enabling an exchange of experience, including with representatives of other specialist international organizations, on important questions such as combating corruption, reducing the risks of natural and man-made disasters, transport links in the OSCE region, managing labour migration, energy efficiency and conservation, and protecting critical energy infrastructure facilities.

At the same time, we believe it necessary to take a more careful approach to the selection of questions for discussion in the Economic and Environmental Committee. In our view, diluting the second committee's agenda by incorporating problems related to the conflict cycle as well as questions concerning the human and human rights dimension is counter-productive, since this leads to unnecessary politicization of the discussions and makes it difficult to reach agreements on the economic and environmental basket.

We thank Ambassador Kvile for his efforts to develop constructive dialogue within the Human Dimension Committee. It proved possible to examine a number of important topics during the last period. The careful selection of competent speakers played no small role in the substantive discussions. The Russian Federation is ready to provide assistance in recruiting qualified subject matter experts from Russia if there is an interest.

We also welcome the fact that the Committee's work this year included the problem area of economic, social and cultural rights. We believe that this range of questions has for a long time been unjustifiably overshadowed by a constant focus exclusively on political and civil rights.

It is important to pay attention to issues such as child protection, and safeguarding privacy and family life. As can be seen from the way the situation is developing in the OSCE area, these problems are becoming ever more relevant and require focused efforts on the part of the Organization.

It has not been possible this year to avoid unnecessary overburdening of the Committee's work, not least of all because of the inclusion on the agenda on a permanent basis of so-called voluntary reports by participating States. We have serious doubts regarding the utility of importing this practice from other organizations. We firmly believe that an appropriate format already exists for the exchange of experience and best practices: the Human Dimension Implementation Meeting in Warsaw.

I should also like to stress once more that the OSCE is an inter-State organization and in that connection it is necessary to be scrupulous about extending contacts within the Human Dimension Committee with representatives of civil society, who are actively engaged in consultations with participating States. There are other formats for these purposes, in particular the Warsaw meeting and other OSCE human dimension events.

Furthermore, we cannot support this kind of additional burdening of the Committee's agenda during the second half of the year, when it is necessary to focus on the discussion and elaboration of draft documents in time for the OSCE Ministerial Council meeting.

We firmly believe that the arbitrary inclusion by the Committee Chairpersons of new practices and methodology that are not based on consensus among all participating States is counter-productive.

Discussion should continue on the comprehensive streamlining of activities in the human dimension.

In conclusion, we should like to point out that very little time remains until the upcoming Ministerial Council meeting in Belgrade, however the drafting of Ministerial documents is still in the initial stage. We believe that in the remaining time all three Committee Chairpersons should focus their efforts on the preparation of Ministerial Council documents, postponing secondary issues for the future. Only then will we manage to complete all the work on the decisions prior to leaving for Belgrade. This in turn will enable the ministers to focus on discussing the really acute issues of European policy and the OSCE agenda.

Thank you for your attention.