



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

PC.DEC/917
10 December 2009

Original: ENGLISH

785th Plenary Meeting

PC Journal No. 785, Agenda item 5

**DECISION No. 917
EXTENSION OF THE MANDATE OF THE
OSCE OFFICE IN ZAGREB**

The Permanent Council,

Decides to extend the mandate of the OSCE Office in Zagreb until
31 December 2010;

Takes note with appreciation of the significant progress achieved by the Government of Croatia in implementing its commitments in many fields in both areas of the mandate of the OSCE Office, as confirmed in the Status Reports on Mandate-Related Developments and Activities distributed on 23 March 2009 (PC.FR/4/09 OSCE+) and 2 November 2009 (SEC.FR/764/09 Restr.);

Tasks the OSCE Office in Zagreb to submit to the Permanent Council a status report, by the end of 2010, as the basis for the evaluation of the fulfilment of the mandate and mandate-related tasks.

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**INTERPRETATIVE STATEMENT UNDER
PARAGRAPH IV.1(A)6 OF THE RULES OF PROCEDURE
OF THE ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY AND
CO-OPERATION IN EUROPE**

By the delegation of Serbia:

“The Republic of Serbia is convinced that the role of the OSCE field presences in South-East Europe and the assistance they provide in implementing the principles, standards and commitments of the OSCE are of crucial importance for the democratic progress of the region as a whole.

The Republic of Serbia is, as a matter of principle, of the opinion that it is of essential importance that all OSCE field presences work actively, until their mandates are completely fulfilled. This applies also to the mandate of the OSCE Office in Zagreb, which is still not completed, as it is outlined in the “Status Report on Mandate-Related Developments and Activities” SEC.FR/764/09 of 27 October 2009.

Apart from that, the Republic of Serbia, as the country hosting the largest number of refugees in Europe, believes that for problems that are in their essence of regional character, as is the refugee issue in South-East Europe, regional solutions are required. Solutions for the existing refugee problems have to be durable and sustainable. We deeply believe that we can find such solutions only with the indispensable assistance of the international community, and the OSCE can, in this sense, with capacities as are the field presences, make a considerable contribution to this.

The Republic of Serbia, on her part, is ready to engage constructively in finding solutions to open issues of the refugee problem and to this end initiated the organization of a regional conference in Belgrade dedicated to the solution of the refugee issues in the region.

Another important aspect of the OSCE field presences in South-East Europe is that they facilitate the complex reform processes of the judiciary structures engaged in war crimes prosecution all over the region. Their co-ordinated activities are an important assistance in the co-operation of our relevant courts, prosecutors and other law-enforcement agencies. In this context, we believe that more transparency on the part of the Croatian authorities with respect to ongoing proceedings related to un-prosecuted war crimes and trials in absentia would be conducive. Having in mind the complexity of the issue, we believe that the monitoring of the war crimes proceedings by the OSCE Office in Zagreb remains a crucial task. We would like to remind that according to PC Decision No. 836 monitoring of all cases involving ICTY transfers, including so-called “Category II” cases, as well as domestic war crimes proceedings initiated at the local level, are within the mandate of the Office in Zagreb.

Furthermore, we would like to underline that the OSCE is perceived by many stakeholders as an important factor in the implementation of the ICTY exit strategy. In this context Chief Prosecutor Serge Brammertz in his address to the United Nations on 3 December 2009 particularly stressed the co-operation with the OSCE field presences and the countries in our region. This year's standstill in the co-operation of Croatia with the ICTY, as it is assessed by the Chief Prosecutor, shows that nobody can claim that progress is irreversible, but we believe that Croatia is on the right track again. In this sense we welcome the establishment of the Croatian Inter-Agency Task Force in October this year, tasked to locate the documentation important for further judicial war crimes proceedings.

The Republic of Serbia joined the consensus regarding the decision on the extension of the mandate of the OSCE Office in Zagreb, understanding that the Office will continue to be actively engaged in the tasks defined in the mandate, until the mandate is fully implemented.

We request that this interpretative statement be duly registered.”