
Chairmanship: Sweden**1299th PLENARY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL**

1. Date: Thursday, 21 January 2021 (via video teleconference)

Opened: 10.00 a.m.
Suspended: 1 p.m.
Resumed: 3 p.m.
Closed: 6.25 p.m.

2. Chairperson: Ambassador U. Funered

Prior to taking up the agenda, the Chairperson reminded the Permanent Council of the technical modalities for the conduct of meetings of the Council during the COVID-19 pandemic.

3. Subjects discussed – Statements – Decisions/documents adopted:

Agenda item 1: INAUGURAL REMARKS BY THE NEW OSCE
SECRETARY GENERAL, H.E. MS. HELGA SCHMID

Chairperson, Secretary General (SEC.GAL/13/21), Portugal-European Union (with the candidate countries Albania, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia; the country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate country Bosnia and Herzegovina; the European Free Trade Association countries Iceland and Liechtenstein, members of the European Economic Area; as well as Andorra, Georgia, Moldova and San Marino, in alignment) (PC.DEL/81/21), Russian Federation (PC.DEL/33/21), United States of America (PC.DEL/28/21), Turkey (PC.DEL/60/21 OSCE+), Switzerland (PC.DEL/41/21 OSCE+), United Kingdom (PC.DEL/42/21 OSCE+), Azerbaijan (PC.DEL/29/21 OSCE+), Norway (PC.DEL/30/21), Holy See (PC.DEL/31/21 OSCE+), Albania (PC.DEL/32/21 OSCE+), Canada (PC.DEL/36/21 OSCE+), Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan, Ukraine (PC.DEL/66/21), Kazakhstan, Georgia (PC.DEL/76/21 OSCE+), Belarus (PC.DEL/35/21 OSCE+), Armenia (PC.DEL/58/21), Italy (PC.DEL/37/21), Mongolia, Lithuania (PC.DEL/39/21 OSCE+), Uzbekistan, Austria

Agenda item 2: ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE
OSCE PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY,
H.E. LORD PETER BOWNESS

Chairperson, President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly (PA.GAL/2/21 OSCE+), Russian Federation (PC.DEL/46/21), Portugal-European Union (with the candidate countries Albania, Montenegro and North Macedonia; the European Free Trade Association countries Iceland and Liechtenstein, members of the European Economic Area; as well as Andorra, Moldova and San Marino, in alignment) (PC.DEL/82/21), United States of America (PC.DEL/38/21), Turkey (PC.DEL/40/21 OSCE+), United Kingdom, Azerbaijan (PC.DEL/45/21 OSCE+), Kyrgyzstan, Ukraine (PC.DEL/67/21), Kazakhstan (PC.DEL/47/21 OSCE+), Norway (PC.DEL/43/21), Armenia (PC.DEL/63/21), Georgia (PC.DEL/77/21 OSCE+)

Agenda item 3: DECISION ON THE EXTENSION OF THE DEPLOYMENT
OF OSCE OBSERVERS TO TWO RUSSIAN
CHECKPOINTS ON THE RUSSIAN-UKRAINIAN
BORDER

Chairperson

Decision: The Permanent Council adopted Decision No. 1400 (PC.DEC/1400) on the extension of the deployment of OSCE observers to two Russian checkpoints on the Russian-Ukrainian border, the text of which is appended to this journal.

Portugal-European Union (with the candidate countries Albania, Montenegro and North Macedonia; the European Free Trade Association countries Iceland and Norway, members of the European Economic Area; as well as Andorra, Georgia, Moldova and San Marino, in alignment) (interpretative statement, see attachment 1 to the decision), Russian Federation (interpretative statement, see attachment 2 to the decision), United Kingdom (interpretative statement, see attachment 3 to the decision), Canada (interpretative statement, see attachment 4 to the decision), United States of America (interpretative statement, see attachment 5 to the decision), Ukraine (interpretative statement, see attachment 6 to the decision)

