

Delegation of the Russian Federation

**STATEMENT BY MR. ANDREY KELIN,  
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,  
AT THE 925th MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

11 October 2012

**In response to the statement by Mr. Riccardo Migliori,  
President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly**

Mr. Chairperson,

We join other delegations in welcoming Mr. Riccardo Migliori, President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, to today's meeting of the Permanent Council. We listened with interest to his assessments of the Assembly's activities and his proposals for enhancing the effectiveness of our Organization's work.

For our part, we think that the Assembly's main task should be to contribute in every possible way to the formation of a common and indivisible security space from Vancouver to Vladivostok. Parliamentarians could make a contribution to the accomplishment of this task, having dedicated the forthcoming winter meeting in Vienna, and the Annual Session that will take place in Istanbul next year, to this topic.

We should like to stress that Russia takes the Assembly's work very seriously. The active participation of the delegation of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation in all of the Assembly's events is evidence of this. We are looking forward with great interest, Mr. Migliori, to your upcoming visit to Moscow. In fact, the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Sergey Lavrov, speaking yesterday to the Federation Council of the Duma of the Russian Federation, expressed high esteem for the role of parliamentary diplomacy, among other things, within the framework of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly. Our parliamentarians have put forward important initiatives intended to strengthen the OSCE and to heighten the effectiveness of its activities in different areas. We note with satisfaction that, at the Assembly's Annual Session held in Monaco in July 2012, resolutions were adopted on improving election observation in OSCE participating States and on freedom of movement in the OSCE area. These resolutions were proposed by Russian parliamentarians and supported by a number of delegations.

This example shows the importance of focusing the Assembly's attention on the most pressing common problems and on the search for mutually acceptable ways of solving them. Above all, this involves issues related to election monitoring by the OSCE. As shown by the experience of the election campaigns that took place this year in a number of countries

belonging to the Commonwealth of Independent States, in particular Russia, Kazakhstan and Belarus, we are again encountering politicized and all too often biased assessments on the part of OSCE observers.

That situation, which is already “chronic”, has rightly elicited criticism, about which Mr. Migliori spoke. It casts doubt on the authority of the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights and of the OSCE as a whole, on whose behalf post-election findings are announced. For this reason, we again call for agreement on common principles and rules of election observation and for strict adherence to them.

We think that the issue of freedom of movement and liberalization of visa regimes should come within the Assembly’s purview. Resolving these issues in the right way is also aimed at surmounting the dividing lines which, unfortunately, still exist on our continent. The resolutions adopted in Monaco constitute a specific contribution by parliamentarians in this area.

One of the urgent topics requiring greater attention from the Assembly is countering aggressive nationalism and neo-Nazism. Parliamentarians cannot be indifferent to incidents involving the glorification of former SS troops and their henchmen.

One of the Assembly’s priorities could be problems relating to the growth of aggressive anti-religious and xenophobic manifestations, which are fraught with serious consequences for Europe. The OSCE and its Parliamentary Assembly, which represent countries with varying cultural, religious and national traditions, are also rightly called upon to be a forum for the preparation of co-ordinated actions to counter these manifestations of intolerance, which affect the fate of millions of people.

We also consider it important for the Assembly to be actively engaged in resolving issues related to the so-called “non-citizens” in a number of OSCE participating States. It is inadmissible that in the twenty-first century, hundreds of thousands of people, born in and living in the territory of their country, should be deprived of elementary social and political rights, including the right to participate in elections.

We are interested in strengthening the Assembly’s position as a forum uniting the parliamentarians of 56 OSCE participating States. For this reason, it is necessary, in considering the Assembly’s current and prospective activities, and especially in discussing draft resolutions on certain country-specific subjects, to avoid unnecessary confrontation and to take into account the opinion of the countries concerned and of their delegations, so as not to turn the Assembly’s rostrum into a venue for biased and aggressive attacks against certain participating States.

In conclusion, I should like to wish you, Mr. Migliori, success in your post in the interests of reinforcing the Assembly’s unified origins and heightening its authority.

Thank you for your attention.