

**Chairmanship: Sweden**

**1334th PLENARY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL**

1. Date: Thursday, 2 September 2021 (in the Neuer Saal and via video teleconference)

Opened: 10.05 a.m.  
Suspended: 1 p.m.  
Resumed: 3.05 p.m.  
Closed: 6.20 p.m.

2. Chairperson: Ambassador T. Lorentzson

Prior to taking up the agenda, the Chairperson welcomed the new Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan to the OSCE, H.E. Ambassador R. Sadigbayli.

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

Agenda item 1: REPORT BY THE HEAD OF THE OSCE PRESENCE IN ALBANIA

Chairperson, Head of the OSCE Presence in Albania (PC.FR/29/21/Corr.1 OSCE+), Slovenia-European Union (with the candidate countries Montenegro, North Macedonia 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, Moldova and Ukraine, in alignment) (PC.DEL/1388/21), United Kingdom, Russian Federation (PC.DEL/1344/21 OSCE+), Turkey (PC.DEL/1367/21 OSCE+), United States of America (PC.DEL/1332/21), Norway (PC.DEL/1346/21), Switzerland (PC.DEL/1374/21 OSCE+), Italy (Annex 1), Albania (PC.DEL/1334/21 OSCE+)

Agenda item 2:           REPORT BY THE CHIEF OBSERVER OF THE OSCE  
OBSERVER MISSION AT TWO RUSSIAN CHECKPOINTS  
ON THE RUSSIAN-UKRAINIAN BORDER

Chairperson, Chief Observer of the OSCE Observer Mission at two Russian checkpoints on the Russian-Ukrainian border (PC.FR/30/21 OSCE+) (PC.FR/31/21 OSCE+), Slovenia-European Union (with the candidate countries Albania, Montenegro and North Macedonia; the European Free Trade Association countries Iceland and Liechtenstein, members of the European Economic Area; as well as Andorra, Georgia, Moldova, San Marino and Ukraine, in alignment) (PC.DEL/1389/21), United Kingdom, United States of America (PC.DEL/1335/21) (PC.DEL/1337/21), Turkey (PC.DEL/1377/21 OSCE+), Norway (PC.DEL/1372/21) (PC.DEL/1371/21), Switzerland (PC.DEL/1381/21/Corr.1 OSCE+), Ukraine, Canada (PC.DEL/1359/21 OSCE+), Russian Federation (Annex 2) (PC.DEL/1384/21 OSCE+), Slovenia-European Union, Germany (also on behalf of France) (Annex 3), Hungary (PC.DEL/1373/21 OSCE+), Georgia

Agenda item 3:           REVIEW OF CURRENT ISSUES

Chairperson

- (a) *Russia's ongoing aggression against Ukraine and illegal occupation of Crimea*: Ukraine, Slovenia-European Union (with the candidate countries Albania, Montenegro and North Macedonia; the European Free Trade Association countries Iceland and Norway, members of the European Economic Area; as well as Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine, in alignment) (PC.DEL/1390/21), United Kingdom, Turkey (PC.DEL/1378/21 OSCE+), United States of America (PC.DEL/1342/21), Canada (PC.DEL/1361/21 OSCE+), Switzerland (PC.DEL/1350/21 OSCE+)
- (b) *Deteriorating situation in Ukraine and continued non-implementation by the Ukrainian authorities of the Minsk agreements*: Russian Federation (PC.DEL/1364/21), Ukraine
- (c) *International Day of the Victims of Enforced Disappearances, observed on 30 August 2021*: Slovenia-European Union (with the candidate countries Albania, Montenegro and North Macedonia; the European Free Trade Association countries Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, members of the European Economic Area; as well as Georgia and Ukraine, in alignment) (PC.DEL/1391/21), United States of America (PC.DEL/1347/21) (PC.DEL/1348/21), United Kingdom, Russian Federation (PC.DEL/1363/21), Ukraine, Azerbaijan (PC.DEL/1383/21 OSCE+) (PC.DEL/1382/21 OSCE+), Turkmenistan, Armenia, Canada (PC.DEL/1360/21 OSCE+)
- (d) *Concerns over intensifying repression in the Russian Federation ahead of the elections to the State Duma, to be held on 19 September 2021*: United States of America (PC.DEL/1351/21), United Kingdom, Slovenia-European Union (with the candidate countries Albania, Montenegro and North Macedonia; the European Free Trade Association country Iceland, member of the European

Economic Area; as well as Georgia and Ukraine, in alignment)  
(PC.DEL/1392/21), Canada (PC.DEL/1365/21 OSCE+), Norway  
(PC.DEL/1379/21 OSCE+), Russian Federation (PC.DEL/1366/21 OSCE+)

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

- (a)    *Briefing on the monthly topic of the Swedish OSCE Chairmanship for September 2021, which is civil society:* Chairperson
- (b)    *Concluding Meeting of the 29th OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum, to be held in Prague and via video teleconference on 9 and 10 September 2021:* Chairperson
- (c)    *Second ambassadorial retreat, to be held in Vienna on 13 and 14 September 2021:* Chairperson
- (d)    *Logistical information related to the Twenty-Eighth Meeting of the OSCE Ministerial Council, to be held in Stockholm on 2 and 3 December 2021 (MC.INF/1/21 OSCE+):* Chairperson
- (e)    *Sports event organized by the Swedish OSCE Chairmanship, to be held in Vienna on 18 September 2021:* Chairperson