Agenda item 4: REVIEW OF CURRENT ISSUES

Chairperson

- (a) *Russia's ongoing aggression against Ukraine and illegal occupation of Crimea:* Ukraine (PC.DEL/68/21), United Kingdom, Portugal-European Union (with the candidate countries Albania, Montenegro and North Macedonia; the European Free Trade Association countries Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, members of the European Economic Area; as well as Georgia and Moldova, in alignment) (PC.DEL/79/21), Turkey (PC.DEL/73/21 OSCE+), United States of America (PC.DEL/44/21), Switzerland (PC.DEL/72/21 OSCE+), Canada

- (b) *Situation in Ukraine and the need to implement the Minsk agreements:* Russian Federation (PC.DEL/52/21), Ukraine
- (c) *Aggression of Azerbaijan against Artsakh and Armenia with the direct involvement of Turkey and foreign terrorist fighters:* Armenia (Annex 1)
- (d) *Censorship of digital information in the United States of America:* Russian Federation (PC.DEL/54/21), United States of America (PC.DEL/48/21)
- (e) *Detention of opposition politician Mr. A. Navalny in the Russian Federation:* Portugal-European Union (with the candidate countries Albania, Montenegro and North Macedonia; the European Free Trade Association countries Iceland and Liechtenstein, members of the European Economic Area; as well as Ukraine, in alignment) (PC.DEL/83/21), United Kingdom, Switzerland (PC.DEL/71/21 OSCE+), United States of America (PC.DEL/49/21), Norway (PC.DEL/50/21), Canada, Russian Federation (PC.DEL/62/21 OSCE+)

Agenda item 5: REPORT ON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE
 CHAIRPERSON-IN-OFFICE

- (a) *Address by the Chairperson-in-Office to the Permanent Council via video teleconference on 14 January 2021:* Chairperson
- (b) *Participation of the Chairperson-in-Office in the annual meeting of the OSCE Chairmanship and the Secretariat with the heads of field operations and institutions, held via video teleconference on 14 and 15 January 2021:* Chairperson
- (c) *Visit of the Chairperson-in-Office to Ukraine on 19 and 20 January 2021:* Chairperson, Russian Federation (Annex 2)

Agenda item 6: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL

- (a) *Update on the COVID-19 situation across the OSCE's executive structures:* Secretary General (SEC.GAL/16/21 OSCE+)
- (b) *Participation of the Secretary General in the annual meeting of the OSCE Chairmanship and the Secretariat with the heads of field operations and institutions, held via video teleconference on 14 and 15 January 2021:* Secretary General (SEC.GAL/16/21 OSCE+)

Agenda item 7: ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- (a) *Presidential election and referendum in Kyrgyzstan, held on 10 January 2021:* Kyrgyzstan, Turkey (PC.DEL/74/21 OSCE+), Portugal-European Union (with the candidate countries Albania, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia; the country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate country Bosnia and Herzegovina; the European Free Trade Association countries Iceland and Liechtenstein, members of the European

Economic Area; as well as Georgia, in alignment) (PC.DEL/84/21), United Kingdom (PC.DEL/57/21 OSCE+), Russian Federation (PC.DEL/61/21), United States of America (PC.DEL/51/21), Azerbaijan (PC.DEL/55/21 OSCE+)

- (b) *Parliamentary elections in Kazakhstan, held on 10 January 2021*: Kazakhstan (PC.DEL/70/21 OSCE+), Turkey (PC.DEL/75/21 OSCE+), Portugal-European (with the candidate countries Albania, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia; the European Free Trade Association countries Iceland and Liechtenstein, members of the European Economic Area; as well as Georgia, in alignment) (PC.DEL/80/21), United Kingdom (PC.DEL/56/21 OSCE+), Russian Federation (PC.DEL/64/21), Azerbaijan (PC.DEL/59/21 OSCE+)
- (c) *Parliamentary elections in Cyprus, to be held on 30 May 2021*: Cyprus
- (d) *Address by the President of Uzbekistan to the Oliy Majlis (Parliament) on 29 December 2020*: Uzbekistan (PC.DEL/69/21) (PC.DEL/69/21/Add.1)

4. Next meeting:

Thursday, 28 January 2021, at 10 a.m., via video teleconference



1299th Plenary Meeting

PC Journal No. 1299, Agenda item 4(c)

**STATEMENT BY
THE DELEGATION OF ARMENIA**

Madam Chairperson,

For the last three and a half months the Armenian delegation has been consistently raising the issue of the war unleashed on 27 September by Azerbaijan against Artsakh and its people with the unreserved political support and direct military involvement of Turkey and Turkish-sponsored foreign terrorist fighters.

