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**Chairmanship: Germany****1116th PLENARY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL**

1. Date: Thursday, 27 October 2016

Opened: 10.05 a.m.  
Suspended: 1.10 p.m.  
Resumed: 3.15 p.m.  
Closed: 5.35 p.m.

2. Chairperson: Ambassador E. Pohl  
Ms. C. Weil

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

Agenda item 1: ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE OSCE  
PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY,  
MS. CHRISTINE MUTTONEN

Chairperson, President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly (PA.GAL/10/16), Slovakia-European Union (with the candidate countries Albania, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Montenegro; the country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate country Bosnia and Herzegovina; the European Free Trade Association countries Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, members of the European Economic Area; as well as Andorra, Georgia, Moldova, San Marino and Ukraine, in alignment) (PC.DEL/1463/16), United States of America (PC.DEL/1441/16), Russian Federation (PC.DEL/1455/16), Switzerland, Turkey (PC.DEL/1479/16 OSCE+), Kazakhstan, Belarus (PC.DEL/1481/16 OSCE+), Azerbaijan (PC.DEL/1450/16 OSCE+), Armenia (PC.DEL/1483/16), Georgia (PC.DEL/1477/16 OSCE+), Mongolia, Ukraine (PC.DEL/1457/16 OSCE+), Tajikistan

Agenda item 2: ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE  
INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS,  
H.E. PETER MAURER

Chairperson, President of the International Committee of the Red Cross (PC.DEL/1440/16 OSCE+), Slovakia-European Union (with the candidate countries Albania, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Montenegro; 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, San Marino and Ukraine, in alignment) (PC.DEL/1465/16), Russian Federation (PC.DEL/1456/16) (PC.DEL/1470/16), Switzerland, Turkey (PC.DEL/1452/16 OSCE+), United States of America (PC.DEL/1444/16), Canada, Norway (PC.DEL/1482/16), Azerbaijan (PC.DEL/1449/16 OSCE+), Armenia (PC.DEL/1484/16), Georgia (PC.DEL/1478/16 OSCE+), Ukraine (PC.DEL/1459/16 OSCE+), France (Annex 1)

Agenda item 3:           DECISION ON THE AGENDA, TIMETABLE AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONAL MODALITIES OF THE 2016 HUMAN DIMENSION SEMINAR

Chairperson

**Decision:** The Permanent Council placed the decision on the agenda, timetable and other organizational modalities of the 2016 Human Dimension Seminar, the text of which is appended to this journal, under a silence procedure with the period of silence expiring on Wednesday, 2 November 2016, at 5 p.m. CET.

Agenda item 4:           REVIEW OF CURRENT ISSUES

Chairperson

- (a) *Russia's ongoing aggression against Ukraine and illegal occupation of Crimea:* Ukraine (PC.DEL/1460/16), Slovakia-European Union (with the candidate countries Albania, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Montenegro; the country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate country Bosnia and Herzegovina; the European Free Trade Association countries Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, members of the European Economic Area; as well as Georgia, Moldova, San Marino and Ukraine, in alignment) (PC.DEL/1467/16), United States of America (PC.DEL/1445/16), Switzerland, Turkey (PC.DEL/1474/16 OSCE+), Canada
- (b) *Situation in Ukraine and the need to implement the Minsk agreements:* Russian Federation (PC.DEL/1466/16), Ukraine
- (c) *Violation of the freedom of the media in the United Kingdom:* Russian Federation (PC.DEL/1458/16) (PC.DEL/1461/16), United Kingdom (Annex 2), United States of America (PC.DEL/1475/16)
- (d) *Violation of the rights of migrants in the European Union:* Russian Federation (PC.DEL/1464/16), France (PC.DEL/1454/16), Slovakia-European Union