Agenda item 5:           REPORT OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL

- (a)    *Announcement of the distribution of a written report of the Secretary General (SEC.GAL/115/21 OSCE+):* Secretary General
- (b)    *Update on the COVID-19 situation across the OSCE's executive structures:* Secretary General (SEC.GAL/115/21 OSCE+)
- (c)    *Visit of the Secretary General to Helsinki on 27 August 2021:* Secretary General (SEC.GAL/115/21 OSCE+)
- (d)    *OSCE Secretariat's response to the situation in Afghanistan:* Secretary General (SEC.GAL/115/21 OSCE+), Albania, Germany, United Kingdom, United States of America (PC.DEL/1369/21), Canada, France, Norway (PC.DEL/1370/21), Afghanistan (Partner for Co-operation)

Agenda item 6:           ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None

4.    Next meeting:

Thursday, 16 September 2021, at 10 a.m., in the Neuer Saal and via video teleconference



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

PC.JOUR/1334  
2 September 2021  
Annex 1

ENGLISH  
Original: ITALIAN

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**1334th Plenary Meeting**  
PC Journal No. 1334, Agenda item 1

**STATEMENT BY  
THE DELEGATION OF ITALY**

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.

Italy aligns itself with the statement delivered by the European Union and wishes to add some observations in its national capacity.

First of all, I should like to renew the welcome extended to Ambassador Del Monaco and express my sincere thanks to him and the entire OSCE Presence in Albania for the admirable work performed and the important results achieved over the past year. Despite the difficult operating environment due to the pandemic, the OSCE Presence in Albania has successfully carried on with numerous activities in all three dimensions of security (politico-military, economic and environmental, and human), continuing to promote fruitful co-operation with Albanian institutions, media and civil society organizations, as evidenced by the effective presentation from this morning.

Italy wholeheartedly supports the OSCE's work in Albania and recognizes its essential contribution to strengthening the implementation of our shared commitments. To that end we are involved alongside the OSCE in some projects in priority areas.

In line with the commitment and attention devoted at the international level to combating organized crime and corruption, Italy has over the years always supported the OSCE's work in Albania on these topics – most recently through a project aimed at strengthening transparency and anti-corruption measures in legislation on public procurement. The recent launch of a structured partnership between the OSCE Presence in Albania, Italy's National Anti-Corruption Authority and the analogous Albanian institution (the State Supreme Audit) to combat corruption is a further example of the continuous and fruitful dialogue that characterizes, also at the bilateral level, the numerous initiatives for collaboration between the Italian authorities (from the Ministry of Justice to the National Anti-Mafia Bureau and the Financial Police) and their Albanian counterparts. Anti-corruption measures and judicial reform are also central elements as far as Albania's European integration is concerned.

Furthermore, Italy supports the work carried out by the OSCE Presence in Albania to strengthen dialogue with the younger generations through specific training projects and

courses. In particular, we are pleased to be funding a project devoted to the contribution of young people to peace and security.

Finally, I wish to underline the importance of the communication initiatives promoted by the OSCE Presence in Albania to strengthen the sharing of our common commitments and enhance the Organization's role in that country. These are initiatives of great interest that I expect will increasingly serve as a benchmark for effective and targeted communication that makes it possible to increase the OSCE's visibility and promote awareness and appreciation of its indispensable contribution to European security and stability.

I request that this statement be attached to the journal of the day.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.



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

PC.JOUR/1334  
2 September 2021  
Annex 2

ENGLISH  
Original: RUSSIAN

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**1334th Plenary Meeting**  
PC Journal No. 1334, Agenda item 2

**STATEMENT BY  
THE DELEGATION OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION**

Mr. Chairperson,

We welcome the distinguished Ambassador György Varga to the Permanent Council. We are grateful for the report. Ever since the observers arrived in Russia and for the entire period of their work, the Mission has noted a consistently calm situation at the border, with no movement of troops or military equipment.

The deployment of observers on Russian territory was intended to have a positive effect on the settlement of the internal Ukrainian crisis, and to induce the Ukrainian authorities to fulfil the promises they made to the people of Ukraine and put an end to their operation aimed at suppressing dissent in Donbas by armed force. Unfortunately, neither the previous nor the current authorities in Ukraine have made any meaningful efforts to bring about a lasting, comprehensive political settlement of the internal conflict in the east of the country.

We regret that the many years of efforts by Russia to create favourable conditions for resolving the crisis in Ukraine – *inter alia*, by inviting OSCE observers to be based on Russian territory – are not meeting with due appreciation in response. The statements delivered today by a number of OSCE participating States testify to their evidently confrontational and anti-Russian attitude. The normal situation at the border as confirmed by the Mission is merely an irritant to them and a pretext for levelling unfounded accusations against Russia.