Throughout the 44 days of that aggression, unprecedented in terms of scale and violence, the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chair countries at the level of the respective presidents and foreign ministers made several attempts to cease the military hostilities, which failed due to the almost immediate violation by Azerbaijan of the agreements reached. In the end the ceasefire was established with the adoption on 9 November of a trilateral statement agreed through the mediation of the President of the Russian Federation.

However, today the Armenian delegation raises this current issue to share deep concerns about the situation in Artsakh (Nagorno-Karabakh) in the aftermath of the war and in particular about continued violation by Azerbaijan of the provisions of the trilateral statement. Unlike Armenia, which implements its part of the provisions of the statement, almost all paragraphs that required action on the part of Azerbaijan so far either have been violated or remained on paper.

Notably, the first provision of the statement holds that “a complete ceasefire and termination of all hostilities in the area of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict is hereby declared” and that the parties “shall stop at their current positions”. Yet, more than a month into the ceasefire, Azerbaijan launched military operations in the direction of Hin Tagher and Khetsaberd, the two villages of the Hadrut region that remained under Armenian control. On 11 December 2020, the special forces of Azerbaijan launched an attack in this area in an attempt to wipe out these villages of their ethnic Armenian inhabitants, so that the entire region of Hadrut would come under Azerbaijan’s *de facto* control.

As a result of this unprovoked aggression, Azerbaijan captured 64 Armenian servicemen, in violation of its ceasefire obligations under the trilateral statement. In an attempt to justify its actions in Hadrut, Azerbaijan is now, again attempting to shift the blame on Armenia by invoking a groundless narrative of a fake “anti-terror operation” and an

alleged sabotage group deployed by Armenia and portraying the Armenian prisoners of war as “terrorists”.

Moreover, the President of Azerbaijan in his statements delivered on 31 December 2020 and 7 January 2021, while presenting the Armenian prisoners of war as “terrorists”, ordered the initiation of a prosecution process. This is a flagrant violation of international humanitarian law and the Geneva Conventions. Furthermore, this is a violation of paragraph 8 of the trilateral statement of 9 November, which unequivocally stipulates that the side should exchange prisoners of war, hostages and other detainees, as well as the remains of the fallen soldiers.

Madam Chairperson,

The immediate release and return of prisoners of war and hostages must be viewed exclusively in the context of human rights and international humanitarian law, as well as in the context of the full implementation of the trilateral statement on the ceasefire. Undue delays in the release of prisoners of war are prohibited under international humanitarian law, which provides that the return of prisoners of war should be ensured immediately after the cessation of hostilities. The Third Geneva Convention of 1949 stipulates that prisoners of war cannot be prosecuted or detained for taking part in hostilities. This is a universal norm of international law, and its application is not conditioned by its inclusion in specific conflict resolution instruments. Therefore, politicizing or using this issue for political purposes is unacceptable and detrimental to the peace process.

The initiation of criminal proceedings against the Armenian servicemen held captive by Azerbaijan is legally unfounded, and it is obvious that their detention and their labelling as “terrorists” puts their lives at risk. Our concerns are well founded, since in the past we have had several cases when Armenian captives were subjected to torture and cruelty, even killed while in captivity. We have also seen cases of physical and psychological abuse of prisoners of war during the Azerbaijani-Turkish aggression as well. There have also been some reports in open sources that the Armenian prisoners of war and civilian hostages are under the risk of becoming victims of organ trafficking.

