
Chairmanship: Italy**1203rd PLENARY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL**

1. Date: Thursday, 22 November 2018

Opened: 10.05 a.m.
Suspended: 12.50 p.m.
Resumed: 3 p.m.
Closed: 5.05 p.m.

2. Chairperson: Ambassador A. Azzoni

Before taking up the agenda, the Chairperson, on behalf of the Permanent Council, extended condolences to Afghanistan (Partner for Co-operation) in connection with the bomb attack that occurred in Kabul on 20 November 2018.

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

Agenda item 1: **REPORT BY THE OSCE REPRESENTATIVE ON
FREEDOM OF THE MEDIA**

Chairperson, Italy, OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media (FOM.GAL/4/18/Rev.1), Austria-European Union (with the candidate countries Albania, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Montenegro; the country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate country Bosnia and Herzegovina; and the European Free Trade Association countries Iceland and Liechtenstein, members of the European Economic Area, in alignment) (PC.DEL/1451/18), Russian Federation (PC.DEL/1436/18), United States of America (PC.DEL/1435/18/Rev.1), Turkey, Azerbaijan, Norway (PC.DEL/1442/18), Kazakhstan, Georgia (PC.DEL/1466/18 OSCE+), Switzerland, Albania, Canada, Montenegro (PC.DEL/1464/18 OSCE+), Armenia, Ukraine (PC.DEL/1445/18), Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova (PC.DEL/1465/18 OSCE+), Cyprus (PC.DEL/1461/18 OSCE+), Malta (PC.DEL/1460/18 OSCE+), France (PC.DEL/1457/18 OSCE+), United Kingdom (Annex), Slovakia

Agenda item 2: REPORT BY THE HEAD OF THE OSCE MISSION TO
 SKOPJE

Chairperson, Head of the OSCE Mission to Skopje (PC.FR/31/18 OSCE+), Austria-European Union (with the candidate countries Albania, Montenegro 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 Georgia and Moldova, in alignment) (PC.DEL/1452/18), Norway (PC.DEL/1443/18), Russian Federation (PC.DEL/1439/18 OSCE+), Turkey (PC.DEL/1446/18 OSCE+), United States of America (PC.DEL/1438/18) (PC.DEL/1459/18), Switzerland, Albania, Austria-European Union, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (PC.DEL/1456/18 OSCE+)

Agenda item 3: REVIEW OF CURRENT ISSUES

- (a) *Russia's ongoing aggression against Ukraine and the illegal occupation of Crimea:* Ukraine (PC.DEL/1449/18), Austria-European Union (with the candidate countries Albania, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Montenegro; 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/1453/18), United States of America (PC.DEL/1440/18), Turkey (PC.DEL/1463/18 OSCE+), Switzerland, Canada
- (b) *Situation in Ukraine and the need to implement the Minsk agreements:* Russian Federation (PC.DEL/1444/18), Ukraine
- (c) *Detention of civil society representatives in Turkey:* Austria-European Union (with the candidate countries Albania, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro 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 Norway, members of the European Economic Area; as well as Andorra and Armenia, in alignment) (PC.DEL/1454/18), Turkey
- (d) *Grave violations of the human rights of indigenous peoples in Canada:* Russian Federation (PC.DEL/1447/18), Canada

Agenda item 4: REPORT ON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE
 CHAIRMANSHIP-IN-OFFICE

- (a) *Modalities related to interventions at the Twenty-Fifth Meeting of the OSCE Ministerial Council:* Chairperson
- (b) *Call for nominations for the function of External Auditor of the OSCE:* Chairperson

Agenda item 5: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL

- (a) *Participation of the Secretary General in the ambassadorial retreat held in Waidhofen an der Ybbs, Austria, on 19 and 20 November 2018*
(CIO.GAL/173/18 Restr.): Secretary General (SEC.GAL/185/18 OSCE+)
- (b) *Extension of the deadline for nominations for the position of Chief Monitor of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine*: Secretary General
(SEC.GAL/185/18 OSCE+)
- (c) *Visit of the Secretary General to Helsinki on 23 November 2018*: Secretary General (SEC.GAL/185/18 OSCE+)
- (d) *Meeting of the Secretary General with the Chairperson-in-Office of the OSCE, to be held in Rome on 27 November 2018*: Secretary General
(SEC.GAL/185/18 OSCE+)

Agenda item 6: ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- (a) *Eighty-fifth anniversary of the Holodomor*: Ukraine (PC.DEL/1448/18), Austria-European Union (with the candidate countries Albania, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia; the European Free Trade Association countries Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, members of the European Economic Area; as well as Andorra, Georgia and Moldova, in alignment) (PC.DEL/1455/18), Canada, Russian Federation (PC.DEL/1450/18), United States of America (PC.DEL/1441/18)
- (b) *Seminar on demarcation and limitation practices, held on 15 and 16 November 2018*: Greece

4. Next meeting:

Thursday, 29 November 2018, at 10 a.m., in the Neuer Saal



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

PC.JOUR/1203
22 November 2018
Annex

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1203rd Plenary Meeting
PC Journal No. 1203, Agenda item 1

STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF THE UNITED KINGDOM

The United Kingdom fully aligns with the statement made on behalf of the European Union, but I would like to add some remarks in my national capacity.

I would like to thank the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, Harlem Désir, for his report, and take this opportunity to underline the importance that the United Kingdom places on freedom of media as a fundamental element of our OSCE human dimension and other international commitments, and a pillar of democratic society.

This is an issue that goes beyond the OSCE region: media freedom is under attack across the world. This year alone over 70 journalists and media workers have been killed. Those deaths in themselves represent grave crimes and abuse of human rights. But they also represent something else. As our Foreign Secretary has said, access to fair and accurate information is the lifeblood of democracy. Without a free media our access to information, an integral part of the right to freedom of expression, is obstructed. Governments and authorities cannot be held accountable, corruption can go unchecked.

I am pleased therefore to inform this Council that the UK Government has committed to put the resources of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office behind the cause of media freedom in 2019. This campaign will be marked by a major international conference to be hosted in the United Kingdom. We look forward to co-operating with the Office of the Representative as we work towards this, and to sharing further information with colleagues here in due course.

My country has a long tradition of vibrant, independent media. We have long been committed to upholding freedom of media globally and to offering practical support to its development, including in the OSCE area, through sharing experience, expertise and innovation.

Mr. Chairperson, the United Kingdom remains a strong supporter of Representative on Freedom of the Media and the work of this important OSCE institution. Building on our longstanding engagement on this issue in the OSCE, I am glad that, as Chairperson of the Human Dimension Committee, with my delegation I have been able to help to keep media freedom and journalist safety high on the agenda for the past two years.

And I am particularly pleased that the Italian Chairmanship has tabled a draft decision on safety of journalists this year. I am grateful to all delegations for their active contributions to negotiations so far on this text and encouraged to hear so many words of support this morning for this initiative. After listening to the report of the Representative, and reading his account of his interventions over the past year, I need hardly explain why this decision is both timely and important.

Echoing the Representative's words, I sincerely hope that we are able to adopt this decision at the Ministerial Council. To do so would demonstrate our shared commitment to media freedom; it would demonstrate our determination to tackle a serious human rights abuse and attack on a fundamental freedom; and it would demonstrate the importance that we, as 57 States, attach both to the lives and work of individuals and media outlets, and to the wider health of our societies across the OSCE area.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson, I would be grateful if this statement could be attached to the journal of the day.