

PC.DEL/449/10
27 May 2010

ENGLISH
Original: RUSSIAN

Delegation of the Russian Federation

**STATEMENT BY MR. ANVAR AZIMOV,
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AT THE MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

27 May 2010

On the 2011 OSCE Programme Outline

Mr. Chairperson,

We thank the distinguished Secretary General for his presentation of the 2011 OSCE Programme Outline. We trust that full account will be taken of Russian interests in the course of the discussions.

1. First, I should like to make some basic observations.

The introduction to the Outline mentions the importance of taking account of the opinions of the participating States in elaborating “adequate and realistic” unified budget proposals. We believe that there is something of more importance: the OSCE executive structures should base their work, even at the drafting stage of such documents, on the collective decisions of the Organization’s decision-making bodies. Consequently, the wording of the Programme Outline on objectives and medium-term results should be of a consensus nature, in other words, it should be taken from decisions of the Ministerial Council and the Permanent Council. All proposed activities should be in accordance with the mandates of the executive structures, and extrabudgetary projects should be clearly distinguished from projects implemented using resources from the OSCE Unified Budget. The highlighting of a number of cross-dimensional and inter-institutional problems in the Overview of Thematic Activities should not result in their being given priority over other tasks.

2. Increased efforts on the various reform issues, without which the effectiveness of the Organization cannot be guaranteed, should remain one of the most important aspects of the OSCE’s work. Among the most pressing tasks in our opinion are the drafting of a Charter, rules for the organization of election monitoring, the procedure for the participation of non-governmental organizations in OSCE events, reform of the way in which heads of missions are appointed, and the regulation of OSCE events in all three “baskets”.

3. We welcome the emphasis on preventing transnational threats and challenges, particularly terrorism, drug trafficking and organized crime. We support the holding in 2011 of wide-ranging anti-terrorist and anti-trafficking events by the OSCE financed from the

Unified Budget and also the continuation of the Domodedovo project for training Afghan drug police. We affirm the need to strengthen the Secretariat's anti-drug and anti-terrorist potential.

Once again we draw attention to the inappropriateness for executive structures to become involved with sensitive issues like cyber security or nuclear non-proliferation before they have received a clear mandate to do so from the participating States.

4. Implementation of the 2003 Maastricht strategy must remain at the basis of the work in the economic and environmental dimension. We regard transport security and migration as long-term issues. We remain of the opinion that it is not useful for the OSCE to become involved in discussions on global warming.

5. The Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) needs to pay greater attention to dealing with the pressing problems of improving its election observation methods and practices. One top-priority task would seem to be the elaboration of uniform standards for the organization and conduct of elections and of universal principles for international monitoring agreed by all participating States. In this context, we recall the proposals made by a number of countries, including Russia, for the organization of national election observation by the ODIHR. The proposal for a comparative analysis of electoral legislation in the OSCE participating States using budgetary resources allocated to the ODIHR remains valid.

We confirm the timeliness of holding the next dedicated event on election observation in 2011. We expect the Lithuanian Chairmanship to continue the positive experience of its Greek and Kazakh predecessors in office.

We regret that the topical issue of freedom of movement is touched on in the Programme Outline only in connection with the free choice of residence within national borders. In our opinion, there is a need to consider above all contacts between people, their movement between countries and a liberalization of visa regimes.

The ODIHR's Democratization Programme raises questions concerning the justification for the Office's plans for more intrusive human rights mechanisms, in particular more intensive monitoring of the implementation of recommendations made by OSCE institutions to participating States.

6. We are in favour of a geographically balanced project structure both to the east and the west of Vienna. The OSCE's activities in Central Asia and Afghanistan are essential but they should not take precedence over other no less important areas. All OSCE project activities relating to Afghanistan must be strictly in accordance with Decision No. 4/07 of the Ministerial Council meeting in Madrid. We continue to oppose the transfer of project activities to the territory of Afghanistan.

OSCE activities in the Balkans should focus on safeguarding human rights, particularly the defence of the rights of ethnic communities and the return of refugees and internally displaced persons. The work of the Mission in the Serbian territory of Kosovo should be in full compliance with United Nations Security Council resolution 1244. Assistance or even mediation in the creation of the "quasi-statehood" of the territory is inadmissible.

In general, any shift in the focuses of the OSCE field missions should be subject to a decision by the Permanent Council after the fulfilment by the missions of their mandate has been studied. We confirm the basic approach described in paragraph 41 of the Charter for European Security, which provides for the gradual transfer of the missions' functions to the host countries. In general, we believe that the work of the OSCE field missions should be closely co-ordinated with the host governments.

7. The task of transforming the OSCE into an effective collective mechanism for preventing and settling conflicts in the Organization's area of responsibility is still highly relevant. As the crises in Georgia and Kyrgyzstan have shown, the Organization, and specifically specialist executive structures such as the Conflict Prevention Centre, lack the ability to anticipate explosive situations and to react to them. In this connection, the enthusiasm concerning the OSCE's role as first responder in the Kyrgyz situation baffles us. It is quite evident that the initiative for reacting to this acute conflict-laden hotbed should be taken up as soon as possible by the Kazakh Chairmanship.

There is one further important comment to be made. Critical situations should be monitored throughout the OSCE's area of responsibility and not just in the Balkans or the former States of the USSR.

In connection with the mention of the Geneva discussions in the Overview of Thematic Activities, we request that incorrect formulations be avoided. This platform for dialogue was created to consider questions of security and stability in the Trans-Caucasus and not "the August 2008 conflict in Georgia". Given the fact that the combination "South Ossetia" is not liked by everyone, we should stick to the designation of events in the manner accepted in the OSCE and set forth in various consensual documents, i.e. without geographical reference to where they happened.

8. In conclusion, I should like to express a few thoughts on improving the programme and budget planning process within the OSCE. Since the Programme Outline is not a consensual document, it cannot in itself be used as the basis for the OSCE budget.

We believe that the Permanent Council should adopt two fundamental documents every year: a programme of work and a budget. The programme is effectively a political instruction by the participating States to the Secretariat, institutions and field missions setting out specific aims and tasks and should be formulated in accordance with the decisions adopted by the OSCE's decision-making bodies. The budget, on the other hand, is a more technical document reflecting the outlays required to carry out these tasks.

The programme of work should indicate the OSCE's aims for the coming year and the tasks of the various executive structures. It should include operations and projects, including extrabudgetary ones, and a rough estimate of their costs. After the programme has been adopted, the participating States can select the projects they are interested in financing.

Thank you for your attention.