For the last two months numerous video footages appeared on social networks and were widely disseminated showing executions, torture, degrading, cruel and inhuman treatment of Armenian prisoners of war by the Azerbaijani side, whereas prohibition of torture “is a peremptory norm of international law without territorial limitation, which applies at all times and in all places”. This was clearly reflected in the Tirana Ministerial Council decision of 4 December 2020, adopted with the agreement of all participating States, including Azerbaijan.

The beheadings, beatings, and humiliations inflicted by Azerbaijani military personnel upon Armenian captives are clear indications of the policy of consistent ethnic cleansing, including through intimidation and terror campaigns against the Armenian people of Artsakh, pursued by Azerbaijan.

The cruel treatment and execution of two Armenians in the town of Hadrut by the Azerbaijani military has already been described by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights as a possible war crime. Armenia lodged a number of applications before

the European Court of Human Rights in this regard. The last case concerned the Armenian prisoner of war, who was identified by his parents in the video footage, but days ago was found dead in the Hadrut region, while the forensic evidence showed that he was killed a couple of days prior to that.

We are extremely concerned with this situation, since we believe that the widespread nature of the cases of degrading and inhuman treatment of Armenian captives unequivocally indicates that this is a behaviour sanctioned at least by the army leadership.

Madam Chairperson,

Besides the prisoners of war, Azerbaijan holds captive civilians as well. According to our estimates, there are 22 civilian captives, including women, who are taken hostage by the Azerbaijani side.

Azerbaijan's unconstructive and highly politicized stance in this purely humanitarian issue further illustrates the lack of goodwill and its true intentions. These actions clearly and undeniably indicate and give us reason to believe that the Armenian prisoners of war, as well as civilian captives will be held as hostages to be used to pressure Artsakh and Armenia.

We call on Azerbaijan to comply with its obligations under international humanitarian law and the OSCE commitments, to stop torture and other degrading and inhuman treatment of Armenian prisoners of war and other captives, and to release all Armenian captives immediately and unconditionally.

Armenia condemns the detrimental practice of threats, blackmail, hostage-taking and attempts to instrumentalize the issue of prisoners of war and to use human lives to get concessions in the context of conflict-related issues, something that Azerbaijan is cynically promoting by turning a humanitarian issue into a bargaining tool.

Madam Chairperson,

Words that are not followed by deeds are empty sounds. We have heard here in the Permanent Council assurances from the Azerbaijani delegation about their commitment to peace and security in the region. So far, Azerbaijani actions indicate the opposite. Indeed, Azerbaijan's agenda is hidden in plain sight for anyone to see. While talking about peace and security in the region, Azerbaijan has consistently been challenging the consolidated position of the international community, in particular, the position of the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chairs.

We have lost count of the number of times when Azerbaijan, in violation of its commitments – both old and new – under international law and signed agreements used force against Artsakh and Armenia. And we do not see any signs that this pattern of behaviour of Azerbaijan and its leadership is going to be changed. Moreover, the unabated anti-Armenian rhetoric evident in the statements of the Azerbaijani leadership comes to confirm that the Armenophobic policy of the Azerbaijani Government has not changed.

In conclusion, Madam Chairperson, I would like to draw the attention of the Permanent Council to and raise our deep concerns about the joint Turkish-Azerbaijani

military exercise to be held in Kars, some 50 kilometres away from the Armenian border. According to the publicly available information this unnotified military exercise will take place from 1 to 12 February and will involve tank divisions, heavy artillery, sniper teams, helicopters and special forces. This is reminiscent of other unnotified large-scale exercises conducted by Turkey and Azerbaijan in close proximity to Armenian borders, the last one being in July and August, almost immediately after the July flare up on Armenia's State border and before the war against Artsakh.

Turkey and its client State Azerbaijan through their actions and public statements aim to keep the high tensions in the region. We have been warning that the Turkish-Azerbaijani tandem, if not stopped, will destabilize the region. And these are the true intentions of these two States, despite verbal assurances and statements of the leaders of both Turkey and Azerbaijan about the need to build trust and good neighbourly relations. Conducting military exercises with an obvious offensive intent, immediately after 44 days of violent war and in the midst of an extremely fragile ceasefire, does not fit into the pronounced intentions or declared readiness by high-ranking officials of Turkey and Azerbaijan to achieve sustainable and lasting peace in the region.

