

---

**429th Plenary Meeting**

PC Journal No. 429, Agenda item 1

**DECISION No. 526  
OSCE OFFICE IN MINSK**

The Permanent Council,

Recalling its Decision No. 185 of 18 September 1997 and the Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of Belarus and the OSCE on the OSCE Advisory and Monitoring Group in Belarus of 18 December 1997,

Welcoming the willingness of the Belarusian Government to continue its co-operation with the OSCE,

Decides:

1. To close the OSCE Advisory and Monitoring Group in Belarus on 31 December 2002 and to open the OSCE Office in Minsk on 1 January 2003;
2. To give the OSCE Office in Minsk the following tasks:
  - Assist the Belarusian Government in further promoting institution building, in further consolidating the Rule of Law and in developing relations with civil society, in accordance with OSCE principles and commitments;
  - Assist the Belarusian Government in its efforts in developing economic and environmental activities;
  - Monitor and report accurately on the above mentioned objectives.
3. The OSCE Office in Minsk will perform its tasks and carry out its activities, in a transparent way, in close co-operation and consultation with the Government of Belarus and in full respect for the laws and regulations of the host country. All activities of the OSCE Office in Minsk not provided in its regular budget will be carried out in the form of projects and programmes, which must be relevant to the fulfilment of this mandate, consistent with OSCE objectives and in full compliance with the relevant procedures in force in the OSCE.
4. This mandate will apply until 31 December 2003. The prolongation and any changes of this mandate will be subject to a new decision of the OSCE Permanent Council, on an annual basis.
5. The OSCE Office in Minsk will be staffed by a Head of Office assisted by a team of experts.

**INTERPRETATIVE STATEMENT UNDER PARAGRAPH 79  
(CHAPTER 6) OF THE FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS  
OF THE HELSINKI CONSULTATIONS**

By the Delegation of Belarus:

“In connection with the adoption of the decision on the OSCE Office in Minsk our Delegation would like to make the following interpretative statement.

1. The procedure of the implementation of all projects and programmes of the OSCE Office in Minsk in accordance with the Permanent Council Decision No. 486 of 28 June 2002 foresees prior consultations with the Government of the host country. We understand that these consultations should result in the agreement by the Government to implementation of any project or programme. Any activity financed through extra-budgetary contributions cannot be carried out without the agreement of the host country.
2. The OSCE Office in Minsk should carry out monitoring on the basis of factual data and using in a balanced way all sources of information. The coverage of any event or fact without presenting an official position of the Government of the host country would be unacceptable.
3. The OSCE Office in Minsk in its activities should be guided, *inter alia*, by the principle of political neutrality and non-interference in the internal affairs of Belarus.
4. Former international and local members of the Advisory and Monitoring Group in Belarus can not be integrated in the work of the OSCE Office in Minsk. Persons who are or were engaged in the activities of intelligence services or any other activity directed against national interests of the Republic of Belarus cannot also be employed as the members of the Office.

I request that this interpretative statement be attached to the Journal of today’s meeting.”

PC.DEC/526  
30 December 2002  
Attachment 2

Original: ENGLISH

**INTERPRETATIVE STATEMENT UNDER PARAGRAPH 79  
(CHAPTER 6) OF THE FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS  
OF THE HELSINKI CONSULTATIONS**

By the Delegation of the United States of America:

“Decisions taken by the Permanent Council should be understood for what they actually say. In the Decision on the OSCE Office in Minsk that the Permanent Council adopted on 30 December 2002, participating States agreed that ‘All activities of the OSCE Office in Minsk not provided in its regular budget will be carried out in the form of projects and programmes, which must be relevant to the fulfilment of this mandate, consistent with OSCE objectives and in full compliance with the relevant procedures in force in the OSCE.’ Decision No. 486, referred to by the Belarus delegation, further asserts that the system on extra-budgetary contributions should include consultations on projects with the government of the host country. These principles, which include no provision for ‘approval’ by the host country, establish the clear basis upon which projects funded by extra-budgetary contributions should be implemented.

In connection with the Belarusian statement regarding OSCE Office in Minsk reporting, ‘non-interference in the internal affairs of Belarus’, and staffing issues, we support the views expressed by the Director of the Conflict Prevention Centre, Ambassador Zannier. In these matters, the OSCE Office in Minsk should be guided by the mandate adopted by this Permanent Council, the Memorandum of Understanding signed by the OSCE and the Government of Belarus, and the policies and procedures of the OSCE.”