

PC.DEL/340/10
30 April 2010

ENGLISH
Original: RUSSIAN

Delegation of the Russian Federation

**STATEMENT BY MR. ANVAR AZIMOV,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,
AT THE MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

29 April 2010

Regarding the shutting down of mobile communication facilities in Kosovo

Mr. Chairperson,

We should like to express our concern regarding the events surrounding the disconnection of mobile network operators in the Serbian enclaves of the territory of Kosovo. These events might be regarded as a clash of commercial interests were it not for the vandalism involved in the actions of the Kosovan authorities and the scale of the humanitarian consequences.

As a result of the damage done to the equipment at the mobile communication facilities, the inhabitants of the Serbian enclaves have been left with no way of contacting the emergency services. As a consequence, during the first five days the emergency medical services were not called out a single time. For several days, the refugees who have returned to the territory and who are the victims of almost daily attacks, as we know from the reports filed by the OSCE Mission in Kosovo, have found themselves without any police protection.

It goes without saying that these actions have sharply ratcheted up inter-ethnic tension in the territory, have jeopardized the already virtually non-existent process of the return of refugees and internally displaced persons, and have undermined any trust on the part of those who have been driven into the enclaves of the non-Albanian communities.

A cause of particular concern is the *de facto* inaction of the OSCE Mission in Kosovo, which for several days watched without becoming involved as the mobile networks were systematically dismantled. Once again the question arises as to the ability of our Organization and its field operations to prevent potential conflict situations.

We firmly believe that disagreements among commercial enterprises that might result in dramatic consequences of this kind must be settled solely through negotiations and not through unilateral actions involving the use of force.

We call for the quickest possible diplomatic settlement of this matter. In our view, the OSCE Mission could play an intermediary role to this end.

Thank you for your attention.