

Chairmanship: Italy

**SPECIAL MEETING OF THE PERMANENT COUNCIL
(1207th Plenary Meeting)**

1. Date: Wednesday, 5 December 2018 (Milan)

Opened: 1.10 p.m.
Closed: 1.30 p.m.

2. Chairperson: Ambassador A. Azzoni

The Chairperson informed the Permanent Council that the Chairperson-in-Office, in a letter issued on 5 December 2018 (Annex 1), had announced the adoption through a silence procedure of Ministerial Council Decision No. 1/18 (MC.DEC/1/18/Corr.1) on the OSCE Chairmanship in the year 2020, the text of which is appended to this journal.

Serbia (interpretative statement, see attachment 1 to the decision), Russian Federation (interpretative statement, see attachment 2 to the decision), Albania (Annex 2),
Chairperson

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

Agenda item 1: REVIEW OF CURRENT ISSUES

None

Agenda item 2: ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None

4. Next meeting:

To be announced

1 Includes corrections to the translation of attachment 2 to Ministerial Council Decision No. 1/18.



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

PC.JOUR/1207/Corr.1
5 December 2018
Annex 1

Original: ENGLISH

1207th Plenary Meeting
PC Journal No. 1207, Point 2

LETTER OF THE CHAIRPERSON-IN-OFFICE

Rome, 5 December 2018

Dear colleagues,

In my capacity as Chairperson-in-Office of the OSCE, I have the honour of informing you that the period of silence on the draft Ministerial Council decision on the OSCE Chairmanship in the year 2020 (MC.DD/20/18), expiring on 5 December 2018, at 12 noon CET, has not been broken.

The decision is therefore adopted and effective as of today. It will be attached to the journal of the Twenty-Fifth Meeting of the OSCE Ministerial Council and to the journal of the next regular meeting of the Permanent Council.

Those participating States that intend to exercise their right to duly register an interpretative statement or a formal reservation under paragraph IV.1(A)6 of the Rules of Procedure of the OSCE are invited to do so through their OSCE delegations at the above-mentioned meeting of the Permanent Council.

Yours sincerely,

[signature]

Enzo Moavero Milanese

To the Ministers for Foreign Affairs
of the OSCE participating States



1207th Plenary Meeting
PC Journal No. 1207, Point 2

STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF ALBANIA

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.

On the occasion of the end of the silence procedure for the decision on the Albanian OSCE Chairmanship-in-Office in 2020, I would like to thank all the participating States for the support they have given us today and throughout this whole process. We have taken note of your comments and we will make good use of your contributions. Thank you.

I will start by quoting the Albanian Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs, H.E. Mr. Ditmir Bushati, who wrote as follows to your Ministers for Foreign Affairs when announcing Albania's readiness to assume the 2020 OSCE Chairmanship: "Albania is fully aware of the challenges that the Organization and its Chairmanships have faced in recent years. Therefore, we are ready to offer our contribution, in full transparency and co-operative spirit, with all the member States, realizing our commitments for enforcing peace and stability in the OSCE area." Albania's OSCE Chairmanship in 2020, he affirmed, will be characterized by balanced, neutral positions that will encourage a spirit of co-operation and consensus in decision-making, in close co-operation with the OSCE Troika and the OSCE as a whole.

As you all know, when Albania joined the Organization 27 years ago, it was just emerging from decades of isolation and totalitarianism and consequently had a strong desire to belong to the OSCE with its promise of a whole and free Europe. In the course of these 27 years, Albania has gone through many integration processes, and much has changed for the better. Today, Albania has committed itself to making an increased contribution to the OSCE through its Chairmanship in the year 2020. Albania has pledged to further improve the effectiveness of the Organization, and to use the opportunity of the 2020 Chairmanship not only to raise the visibility of our region, the Western Balkans, and to strengthen its sense of ownership as provider of security and peace, but also to do all it can to bridge the differences existing among participating States in these difficult times for the security architecture of the OSCE area.

This task is an enormous responsibility at times such as these when the OSCE area is faced with many challenges, some of the most prominent among them being terrorism, cybersecurity threats, corruption and organized crime, and the crisis related to migrants and refugees.

Mr. Chairperson,
Dear colleagues,

We are fully aware that while the OSCE is facing difficult times, it is using all means at its disposal to rise to the challenges, constantly abiding by the principles of the Helsinki Final Act. It will be our aim to make constructive progress in the resolution of disparities in East-West relations. Not only is the OSCE well positioned for the vital role it has to play but it also has instruments of great relevance to implementing a comprehensive concept of security: crisis management tools and confidence-building measures, executive structures, autonomous institutions and field operations.

