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ENGLISH only

*Eesti Vabariigi Alaline Esindus OSCE juures  
Permanent Mission of the Republic of Estonia  
to the OSCE*

Statement by Ambassador Triin Parts, Permanent Representative of Estonia to the OSCE  
in response to the statement delivered by the Russian Federation.  
Permanent Council No 720  
10 July, 2008

Mr. Chairman,

Estonian officials such as president, prime minister, ministers etc. have condemned Nazism as well as other crimes against humanity continuously and at any occasion. Estonia respects all the men and women who fought against totalitarian regimes of the XX century.

The Estonian government has never supported the gatherings of the former members of the Waffen SS. The gatherings of the remembrance of the war victims (not of any ideology) have been organized by the NGO Union for Estonian Freedom. The membership of this union is quite broad containing also war veterans who were mobilized on the German side. These gatherings have nothing to do with neo-fascism and fascist actions. Estonia is a country where all the fundamental freedoms are guaranteed including the freedom of association. There is no reason to declare these gatherings illegal nor prohibit them or to prohibit someone to participate in these gatherings.

Thank you Mr. Chairman