Lasting and sustainable peace in the region could be achieved only through a comprehensive resolution of the conflict, including resolving the issue of the status of Artsakh based on the realization of the right of its people to self-determination, ensuring the safe and dignified return of the displaced population to their homes and preserving the cultural and religious heritage of the region.

I thank you.



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

PC.JOUR/1299
21 January 2021
Annex 2

ENGLISH
Original: RUSSIAN

1299th Plenary Meeting
PC Journal No. 1299, Agenda item 5(c)

**STATEMENT BY
THE DELEGATION OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION**

Madam Chairperson,

In the light of the comments by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Sweden, Ann Linde, during her official visit to Ukraine on 19 and 20 January in her capacity as OSCE Chairperson-in-Office, we consider it necessary to additionally emphasize the following.

A number of the statements made by Ms. Linde are confrontational in nature, do not reflect the real situation and are not in line with the consensus-based approaches developed at the OSCE. I am referring, in particular, to her comments regarding the territorial affiliation of the Crimean peninsula and the outright disrespect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Russian Federation. We would like to emphasize that any attempts to use the OSCE to advance revisionist approaches to a political and legal reality that came about as a result of a democratic process not only jeopardize the assertion of OSCE principles, but also clearly do not contribute to the strengthening of pan-European security.

Ms. Linde's biased assessments regarding the work of the "Normandy format" and the consultations held within that framework deserve special attention. I would remind you that neither Sweden nor the OSCE participate in the "Normandy format". It is out of place to try to impose certain obligations on the Russian Federation that are meant to be fulfilled by it in the wake of the Paris summit of the Normandy Four leaders on 9 December 2019. We would point out that a desire to use the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office as a resource for exerting external pressure on the discussions in the "Normandy format" will only hamper the extensive diplomatic efforts being made to ensure that the format works effectively.

We are obliged to point out that the approach demonstrated by Ms. Linde in Ukraine is at variance with the mandate of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office based on the decisions of the Organization's decision-making bodies. We regard such a course as being in outright disregard for the collectively adopted norms regulating the work of the Chairmanships.

Specifically, pursuant to paragraph 2 of the 2002 Porto Ministerial Council decision on the role of the OSCE Chairmanship-in-Office, the Chairmanship is obliged to ensure that "its actions are not inconsistent with positions agreed by all the participating States and that

the whole spectrum of opinions of participating States is taken into account”. Furthermore, pursuant to Permanent Council Decision No. 485 of 28 July 2002, public statements on behalf of the Chairperson-in-Office, the Secretary General and their authorized official representatives and public outreach activities “are to be made in line with their mandates and should not be inconsistent with OSCE consensus positions”.

We emphasize that it is absolutely unacceptable to replace the interests of the Organization, which comprises 57 participating States with equal rights, with a political agenda based on the interests of a group of countries. We urge Sweden to take a responsible and professional approach to fulfilling its duties as the OSCE Chairmanship.

We ask that this statement be transmitted to Ms. Linde personally and that the text be attached to the journal of the day.



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

PC.DEC/1400
21 January 2021

Original: ENGLISH

1299th Plenary Meeting

PC Journal No. 1299, Agenda item 3

**DECISION No. 1400
EXTENSION OF THE DEPLOYMENT OF OSCE OBSERVERS TO
TWO RUSSIAN CHECKPOINTS ON THE
RUSSIAN-UKRAINIAN BORDER**

The Permanent Council,

Recalling its Decision No. 1130 of 24 July 2014 on the deployment of OSCE observers to two Russian checkpoints on the Russian-Ukrainian border (PC.DEC/1130),

Decides:

1. To extend the mandate of the deployment of OSCE observers to the two Russian border checkpoints of Donetsk and Gukovo on the Russian-Ukrainian border until 31 May 2021;
2. To approve the arrangements and the financial and human resources for the Observer Mission as contained in document PC.ACMF/5/21 of 18 January 2021. In this respect, authorizes the use of 468,000 euros from cash surplus to fund the proposed budget for the duration of the mandate to 31 May 2021.

