

Chairmanship: Romania**850th PLENARY MEETING OF THE FORUM**

1. Date: Wednesday, 5 April 2017

Opened: 11.35 a.m.

Closed: 12.25 p.m.

2. Chairperson: Ambassador C. Istrate

Prior to taking up the agenda, the Chairperson wished to express, and he believed on behalf of all delegations, sincere sympathies and offer condolences to the families of the victims of the attack that took place on 3 April 2017 in St. Petersburg, together with the hopes that the injured persons would recover soon. The Russian Federation thanked the Chairperson for his expression of sympathy.

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

Agenda item 1: GENERAL STATEMENTS

None

Agenda item 2: ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Implementation meeting on SALW deactivation, held on 30 March 2017:

Representative of the Conflict Prevention Centre

Agenda item 3: CLOSING REMARKS BY THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE
FSC, H.E. AMBASSADOR CRISTIAN ISTRATE

Chairperson (Annex), Malta-European Union (with the candidate countries Albania, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia; 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, Moldova, San Marino and Ukraine, in alignment) (FSC.DEL/122/17), Austria, United States of America, Canada, Portugal, Russian Federation, Ukraine, Serbia

Point of order: Russian Federation

4. Next meeting:

Wednesday, 3 May 2017, at 10 a.m., in the Neuer Saal



850th Plenary Meeting

FSC Journal No. 856, Agenda item 3

STATEMENT BY THE CHAIRPERSON

Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen,

Alles zu seiner Zeit, as Goethe put it! Time has come to draw the line and discern some conclusions, share experience and, perhaps, advance a few recommendations from my position as Chair of FSC in the interest of reinforcing the Forum as a platform for dialogue, creating trust through transparency and openness and building confidence in the field of security among participating States.

I am going to read out a statement which will be attached to the journal of the day! In view of that, let me start by confessing that only now, at the end of my tenure, could I grasp with the magnitude of the task to steer the activity of this important decision-making body of the OSCE. In more than one respect, it is comparable with the burden of the Chairmanship-in-Office, and I am referring here not necessarily to weekly sessions and Troika meetings, or to selecting topics of the Programme of Work and inviting the right guests to elaborate on them. Nor am I talking about conducting the usual business, including the management of available funds.

But the main responsibility of the FSC Chair resides, in my view, in the manner in which one is able to integrate the Forum in the overall life of the Organization at a given moment, to be in sync with other organs and institutions and, more importantly, to fulfil what the participating States expect from it – that is, to facilitate in a honest way their Co-operation towards Security. This is the measure of success of the FSC Chair and, for that matter, of any position of public interest!

Distinguished colleagues,

We all know that chairing the FSC is a rare opportunity which comes by alphabetic rotation, not choice. Being as such, it required us thorough preparation which begun about a year ago, when we put together a draft Programme of Work outlining a meaningful concept alongside two dimensions: geographical and thematic. This draft has been the base of many rounds of informal consultations and further refinement with the Secretariat, Chairmanship-in-Office, Troika members and other stakeholders. Only when we were sure that the Programme of Work is broadly acceptable the decision was taken to announce it formally. It is simple, after all: no surprises – no challenges! No undue tensioning of an

already tense climate, but, at the same time, no taboos, no shying away from difficult or new topics. Guest speakers were invited with the same intention to offer value-adding inputs and inspire a genuine dialogue among participating States about their security concerns.

I insist upon setting the tone right, at the right level, in our case the State Secretary, Deputy Foreign Minister, because the level shows respect and commitment. In return, I was happy to note a high degree of interest from delegations and, in particular, fellow ambassadors in the activity of the Forum. These are times when security dialogue becomes again paramount and I am certain that my colleagues will keep participating in ever-larger numbers at Wednesday morning sessions, as much as they do it at Thursdays' PC. For one, I am going to continue showing good example!

Dear friends,

What were the basic tenets of the Romanian Chairmanship of the FSC? First, I should mention the institutional approach resting upon transparency, balance, inclusivity, predictability – all ingredients necessary to pave the way for ownership of participating States over the process, if not the proceedings altogether! A most pleasant part of the institutional approach was of course the spotless, all-the-way co-operation with the Austrian Chairmanship-in-Office. I experienced the feeling of both Chairmanships rowing in the same boat, in the same direction – thank you, Austrian delegation, for that!

Then, let me highlight the integrated approach, bringing together the contribution of the Executive Structures, in particular the Conflict Prevention Centre, as well as the field presences, autonomous institutions, other international organizations and NGOs in an effort aiming at assisting the participating States to comprehensively define and address the challenges and risks to their security. Because dealing with multi-faceted threats requires banking on all assets at our disposal: in-house expertise and partnership outreach!

During the Romanian Chairmanship, the FSC had to adapt to the reality created by the adoption in Hamburg of the MC Declaration launching the Structured Dialogue. I am indebted to both the Chairmanship-in-Office and the Chair of the Informal Working Group on Structured Dialogue for involving the FSC Troika in the preparations for this important process. We did our best to underline the valuable contribution the FSC could bring through its security dialogue and other topics on the agenda to the Structured Dialogue. Indeed, I expect this contribution to grow in substance as we tackle the core of the Hamburg mandate, namely the present and future risks and challenges to security.

From our side, we intend to circulate soon a perception paper containing Chair's conclusions and recommendations after the thematic debates which we included in the Programme of Work. This would add an extra layer of memory about progress the FSC succeeded to achieve in addressing topics of broad interest and would assist future Chairs in defining the starting line of their related endeavours.

Dear future FSC Chairs,

May I turn to you now with some practical advice, which can be captured in three “do's” and one “don't”:

- Do allocate the necessary resources, for the road is long and the process is the prerequisite of the outcome. Some of you may know that before assuming this responsibility I served for two years as Chair of the Security Committee. There, I could cope with the help of only one colleague. In contrast, chairing the FSC required from our side an average of two diplomats, one military adviser and one intern. You tell the difference! Equally important is to wisely use the funds at your disposal according to planning discipline.
- Do take advantage of the opportunities created by the events in the margin of the Chairmanship. In my case, it was AIAM, the Breakout Workshop on Confidence and Security-Building Measures, the SALW deactivation meeting and the Structured Dialogue retreat, events which I tried to put at best use to promote the role and the contribution of FSC. Make the most out of the debriefing luncheons after formal session, for these are more relaxed occasions to go even deeper into the matter and extract new ideas!
- Do communicate! Use the facilities provided by the Communication Department to tell the outside world about FSC, your priorities, your approach, your guests and how do you take the joint agenda forward! Press releases, Twits, Facebook, interviews – everything is good to spread the truth in the post-truth world! And do not be shy to promote your country by designing an attractive logo, offering inspired welcome gifts, sponsoring the OSCE Charity Ball or displaying national spring traditions, as we did.

And now, the caution: do not take anything for granted! Check everything – twice! Prepare seriously! Obey the procedure, but be creative and adaptive! Resist all temptations, except to work in the interest of all!

Thank you Portugal and all the previous Chairs for being such a great source of inspiration to us! Thank you all delegations who have contributed to the FSC meetings, the Co-ordinators, the Secretary General, the CPC and its Support Section, the OSCE Communication Department, the Conference services, the interpreters! Thank you the Romanian Chairmanship team from Vienna and the capital!

Wish success to the Russian Federation, Serbia and all the following Chairs! And now let me transfer the symbols of the Chair and open the floor for the last time in my capacity!