

156th Plenary Meeting

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DECISION No. 218

The Permanent Council meeting in a special session,

Deeply concerned about the crisis in Kosovo, Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY), and urging those involved to cease unconditionally any form of violence,

Condemning the excessive and indiscriminate use of force during Serb police actions in Kosovo, which have led to the death of some 80 people over the past week,

Stressing the unacceptability of any terrorist action and calling on all concerned actively to oppose the use of violence to achieve political aims,

Recalling the statements of the Chairman-in-Office of 2 March and 10 March 1998 on the situation in Kosovo,

Recognizing that the crisis in Kosovo is not solely an internal affair of the FRY because of violations of OSCE principles and commitments on human rights and because it has a significant impact on the security of a region, as well as taking into account the need for immediate efforts by the international community to prevent further escalation,

Calling on the authorities in Belgrade and the leadership of the Kosovar Albanians to assume their responsibility to enter without preconditions into meaningful dialogue, based on full observance of OSCE principles and commitments, including those of the Helsinki Final Act, and expressing the readiness of the OSCE to assist in this process,

1. Takes positive note of the activities of the Chairman-in-Office undertaken with regard to the crisis in Kosovo and encourages him to continue efforts aimed at an effective OSCE contribution to its peaceful resolution;
2. Supports a new mission by Mr. Felipe Gonzalez as the Personal Representative of the Chairman-in-Office for the FRY which would include a mandate for addressing the problems in Kosovo;
3. Expresses gratitude for the work of Mr. Max van der Stoel, whose experience and expertise remain invaluable in helping the OSCE in its efforts to resolve the problems in the region;

4. Authorizes the following operational measures to be taken to allow adequate observation of the borders with Kosovo, FRY, and prevention of possible crisis spillover effects, as already requested by the Chairman-in-Office:
 - The monitoring capabilities of the OSCE Presence in Albania and, as appropriate, the OSCE Spillover Monitor Mission to Skopje will be temporarily enhanced for the fulfilment of those tasks;
 - The respective Heads of Mission will report regularly on their observations;
5. Requests the representatives of OSCE Troika members accredited in Belgrade to co-ordinate arrangements for continuous monitoring of the situation in Kosovo by diplomatic representatives in Belgrade of the OSCE participating States. The Permanent Council will be kept informed about relevant findings;
6. Calls on FRY authorities:
 - To halt excessive use of force in Kosovo, to vigorously investigate and accept international investigation of reported summary executions and to bring to justice those found responsible;
 - To co-operate fully with the OSCE Chairman-in-Office's Personal Representative to the FRY, Mr. Felipe Gonzalez;
 - To initiate a meaningful dialogue with Kosovar Albanian representatives which will lead to concrete steps towards the resolution of ongoing political problems in the region;
 - To allow access to Kosovo for the International Committee of the Red Cross and other humanitarian organizations;
 - To implement without delay the Education Agreement and seek agreements on further confidence-building measures;
 - To accept without preconditions, an immediate return of the OSCE missions of long duration to Kosovo, Sandjak and Vojvodina, noting the return of these missions as essential for future participation in the OSCE by the FRY.