- (e) *Pressure on independent voices in Turkmenistan*: United States of America (PC.DEL/1447/16), Turkmenistan
- (f) *Ongoing concerns about restrictions on civil society in the Russian Federation*: United States of America (PC.DEL/1446/16) (PC.DEL/1473/16), Russian Federation (PC.DEL/1469/16)
- (g) *Glorification of an SS veteran in Estonia*: Russian Federation (PC.DEL/1471/16) (PC.DEL/1472/16), Estonia (PC.DEL/1480/16 OSCE+)
- (h) *Parliamentary elections in Montenegro, held on 16 October 2016*: Montenegro (PC.DEL/1453/16 OSCE+), Slovakia-European Union (with the candidate countries Albania, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Turkey; the country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate country Bosnia and Herzegovina; the European Free Trade Association countries Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, members of the European Economic Area; as well as Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine, in alignment) (PC.DEL/1468/16), United States of America (PC.DEL/1448/16), Russian Federation (PC.DEL/1462/16)

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

- (a) *Address by the Chairperson-in-Office to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, delivered in Strasbourg on 13 October 2016*: Chairperson (CIO.GAL/194/16)
- (b) *Extension of condolences by the Chairperson-in-Office and the OSCE Secretary General on the passing of King Bhumibol Adulyadej of Thailand*: Chairperson (CIO.GAL/194/16)
- (c) *Opening by the Chairperson-in-Office and Mr. D. Barenboim, General Music Director of the Berlin State Opera, of the OSCE Chairmanship Conference on Tolerance and Diversity, held in Berlin on 20 October 2016*: Chairperson (CIO.GAL/194/16)

Agenda item 6:           REPORT OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL

*Announcement of the distribution of a written report of the Secretary General (SEC.GAL/157/16 OSCE+)*: Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities

Agenda item 7:           ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- (a) *Drawing of lots to establish the order of statements for the Twenty-Third Meeting of the OSCE Ministerial Council, to be carried out on 3 November 2016 after the morning session of the Permanent Council meeting*: Chairperson

- (b) *Distribution of a draft agenda for the Twenty-Third Meeting of the OSCE Ministerial Council (MC.GAL/1/16) and of a draft decision on forwarding of a draft agenda to the Ministerial Council (PC.DD/30/16): Chairperson*

4. Next meeting:

Thursday, 3 November 2016, at 10 a.m., in the Neuer Saal



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

PC.JOUR/1116  
27 October 2016  
Annex 1

ENGLISH  
Original: FRENCH

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**1116th Plenary Meeting**  
PC Journal No. 1116, Agenda item 2

## **STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF FRANCE**

Mr. Chairperson,

My delegation aligns itself with the statement by the European Union, but I should like to add a few words on behalf of my country.

I should like first to pay tribute to the commitment of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) since the start of the crisis in Ukraine: distribution of food and hygiene articles, supply of 13 hospitals and medical posts in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions with medical provisions, indication of areas containing unexploded mines and munitions. This commitment has helped relieve the civilian populations affected by this conflict, which has already left over 9,000 dead and 22,000 injured and almost 2 million displaced persons.

The ICRC also plays an essential role for families without news of their relatives and for persons who have fled the conflict. This work should be facilitated on both sides of the line of contact.

We also welcome the role played by the ICRC in the exchange of prisoners, as occurred in September for the fifth time in 2016. We hope that these efforts will be continued and stepped up as we stated on 19 October in Berlin in the Normandy format.

The humanitarian situation nevertheless remains extremely difficult. Numerous infrastructural objects have been destroyed by the fighting, and the supply of water and electricity to many villages is uncertain. With winter approaching, as was recalled at the Normandy format summit on 19 October in Berlin, we call on the parties – in the interests of the civilian populations – to facilitate access by humanitarian organizations including the ICRC to the regions not under government control.

The presence of unexploded mines and munitions remains one of the main causes of civilian deaths in the conflict. We welcome the ICRC's activities in this sphere and urge the parties to mark mined areas and demine them as rapidly as possible, as they have undertaken to do on several occasions.

Mr. Chairperson,

We should also like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to the work of the ICRC on missing persons in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. We urge the parties concerned to continue the exchange of information on missing persons under the auspices of the ICRC in accordance with the commitments undertaken at the Paris summit in October 2014 and confirmed at the meeting in Vienna in May 2016.

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



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**1116th Plenary Meeting**

PC Journal No. 1116, Agenda item 4(c)

**STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF THE UNITED KINGDOM**

I should like to respond briefly to points made by the distinguished Russian representative.