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

The delegation of Portugal, in its capacity as EU Presidency, passed the floor to the representative of the European Union, who delivered the following statement:

“In connection with the decision of the Permanent Council on the extension of the deployment of OSCE observers to two Russian checkpoints on the Russian-Ukrainian border, the European Union would like to make the following interpretative statement under the relevant provisions of the Rules of Procedure.

The European Union’s views on the vital importance of the monitoring of the Ukrainian-Russian State border are well known. Effective and comprehensive monitoring of this border is an integral part of a sustainable political solution in line with OSCE principles and commitments, which re-establishes full Ukrainian control over its sovereign territory, including the border. We recall that the Minsk Protocol calls for permanent monitoring of the border and verification by the OSCE and that the Minsk Package of Measures includes a commitment to reinstate full Ukrainian control over its entire international border.

The OSCE Observer Mission’s currently very limited mandate and its small size does not provide for a comprehensive border monitoring. We therefore reiterate our call for a significant expansion of the Observer Mission to all border crossings on the Russian-Ukrainian State border currently not under control of the Ukrainian Government as well as monitoring between these border crossings. This should be supported and co-ordinated with border monitoring on the Ukrainian side of the border by the Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine (SMM) and we reiterate the need for the SMM to be assured safe and unhindered access to all parts of the border currently not under Ukrainian Government control since border and ceasefire monitoring are very closely interlinked. Further, we underline the need for sufficient equipment and sufficient freedom of movement for the Observer Mission at the current crossing stations in order to monitor movements on the border more effectively.

We do not see any grounds for the Russian Federation’s continued resistance to the long overdue expansion of the Observer Mission, including the improvement of its equipment and urge it to reconsider its position.

We welcome the mandate extension by four months, and would support an extension to a longer period of time, increasing the Mission’s continuity and consistency.

We request that this interpretative statement be attached to the decision and to the journal of the day.”

The candidate countries the Republic of North Macedonia¹, Montenegro¹ and Albania¹, and the EFTA countries Iceland and Norway, members of the European Economic Area, as well as the Republic of Moldova, Georgia, Andorra and San Marino align themselves with this statement.

1 The Republic of North Macedonia, Montenegro and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

PC.DEC/1400
21 January 2021
Attachment 2

ENGLISH
Original: RUSSIAN

**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 the Russian Federation:

“The Russian Federation has joined the consensus regarding the Permanent Council decision on the extension of the mandate of the team of OSCE observers at the two Russian checkpoints of Gukovo and Donetsk on the Russian-Ukrainian border for four months (until 31 May 2021), viewing the work of this team as a confidence-building measure outside the context of the fulfilment by the parties to the internal Ukrainian crisis – the Ukrainian Government, Donetsk and Luhansk – of their commitments within the framework of the Minsk agreements signed already after the team’s deployment.

The Minsk Protocol of 5 September 2014 in no way mentions the deployment of OSCE observers on the Russian side of the border with Ukraine. Nor is there any reference to this in the Package of Measures for the Implementation of the Minsk Agreements adopted on 12 February 2015 and subsequently endorsed by United Nations Security Council resolution 2202. The decision to allow OSCE observers on Russian territory and Ukrainian border guards and customs officers to be present at Russian checkpoints is solely a gesture of goodwill on Russia’s part.

The long-standing work of the team, which has confirmed the consistently calm situation on the Russian-Ukrainian border, should have had a positive effect on the resolution of the internal Ukrainian crisis. However, no progress is being observed in this regard because the leadership of Ukraine is not making any meaningful efforts to achieve a lasting, comprehensive political settlement of the internal conflict in the east of the country. There is also the desire of a number of participating States to politicize the activities of the team of observers through calls to change its mandate without good reason.

