
Chairmanship: Ukraine**968th PLENARY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL**

1. Date: Thursday, 24 October 2013

Opened: 10.10 a.m.

Closed: 1.05 p.m.

2. Chairperson: Ambassador I. Prokopchuk
Ms. N. Galibarenko

Prior to taking up the agenda, the Chairperson, on behalf of the Council, offered condolences to the Russian Federation in connection with a terrorist attack that had taken place in Volgograd on 21 October 2013. The Russian Federation thanked the Chairperson for the expression of condolences. Lithuania-European Union, Mongolia, the United States of America, Turkey and Azerbaijan also expressed condolences to the Russian Federation.

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

Agenda item 1: ADDRESS BY THE SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE
COUNCIL OF EUROPE, H.E. THORBJØRN JAGLAND

Chairperson, Secretary General of the Council of Europe (PC.DEL/834/13 OSCE+), Lithuania-European Union (with the candidate countries the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Iceland, Montenegro and Serbia; the countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate countries Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina; the European Free Trade Association country Liechtenstein, member of the European Economic Area; as well as Andorra, Georgia, Moldova and San Marino, in alignment) (PC.DEL/837/13), United States of America (PC.DEL/836/13), Russian Federation, Switzerland (PC.DEL/847/13), Turkey (PC.DEL/852/13), Norway (PC.DEL/844/13), Armenia, Austria, Greece, Azerbaijan

Agenda item 2: REPORT BY THE CO-ORDINATOR OF OSCE ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVITIES

Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities (SEC.GAL/174/13 OSCE+), Lithuania-European Union (with the candidate countries the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Iceland, Montenegro and Serbia; the countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate countries Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina; the European Free Trade Association countries Liechtenstein and Norway, members of the European Economic Area; as well as Andorra, Georgia, Moldova and San Marino, in alignment) (PC.DEL/839/13), United States of America (PC.DEL/838/13), Russian Federation, Switzerland (PC.DEL/848/13 OSCE+), Turkey (PC.DEL/851/13 OSCE+), Belarus (PC.DEL/843/13 OSCE+), Turkmenistan, Chairperson

Agenda item 3: DECISION ON ELECTION SUPPORT TEAM TO AFGHANISTAN

Chairperson

Decision: The Permanent Council adopted Decision No. 1094 (PC.DEC/1094) on the election support team to Afghanistan, the text of which is appended to this journal.

Agenda item 4: REVIEW OF CURRENT ISSUES

- (a) *Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transsexual (LGBT) rights in Norway*: Norway (PC.DEL/845/13)
- (b) *Pride parade entitled "Montenegro Pride-Proudly", held in Podgorica on 20 October 2013*: Montenegro (PC.DEL/842/13), United States of America (PC.DEL/840/13)
- (c) *Case of Mr. Azimjon Askarov in Kyrgyzstan*: United States of America (PC.DEL/841/13), Kyrgyzstan
- (d) *Statement by France on behalf of the Minsk Group Co-Chairs and the Personal Representative of the Chairperson-in-Office on the Conflict Dealt with by the OSCE Minsk Conference (SEC.PR/340/13)*: France (also on behalf of the Russian Federation and the United States of America), Armenia, Azerbaijan (PC.DEL/846/13)

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

Announcement of the distribution of the report on the activities of the Chairperson-in-Office: Chairperson

Agenda item 6: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL

Announcement of the distribution of the report of the Secretary General (SEC.GAL/177/13 OSCE+): Secretary General

Agenda item 7: ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- (a) *Farewell to the Permanent Representative of Israel (Partner for Co-operation) to the OSCE, Ambassador Aviv Shir-On: Chairperson, Israel (Partner for Co-operation)*
- (b) *Meeting of the Mediterranean Contact Group, held on 18 October 2013: Switzerland (PC.DEL/849/13 OSCE+)*
- (c) *Upcoming Model OSCE project to be held in Vienna and Belgrade in 2014: Switzerland (also on behalf of Serbia) (PC.DEL/850/13)*
- (d) *High-level Conference on Combating Racism, Xenophobia and Intolerance in Europe, held in Yerevan on 21 and 22 October 2013: Armenia*
- (e) *OSCE Annual Police Experts Meeting on Improving the Role of the OSCE in Police-Related Activities: Experiences and Lessons Learned, to be held on 24 and 25 October 2013: Chairperson*
- (f) *OSCE Mediterranean Conference on Enhancing the Role of Women in Public, Political and Economic Life, to be held in Monaco on 28 and 29 October 2013: Chairperson*
- (g) *Presentation of the Review of Electoral Legislation and Practice in OSCE Participating States, to be held on 31 October and 1 November 2013: Chairperson*
- (h) *Supplementary Human Dimension Meeting on the Implementation of the Action Plan on Improving the Situation of Roma and Sinti (dedicated to the 10th anniversary of the adoption of the 2003 OSCE Action Plan), to be held on 7 and 8 November 2013: Chairperson*
- (i) *Reinforced meeting of the Permanent Council, to be held on 19 November 2013: Chairperson*

4. Next meeting:

Thursday, 31 October 2013, at 10 a.m., in the Neuer Saal

968th Plenary Meeting

PC Journal No. 968, Agenda item 3

**DECISION No. 1094
ELECTION SUPPORT TEAM TO AFGHANISTAN**

The Permanent Council,

Recalling UN Security Council resolution 2096 (2013), which underscores the importance of upcoming elections to Afghanistan's democratic development, welcomes the commitment of the Government of Afghanistan to make further improvements to the electoral process and calls upon members of the international community to provide assistance as appropriate,

Taking note of the letter of 10 September 2013 of the Independent Election Commission of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, in which the OSCE/ODIHR is invited to support the presidential and Provincial Council elections in Afghanistan scheduled for 5 April 2014,

Taking into consideration the status of Afghanistan as a Partner for Co-operation of the OSCE, which has an important impact on neighbouring regions of the OSCE,

Underscoring the importance of democratic elections for fostering democracy and human rights and for furthering stability in Afghanistan and contributing to international efforts to combat terrorism,

Taking note of the Permanent Council Decisions Nos. 622, 686, 891 and 953 on sending OSCE/ODIHR Election Support Teams for different elections in Afghanistan and the recommendations issued by those Support Teams,

Taking into account conditions in Afghanistan, in particular the security situation,

Decides, as an extraordinary measure, in response to the specific request of the Government of Afghanistan, to send an Election Support Team to be organized by the ODIHR to assist government and international efforts on the presidential and Provincial Council elections in Afghanistan scheduled for 5 April 2014;

Tasks the Election Support Team to prepare a report, to be distributed to participating States, on the electoral process, based on its findings, including a set of recommendations to the Government of Afghanistan for implementation as appropriate in the post-election period,

with a view to enhancing the conduct of future elections and improving Afghanistan's legal framework and procedures;

Requests that the ODIHR closely co-ordinate with relevant national, regional and international actors involved in electoral processes in Afghanistan, including the Independent Election Commission of Afghanistan, the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the European Union;

Tasks the ODIHR to determine the appropriate size of the Election Support Team, which is not to exceed twenty election staff; and

Tasks the Secretariat, together with the ODIHR, to conduct consultations with the Government of Afghanistan, international military forces and international actors, including the United Nations, in order to spell out clearly in the appropriate form and put in place the necessary security arrangements for the Election Support Team.

Expenses for the Election Support Team will be covered by extrabudgetary contributions.

This decision does not set a precedent for OSCE activities beyond its geographical area of responsibility.