I am glad that the Russian Federation has raised at the Permanent Council the issue of media freedom. This is a subject very dear to the United Kingdom as well as to many other States represented around this table.

On the specific question regarding banking arrangements between Natwest bank and Russia Today, I am happy to put on record that – contrary to assertions made by the Russian authorities – the UK Government has had no involvement whatsoever in this matter. It is a matter between the bank and its customer and we find it deeply puzzling that the Russian Government having misunderstood or misrepresented the facts continues to draw attention to this.

I should add that we have received no expression of concern from the Representative on the Freedom of the Media.

My Chairperson, on a more general note, I would like to address my distinguished Russian colleague's unfounded criticism of media freedom in the United Kingdom.

Free speech, as most of us seated here today well understand, is a central and longstanding pillar of British democracy. We have a pluralist and robust media landscape. I understand that the organization Reporters Without Borders currently ranks the United Kingdom 38th out of 180 countries in terms of press freedom and Russia 148th.

As the saying goes: *“люди, живущие в стеклянных домах, не должны кидаться камнями”* (“People who live in glass houses shouldn't throw stones”).

The growing pressures upon independent media in Russia have been raised many times in OSCE fora by the Member States of the European Union and by others. Independent news outlets have been either brought under State control or regulated out of existence.

The Russian representative suggested that Russia Today was operating under pressure in a number of countries and that this represented a violation of freedom of expression.

Mr. Chairperson,

I am happy to make clear that the United Kingdom allows foreign-owned media channels to operate freely. Even where – as in the case of Russia Today – our independent UK media regulator Ofcom has been forced to take action as a result of inaccurate and misleading reporting, the United Kingdom’s commitment to freedom of speech and a robust, diverse media landscape allows the channel to continue broadcasting.

Mr. Chairperson,

I need hardly add that it is patent nonsense to suggest, as the Russian Embassy in London recently did, that Russian media in the United Kingdom are operating under unbearable conditions.

I should be grateful if you could add this statement to the journal of the day.





**1116th Plenary Meeting**

PC Journal No. 1116, Agenda item 3

**DECISION ON THE  
AGENDA, TIMETABLE AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONAL  
MODALITIES OF THE 2016 HUMAN DIMENSION SEMINAR,  
SUBJECT TO A SILENCE PROCEDURE EXPIRING ON  
WEDNESDAY, 2 NOVEMBER 2016, AT 5 P.M. CET**

(Warsaw, 21–23 November 2016)

**Promoting effective and integral justice systems: how to ensure the  
independence and quality of the judiciary**

**I. Agenda**

1. Opening of the Seminar
2. Opening plenary: Keynote addresses
3. Discussion in two working groups:
  - Working group I: Selection, promotion and training of judges: impact on judicial accountability and the integrity of the justice system
  - Working group II: The role of civil society in observing judicial independence and accountability
4. Closing plenary: Summing up and closing of the Seminar

**II. Timetable and other organizational modalities**

1. The Seminar will open on Monday, 21 November 2016, at 3 p.m. It will close on Wednesday, 23 November 2016, at 1 p.m.
2. All plenary sessions and working group sessions will be open to all participants.

3. The closing plenary session, scheduled for the morning of 23 November 2016, will focus on practical suggestions and recommendations for addressing the issues discussed during the working group sessions.
4. The plenary and working group sessions will take place in accordance with the work programme below.
5. A representative of the ODIHR will chair the plenary sessions.
6. The Rules of Procedure of the OSCE and the modalities for OSCE meetings on human dimension issues (Permanent Council Decision No. 476) will be followed, *mutatis mutandis*, at the Seminar. Furthermore, the guidelines for organizing OSCE meetings (Permanent Council Decision No. 762) will also be taken into account.
7. The discussions during the plenary and working group sessions will be interpreted from and into the six working languages of the OSCE.

### III. Work programme

Working hours: 10 a.m.–1 p.m.  
3–6 p.m.

	Monday 21 November 2016	Tuesday 22 November 2016	Wednesday 23 November 2016
Morning		Working group I	Closing plenary session
Afternoon	Opening plenary session	Working group II	