We reaffirm the immutability of the mandate and the places of work of the team, which were clearly laid down in Permanent Council Decision No. 1130 of 24 July 2014. That decision was based on the invitation made on 14 July 2014 by the Russian Federation in the wake of the Berlin Declaration issued on 2 July 2014 by the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Russia, Germany, France and Ukraine. The organizational modalities of their work, which are laid down in the mandate of the team of OSCE observers, do not provide for functional co-operation with OSCE field operations in other States.

We request that this statement be attached to the adopted decision and included in the journal of the day.”

**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 the United Kingdom:

“In connection with the decision of the Permanent Council on the extension of the deployment of OSCE observers to two Russian checkpoints on the Russian-Ukrainian border, the United Kingdom would also like to make the following interpretative statement under paragraph IV.1(A)6 of the OSCE Rules of Procedure.

We very much share the views expressed by the European Union and others that the establishment of genuinely comprehensive monitoring of the entire segment of the Russian-Ukrainian State border outside Ukrainian Government control, as well as the restoration of full Ukrainian control over that border, is essential.

While joining consensus on this decision, we wish to reiterate that the Mission’s limited scope, as well as the excessive restrictions placed on it by the host country, mean that it is a far cry from the comprehensive border monitoring foreseen under the Minsk agreements.

The Mission is only present at two checkpoints along an over 400-kilometre stretch of the Russian-Ukrainian State border which is outside of Ukrainian Government control; and even at those two checkpoints, its freedom of movement is severely limited. This impedes its ability to observe certain categories of crossing (such as people in military-style outfits) and the trains at Gukovo border crossing point. The Mission’s observation is further hindered by Russia’s refusal to allow the observers to use monitoring tools such as binoculars.

The United Kingdom joins the many other calls on Russia to end all undue restrictions placed on the Observer Mission and end its objection to the expansion of the Mission to the entirety of the uncontrolled section of the border. We also reiterate the importance of full, safe and unimpeded access for the Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine to the entire territory of Ukraine, including the border.

Let me also take this opportunity to reiterate the United Kingdom’s unwavering support for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders, including its territorial waters.

I request that this statement be attached to the decision and to the journal of the day.”

PC.DEC/1400
21 January 2021
Attachment 4

Original: ENGLISH

**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 Canada:

“Madam Chairperson,

In connection with the decision of the Permanent Council on the extension of the deployment of OSCE observers to two Russian checkpoints on the Russian-Ukrainian border, Canada would like to make the following interpretative statement under paragraph IV.1(A)6 of the OSCE Rules of Procedure:

Canada strongly believes that a comprehensive and substantial OSCE Observer Mission mandate would include the entire Russian side of the border adjacent to Russia-occupied parts of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions of Ukraine. The request for expanding the mandate to all sections of the border that are currently not under control of the Ukrainian authorities has been reiterated several times by participating States, with the exception of one. We regret that the Russian Federation continues to resist an expanded geographical mandate and much needed equipment for the OSCE border Observation Mission.

As ceasefire and border monitoring are closely interlinked, Canada reiterates the call to allow OSCE monitors the necessary freedom of movement for the implementation of their mandate, with assurances of the Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine’s safe and unhindered access to all parts of the border currently not under Ukrainian Government control and the Observer Mission access to the current crossing stations to monitor movements more effectively. We urge the Russian Federation, as signal of good will, and as part of its Minsk Protocol commitments, to lift all restrictions, which undermine the efficiency of the Mission’s monitoring efforts.

Canada requests that this statement be attached to the decision and reflected in the journal of the day.

Thank you.”

**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 the United States of America:

“In connection with the adoption of the decision for the extension of deployment of OSCE observers to two Russian checkpoints on the Russian-Ukrainian border, the United States would like to make the following interpretative statement under paragraph IV.1(A)6 of the OSCE Rules of Procedure:

The United States finds it deeply regrettable that Russia continues to block the expansion of the geographic scope of the Observer Mission, despite the clear, strong, and continued support from other participating States to do so. We once again must accept an inadequate, limited-scope mission covering just two border checkpoints, which together account for only a few hundred metres of the 2,300 kilometre Russian-Ukrainian border, much of which Ukraine does not control.