The crisis in and around Ukraine has made it clear how much the OSCE executive structures, autonomous institutions and field operations are needed. The work done by the Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine, especially at those times of escalation in and around Ukraine, has been a distinguished example of the participating States joining in common efforts to promote a peaceful settlement of the conflict. Albania fully supports the mandate and work of the SMM and, likewise, the endeavours of the Normandy format and the Trilateral Contact Group aiming at a peaceful solution of the crisis, in application of the Minsk agreements and based on full respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity, unity and independence of Ukraine.

Furthermore, my country attaches great importance and remains fully and actively committed to building upon the current, incoming and previous Chairmanships' efforts on the protracted conflicts. In facing these joint challenges, the OSCE and its institutions and field operations must be equipped with the resources needed and in a position to fulfil their mandates in all conflict areas and regions. We believe that the protracted conflicts have to be settled in accordance with the agreements reached, in line with OSCE principles and commitments and international norms and with full respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the States concerned.

As a key instrument for paving the way to security and stability across its area, the OSCE contributes to preventing the deterioration of security conditions, to containing risks resulting from tense situations on the ground, and to promoting peaceful and sustainable solutions to the various conflicts in the OSCE space.

During its Chairmanship in 2020, Albania is determined to pursue a constructive approach to assuring full support for existing negotiation formats and to further promoting the joint energies that are best able to ensure peace, security and stability in the OSCE area.

The process of establishing a lasting solution to the Transdniestrian conflict will continue to be a focus for us as we strive to help the sides reach a further and final agreement. Both parties should now take advantage of the present favourable situation and continue to engage constructively, redoubling their efforts aimed at a peaceful resolution of the conflict based on respect for Moldovan territorial integrity and sovereignty, with a special status for Transdniestria. Any further step made along these lines will enhance stability and increase the well-being of the populations on both sides of the Dniester.

With regard to the Geneva International Discussions on addressing the consequences of the 2008 conflict in Georgia, Albania will support the continuation of negotiations in their

current format as this is the only road for resolving the problems deriving from the conflict. We are concerned that the situation on the ground continues to be complex and that there is no agreement among the parties on incident prevention and response mechanisms, which are a fundamental instrument for enhancing stability and improving security on the ground. This being the case, we will continue to build on the efforts of previous Chairmanships in this regard, as this approach contributes to increasing trust, predictability and transparency and at the same time helps in resolving the urgent humanitarian issues triggered by the conflict.

Moreover, Albania would like to reaffirm its strong commitment to promoting a negotiated and peaceful resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. My country greatly values the work done by the Minsk Group and its Co-Chairs to reach a settlement on a comprehensive solution of the conflict based on the fundamental principles of the UN Charter and the Helsinki Final Act, in particular those related to the non-use of force, to territorial integrity, and to equal rights and self-determination of peoples. We are pleased that in various forums, the Minsk Group leaders have reported on positive developments in finding a political, fair and sustainable solution to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, which is so essential to the future of the region.

In the context of conflicts, genuine commitment on the part of all involved and an atmosphere conducive to peace are of utmost importance for negotiation processes. In this regard Albania endorses all agreements on risk reduction, particularly the agreement reached between the Prime Minister of Armenia and the President of Azerbaijan in Dushanbe in September 2018, and also previous agreements on the finalization of the OSCE investigative mechanism on ceasefire violations and the expansion of the capacities of the Office of the Personal Representative of the Chairperson-in-Office on the Conflict Dealt with by the OSCE Minsk Conference.

Mr. Chairperson,
Dear colleagues,

Respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, democracy and the rule of law remain at the core of the OSCE's comprehensive concept of security.

Accordingly, Albania will remain committed to further promoting strong democratic institutions and the rule of law, to advancing the fight against terrorism and violent extremism and radicalization that lead to terrorism, to supporting all measures and undertakings against organized crime and corruption, and to pursuing the connectivity agenda, as all these contribute to the security, stability and prosperity of our countries. In these endeavours, the OSCE's cross-dimensional approach is a very important component in that it helps it to complement other international organizations' actions. As a country with a field presence, Albania sees the field operations, the autonomous institutions, and the OSCE structures as vital tools that have to be further enhanced and promoted.

