

PC.DEL/78/14
31 January 2014

ENGLISH
Original: RUSSIAN

Delegation of the Russian Federation

**STATEMENT BY MR. ANDREY KELIN,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,
AT THE 982nd MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

30 January 2014

**In response to the address by Mr. Sebastian Kurz,
Federal Minister for European and International Affairs of Austria**

Mr. Chairperson,
Minister,

We are genuinely pleased to welcome you to this meeting of the Permanent Council. We listened to your approaches to key areas of work of the Council of Europe and its co-operation with the OSCE with great interest. Nonetheless, we should like to shed extra light on the important Helsinki+40 process. It is a unique Europe-wide format for developing joint measures to promote our shared goal: creating an equal and indivisible security community. However, to succeed in this undertaking, political determination and a goodwill-based approach are vital.

We remain committed to the motto of the Russian chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe in 2006; "Towards a Europe without dividing lines". We are convinced that combining the efforts of the OSCE and the Council of Europe will prove to be productive and will help to build a single economic and humanitarian space in Europe: the necessary foundation for eliminating dividing lines on security.

We trust that in 2014 the Helsinki+40 process will be able to put forward specific ideas that will help to create a new image for the Organization after 2015. In order to be oriented towards the future, the OSCE must transform itself into a fully fledged international organization. In this regard, it is extremely useful to examine the experience of the Council of Europe. The OSCE requires comprehensive reform, including resolving its legal status, defining the membership criteria and geographical scope of the Organization, and streamlining the work of its collective bodies and executive structures.

I fully agree with you, Minister, that given our limited resources, joint efforts must be efficient. The Council of Europe has developed a solid international legal basis on humanitarian issues. The OSCE is a unique forum which operates on the basis of consensus and the sovereign equality of States to develop open dialogue, prevent and settle conflicts, increase mutual understanding and strengthen co-operation. What we need is not duplication, but complementarity. In this regard, it is important that the arrangements for the OSCE's

co-operation with the Council of Europe, just like those with other organizations, be based on collective agreement.

The OSCE and the Council of Europe have defined four priority areas for co-operation that are well known. These are the fight against terrorism, trafficking in human beings, the rights of ethnic minorities, tolerance and non-discrimination. It is important to focus on these, rather than getting ahead of ourselves and searching for new topics. In this regard we are looking forward with great interest to the international “Not for Sale – Joining Forces against Trafficking in Human Beings” conference, which is being jointly organized by the chairmanships of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe and the OSCE.

We are certain that the Austrian chairmanship will help to bolster the role of the Council of Europe as a politically independent organization in Europe, and the leading pan-European format for specialized co-operation on humanitarian affairs.

The recipe for success for any chairmanship, and this holds true for the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe as much as for the OSCE, lies in focusing on solving real problems that worry people throughout the Organization’s geographical area, and in being ready to tirelessly seek consensus-based decisions on complex agenda points.

In conclusion, I should like to take this opportunity to once again thank the Austrian authorities for their hospitality and the extremely pleasant environment that they have provided for the work of the OSCE and the diplomatic missions of participating States.

Thank you for your attention.