The most zealous “mentors” of the Ukrainian Government try to portray this gesture of goodwill by Russia as a kind of obligation on our country’s part and as an allegedly integral element of the process for settling the crisis in Ukraine. They artificially link the Mission’s work with the Minsk agreements, in the text of which there is not a single mention of the Mission as such. Need I remind you of the universally known fact that the observers came at the invitation of Russia before the Minsk agreements even existed?

The attempts to make use of the Mission’s presence on Russian territory for propaganda attacks against Russia simply keep increasing. This is done, to all appearances, with the obvious aim of diverting attention from the Ukrainian authorities’

non-implementation of the whole gamut of obligations under the Minsk agreements and justifying the Ukrainian Government's evasion of direct dialogue with the representatives of Donbas on a political settlement. Additionally, the foreign "minders" of Ukraine continue to actively busy themselves with the militarization and military exploitation of the country, and to stoke and encourage the bellicose aspirations of the hotheads in Kyiv, thereby helping to entrench the paradigm of a military solution to the conflict in Donbas. This summer, military exercises have been conducted on the territory of Ukraine involving a number of NATO countries, in the course of which offensive operations in urban areas and special operations to "clear" settlements were demonstratively practised, among other things. All this is merely undermining the efforts undertaken at the OSCE to facilitate a settlement of the internal Ukrainian conflict and nullifying the work of its field operations.

We have repeatedly warned that this situation must inevitably be taken into account when weighing the prospects for extending the Mission's mandate. However, our hints have not elicited a proper response. Today I am authorized to announce that the Russian Federation sees no grounds for extending the Mission's mandate after it expires on 30 September 2021. And this decision is not subject to review. We believe that the Mission will be able to make effective use of the time that remains in order to carry out all the necessary administrative procedures for winding down its activities.

Ambassador Varga,

Allow me to dwell separately on your efforts to ensure the concerted nature of the Mission's work, which continued without interruption even during the pandemic. To a significant degree, this can be ascribed to your personal merits, backed up by the highest professionalism and the effective interaction you established with the Russian host authorities.

We are pleased to emphasize that one element of this co-operation was shared duty of care for the health of the Mission's personnel. We would remind you that, as a contribution to ensuring the safety of the observers' work, a COVID-19 vaccination with Sputnik V was made available by Russia free of charge, and most of your colleagues have taken advantage of this offer. This is the first example of systematic vaccination of the staff of an OSCE field operation.

In closing, I should like once again to sincerely thank you, distinguished Ambassador Varga, and all your colleagues in the Mission for your work and to wish you the best of health.

I request that this statement be attached to the journal of today's meeting of the Permanent Council.

Thank you for your attention.



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

PC.JOUR/1334  
2 September 2021  
Annex 3

Original: ENGLISH

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**1334th Plenary Meeting**  
PC Journal No. 1334, Agenda item 2

**STATEMENT BY  
THE DELEGATION OF GERMANY (ALSO ON BEHALF OF FRANCE)**

Madam Chairperson,

I align myself fully with the statement made by the European Union but will add some additional remarks on behalf of Germany and France, in response to the intervention of the Russian Federation.

France and Germany deplore that Russia is now opposed, not only to the four months renewal of the mandate of the border Observation Mission at the Russian checkpoints Gukovo and Donetsk, but opposed to its very renewal, and so to its existence.

The border Observation Mission provides important objective facts and information from the situation at the Russian-Ukrainian border at the two mentioned checkpoints. It constitutes a central confidence-building instrument and is part of the conflict resolution efforts of the OSCE.

We recall that the Minsk Protocol provides for permanent monitoring of the border and verification by the OSCE, and that the Minsk Package of Measures includes the commitment to reinstate full control by Ukraine over its entire international border.

In the Normandy format, France and Germany are pursuing their efforts for the full implementation of the Minsk agreements. An effective and comprehensive monitoring of the Russia-Ukraine State border is essential, also through the border Observation Mission, for improving the security situation and finding a sustainable political solution to the conflict.

Let me recall that the establishment of the Mission and the endorsement of its mandate had been initiated by the Normandy Four foreign ministers with the aim to enhance transparency at the Russian-Ukrainian border as a confidence-building measure.

To our deep concern, the opposition of the Russian Federation to the renewal of the border Observation Mission mandate, will irrevocably reduce transparency and diminish confidence and trust. Such a decision would be all the more disappointing given that one month ago, the Russian Federation eventually accepted a partial renewal of the border Observation Mission mandate, for only two months instead of four, thus creating an unnecessary extra administrative burden for the mission. But Russia was at least no longer



questioning its very existence. We cannot see any reason that would justify such a Russian decision now.

Such a decision would be a wrong and negative signal that contradicts the letter and the spirit of the Minsk agreements. It would add to the massive restrictions of movement, the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine has been facing for years in non-government-controlled areas and in particular adjacent to the border.

We call on the Russian Federation to return to a constructive approach in order to find a viable solution which serves our common goal of enhancing transparency and building confidence.