



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

PC.DEC/589
18 December 2003

Original: ENGLISH

488th Plenary Meeting
PC Journal No. 488, Agenda item 15

**DECISION No. 589
EXTENSION OF THE MANDATE OF THE
OSCE OFFICE IN MINSK**

The Permanent Council,

Recalling its Decision No. 526 of 30 December 2002,

Decides to extend the mandate of the OSCE Office in Minsk until 31 December 2004.

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**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 extension of the mandate of the OSCE Office in Minsk until 31 December 2004 our Delegation would like to make the following interpretative statement.

1. The Republic of Belarus reiterates that the procedure of the implementation of all projects and programmes of the OSCE Office in Minsk in accordance with Permanent Council Decisions No. 486 of 28 June 2002 and No. 526 of 30 December 2002, foresees prior consultations with the Government of the host country. The Republic of Belarus understands 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. Project activities of the OSCE Office in Minsk should be carried out in a balanced way for all the areas determined by its mandate, and should respond to the real needs of the host country.
2. The OSCE Office in Minsk should carry out monitoring of the development of the situation in the areas where it is to provide the assistance to the Government of Belarus, 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. In its reports the Office should, first and foremost, report on its real work in order to implement its mandate. It should refrain from a political assessment of events and from making predictions on the development of the situation in the host country.
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.

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