Leveraging partnerships and further strengthening co-operation with the OSCE's Mediterranean and Asian Partners for Co-operation will continue to be a focus of the Albanian Chairmanship 2020. Enhancing partnerships and building greater co-operation with them will contribute to improving stability in the OSCE area and beyond. During the year of the Albanian Chairmanship we intend, with the support of the OSCE executive structures, to

co-operate with the present Italian Chairmanship and the incoming Slovak Chairmanship and to continue their good work.

Mr. Chairperson,
Dear colleagues,

As we prepare for the 2020 Chairmanship, I would like to assure you of my country's commitment to assuming and exercising the responsibilities of the OSCE Chairmanship in line with the OSCE Rules and Procedures. Albania believes that it can best make a valuable contribution by collaborating closely with the present Chairmanship-in-Office, the incoming Slovak Chairmanship, and other countries that have had experience of holding the OSCE Chairmanship in past years.

Responsibilities and decisions of this kind require unity, accountability, trust and your support, which we remain confident of receiving during our Chairmanship year.

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

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.



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

MC.DEC/1/18/Corr.1¹
5 December 2018

Original: ENGLISH

**DECISION No. 1/18
OSCE CHAIRMANSHIP IN THE YEAR 2020**

The Ministerial Council,

Decides that Albania will exercise the function of the OSCE Chairmanship in the year 2020.

1 Includes corrections to the translation of attachment 2.

**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 delegation of Serbia would like to make the following interpretative statement under paragraph IV.1(A)6 of the OSCE Rules of Procedure in connection with the adoption of the Ministerial Council decision on the OSCE Chairmanship in the year 2020.

The Republic of Serbia has joined the consensus on this decision with a belief that entrusting the chairing of our Organization to the Republic of Albania will represent an opportunity for the promotion of the Western Balkans region, contributing to fostering of regional co-operation, including the aspirations of all our countries for accession to the European Union.

However, bearing in mind the differing views of OSCE participating States on the issue of Kosovo, as well as Albania’s strong support and leading role in promoting the unilaterally declared independence of the Republic of Serbia’s Autonomous Province of Kosovo and Metohija (as revealed, *inter alia*, in Albania’s interpretative statement attached to Ministerial Council Decision No. 1/12 and in the Permanent Council statement distributed under reference number PC.DEL/1195/18), we expect that Albania will, as every Chairmanship, set aside its national agenda during 2020 and perform its duties in a responsible, transparent and unbiased way, in accordance with the provisions of UN Security Council resolution 1244 (1999), OSCE norms, principles and commitments, deriving in particular from the 1975 Helsinki Final Act, and with full adherence to the OSCE’s status neutrality on the issue of Kosovo.

In that context, we have joined the consensus with the understanding that all decisions of Albania during its Chairmanship-in-Office of the OSCE, with regard to the issue of Kosovo and Metohija, and OMiK will be taken in a transparent manner, in full co-operation, consultation and agreement with all Troika members.

We welcome the commitment of Albania to perform its Chairmanship duties in accordance with the OSCE Rules of Procedure, and with full adherence to Decision No. 8 on the role of the OSCE Chairmanship-in-Office adopted at the Tenth Meeting of the Ministerial Council in Porto, 2002, in particular its paragraph 2 defining that the Chairmanship-in-Office shall 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’,

as expressed in the letter of the Foreign Minister of Albania addressed to the First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Serbia dated 28 November 2018.

We expect the Albanian Chairmanship to respect and preserve the principle of consensus in the OSCE, and to refrain from any action that is not consistent with the status neutrality of our Organization, based on the UN Security Council resolution 1244 (1999), which remains the only framework for the engagement of the OSCE Mission in Kosovo.

We would like to use this opportunity to once again congratulate our neighbour, the Republic of Albania, for assuming this important duty, and wish to offer our full support. Serbia stands ready to share its experience from its 2015 OSCE Chairmanship-in-Office.

We request that this statement be attached to the decision adopted, 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 Russian Federation:

“In joining the consensus regarding the OSCE Ministerial Council decision on Albania’s Chairmanship of the OSCE in the year 2020, we expect Albania to closely adhere to the provisions of the 2002 Porto OSCE Ministerial Council Decision No. 8 on the role of the OSCE Chairmanship-in-Office, ensuring 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 in these actions.

We also expect that public statements issued by the OSCE Chairmanship-in-Office will be in line with OSCE Permanent Council Decision No. 485 of 28 June 2002 and comply with the fundamental OSCE consensus rule.

This applies fully to the OSCE’s activities regarding Kosovo on the basis of United Nations Security Council resolution 1244.

I request that this statement be attached to the adopted OSCE Ministerial Council decision and included in the journal of the day.”

1 Includes corrections to the translation.