



PERMANENT MISSION OF THE HOLY SEE  
TO THE ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY  
AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE

**STATEMENT BY MONSIGNOR MICHAEL W. BANACH,  
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE HOLY SEE,  
AT THE 710<sup>th</sup> MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

**24 APRIL 2008**

**RE: ANY OTHER BUSINESS - ORTHODOX EASTER HOLIDAYS**

Mister Chairman:

The Holy See Delegation joins the Russian Federation in expressing appreciation to the Finnish Chairmanship for including the Orthodox Easter celebrations among the list of OSCE holidays this year.

In this way, the OSCE joins the institutions of the European Union in Brussels which also recognize the Easter holidays for Orthodox Christians working there. This was the result of an intervention of the Apostolic Nuncio to the European Community, in conjunction with representatives of the Russian Orthodox Patriarchate, as well as with representatives from other Orthodox Churches.

There are some initiatives between the churches to find a common date for the celebration of Easter. Until the time when we can celebrate the greatest of Christian feasts together, my Delegation is grateful for allowing this holiday period for those from the Orthodox faith.

To the Orthodox representatives among us and to the Orthodox faithful in their countries a very Happy Easter!

Thank you, Mister Chairman!