Due to Russia’s unwarranted restrictions of the border Observer Mission’s work, the Mission fails to ascertain the full extent to which Russia participates in or facilitates the flow of arms, funding, and personnel to support its proxies in eastern Ukraine.

We note that point 4 of the Minsk Protocol delineates a clear role for the OSCE to monitor and verify both sides of the Russian-Ukrainian international border, and to create a security zone in the border areas of Russia and Ukraine. There are strong linkages between ceasefire monitoring and border monitoring, and it is to the detriment of all efforts to resolve the conflict that the OSCE approach to these activities has been impeded by one participating State. Russia’s repeated refusal to allow expansion of the scope of this mission demonstrates, regrettably, once again, Moscow’s unwillingness to take its Minsk commitments seriously.

Madam Chairperson, I request that this interpretative statement be attached to the decision and to the journal of the day.

Thank you, Madam Chairperson.”

**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 Ukraine:

“Mr. Chairperson,

In connection with the Permanent Council decision on the extension of the deployment of OSCE observers to two Russian checkpoints on the Russian-Ukrainian border, the delegation of Ukraine would like to make the following interpretative statement under paragraph IV.1(A)6 of the Rules of Procedure of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe.

The delegation of Ukraine consistently reiterates the importance of having a substantial and comprehensive OSCE monitoring at the segment of the Russian-Ukrainian border adjacent to the Russia-occupied parts of Donetsk and Luhansk regions of Ukraine. We regret that the OSCE border Observer Mission at the Russian border checkpoints ‘Gukovo’ and ‘Donetsk’ is forced to operate under difficult conditions and in a framework of stringent impediments imposed by the Russian Federation. We urge the Russian Federation to lift all restrictions, which undermine efficiency of the Mission’s monitoring in ‘Gukovo’ and ‘Donetsk’ checkpoints.

Having signed the Minsk Protocol of 5 September 2014, the Russian Federation committed to ensure permanent monitoring of the Russian-Ukrainian State border and verification by the OSCE with the establishment of a security zone in the border areas of Ukraine and the Russian Federation. As a part of the implementation of this provision, the mandate of the OSCE Observer Mission at the Russian border checkpoints ‘Gukovo’ and ‘Donetsk’ must be geographically expanded to all border checkpoints at the Russian-Ukrainian border adjacent to the Russia-occupied parts of Donetsk and Luhansk regions of Ukraine, as well as to all sections between these border crossings. This will greatly contribute to sustainable de-escalation and peaceful resolution of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict.

We urge the Russian Federation to allow expansion of the mandate of the border Observer Mission to the whole segment of the State border which is temporarily not under control of the Ukrainian Government. We deeply regret that the Russian Federation continues to strongly resist it. At the Tirana Ministerial Council, 35 participating States clearly indicated strong support to such expansion. Persistent reluctance on the part of Russia can be attributed only to its unchanged intention to continue intervention in Ukraine’s Donbas,

including by sending heavy weapons, military equipment, regular troops, fighters and mercenaries, sponsoring the terrorist activities in the territory of Ukraine. We consistently continue to urge Russia to cease immediately these internationally wrongful acts.

The OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine and the border Observer Mission at the Russian side of the Russian-Ukrainian State border together can conduct comprehensive monitoring and verification.

The delegation of Ukraine recalls that Russia has not responded to numerous requests for explanations regarding presence in the temporarily occupied parts of Donbas of modern Russian weapons and military equipment including multiple rocket launchers and electronic warfare systems recorded by the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine.

We call upon the Russian Federation to demonstrate its full commitment to the implementation of the Minsk arrangements in good faith and to allow proper and comprehensive permanent monitoring by the OSCE of the Russian-Ukrainian State border adjacent to the temporarily occupied areas of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions with establishment of a security zone in border areas of Ukraine and the Russian Federation.

The delegation of Ukraine requests that this statement be attached to the decision and registered in the journal of the day.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.”