

Chairmanship: Austria**991st PLENARY MEETING OF THE FORUM**

1. Date: Wednesday, 27 October 2021 (in the Neuer Saal and via video teleconference)

Opened: 10 a.m.

Closed: 1 p.m.

2. Chairperson: Mr. R. Lassmann

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

Agenda item 1: SECURITY DIALOGUE ON ONGOING INITIATIVES IN THE FIELD OF SMALL ARMS AND LIGHT WEAPONS AND STOCKPILES OF CONVENTIONAL AMMUNITION

- *Presentation by Mr. E. LeBrun, Project Co-ordinator, Small Arms Survey*
- *Presentation by Ms. J. O'Neill, Ambassador for Women, Peace and Security, Canada*
- *Presentation by Mr. Ye. Avramenko, National Project Officer for Humanitarian Mine Action, Office of the OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine*

Chairperson, Mr. E. LeBrun, Ms. J. O'Neill, Representative of the Office of the OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine, Slovenia-European Union (with the candidate countries Albania, Montenegro, North Macedonia 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, Georgia, Moldova and San Marino, in alignment) (FSC.DEL/403/21), United Kingdom, United States of America (Annex 1), Switzerland (FSC.DEL/399/21 OSCE+), Turkey, Ukraine (FSC.DEL/404/21), Russian Federation (FSC.DEL/400/21), Azerbaijan, Armenia, Chairperson of the Informal Group of Friends on Small Arms and

Light Weapons and Stockpiles of Conventional Ammunition (Latvia)
(Annex 2), Canada, Slovenia-European Union

Agenda item 2: GENERAL STATEMENTS

Situation in and around Ukraine: Ukraine (FSC.DEL/405/21 OSCE+), Slovenia-European Union (with the candidate countries Albania, Montenegro and North Macedonia; 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) (FSC.DEL/402/21), United Kingdom, United States of America (FSC.DEL/398/21 OSCE+), Canada, Russian Federation (FSC.DEL/401/21)

Agenda item 3: ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- (a) *Upcoming distribution of letters from the FSC Chairperson on the electronic annual exchange of military information and on a call for the resumption of verification activities taking into account the evolution of the COVID-19 pandemic:* Chairperson
- (b) *Excursion to the Austrian Armed Forces Logistics School on 27 October 2021:* Chairperson
- (c) *Politico-military retreat to be held in Reichenau an der Rax, Austria, on 29 October 2021:* Chairperson
- (d) *Matters of protocol:* Chairperson, Representative of the Conflict Prevention Centre, United States of America, Slovenia-European Union, Russian Federation, Sweden, Switzerland, Canada, Germany, United Kingdom

4. Next meeting:

Wednesday, 10 November 2021, at 10 a.m., in the Neuer Saal and via video teleconference



991st Plenary Meeting

FSC Journal No. 997, Agenda item 1

**STATEMENT BY
THE DELEGATION OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

The United States thanks the Chairmanship for raising this important topic of how the pursuit of gender equality and gender mainstreaming relates to ongoing initiatives in the field of small arms and light weapons (SALW) and stockpiles of conventional ammunition (SCA), and the distinguished speakers for sharing their perspectives.

When considering gender mainstreaming in SALW and SCA, we must consider the wide societal inputs and implications. Effective policy responses should take a whole-of-government approach to enhancing gender mainstreaming. And, whereas the effects of illicit SALW and SCA are often indiscriminate, harming women, men, boys, and girls with malign equality, our efforts to counter these effects will address the unique needs of women and girls. There are specific efforts regarding gender mainstreaming and SALW and SCA that merit special attention.

We would like to share our experience in addressing the challenges and opportunities of gender mainstreaming at a policy level. In July of this year, States gathered in New York for the Seventh Biennial Meeting of States (BMS7) on the United Nations Programme of Action on SALW. Gender issues featured prominently in the thematic discussion and are also well represented in the BMS7 Outcome Document. This was not an anomaly. Many States recognized the need for stronger language, and we are proud to say that the United States joined 63 other States in a statement calling for robust language on gender in the BMS7 Outcome Document. This powerful acknowledgement by States is not an end in itself; it sets a tone and direction for follow-on work.

I would like to highlight the mechanisms within the United States Department of State's 2020 Plan to Implement the US Strategy on Women, Peace, and Security as they relate to the translation of policies, concepts, and tools into beneficial programmes and activities. Through targeted programmatic interventions, the United States is focusing on: building women's capacity as actors in conflict prevention and conflict-related decision-making and peace processes; providing avenues to integrate women into the security sector – including law enforcement and the military – of our partner nations; and strengthening women and girls' knowledge, skills, and resources for meaningful participation in all aspects of political and civic life. Recognizing the truism that you cannot change what you cannot measure, the plan seeks to "Expand and apply gender analysis to policy and programme design to enhance outcomes in gender equality and women's empowerment," and

then elaborates on practical means of doing so. We have already started implementing this plan and have released our first progress report measuring our women, peace and security efforts this year, highlighting our achievements but also identifying areas for sustained focus.

We draw attention again to the BMS7 Outcome Document, in which States resolved to take account of the differing impacts of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons on women, men, girls, and boys by collecting, where feasible, disaggregated data by sex, age, and disability and utilizing analysis mechanisms to inform evidence-based gender-sensitive policymaking and programming with a view to strengthening the full and effective implementation of the Programme of Action at all levels. This includes the internal integration of gender analysis into budget planning and procurement processes. It also includes the gender analysis of beneficiaries for a wide range of security assistance programmes. The importance of gathering sex-disaggregated data to gender mainstreaming in SALW has been noted in various multilateral fora. We recommend States gather and use data in a tangible and concrete manner to meaningfully inform programmes and policies. In the context of US programmes for assistance with SALW and conventional ammunition stockpiles, we track the beneficiaries of these programmes in a gender-disaggregated fashion, such as personnel who received training in stockpile management or explosive ordnance disposal. Starting in 2022, we will require our implementing partners to report sex-disaggregated data on personnel employed in both supervisory and non-supervisory capacities. This requirement, and the data that it generates, will facilitate concrete insights and illuminate how gender perspectives inform our programmes.

We appreciate the OSCE's focus on how to increase women's meaningful participation in decision-making and implementation of SALW and SCA policies. Part of the answer to that question lies in the fourth guiding question for this session: exchanging information and best practices. Indeed, the BMS7 outcome document makes a similar call, wherein States noted the importance of exchanging national experiences, lessons learned, and good practices on the mainstreaming of gender perspectives into policies and programmes designed to combat the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons.

The most fundamental way to "increase women's meaningful participation in decision-making and implementation of SALW and SCA policies, programmes, and activities," is to increase women's meaningful participation in government and society. Beyond that admittedly broad, holistic approach, however, we can recommend policies to gather useful data connected to concrete outcomes and iterate our approach going forward until we achieve real and lasting equality.

Mr. Chairperson, I would like to particularly welcome Yevhen Avramenko to the Forum for Security Co-operation. As the OSCE's National Project Officer for Humanitarian Mine Action in Ukraine, we appreciate hearing from Mr. Avramenko on this critical mission to rid Ukraine of mines, protect the civilian population, and integrate gender aspects in demining work. Ukraine remains one of the most heavily mine-contaminated countries in the world, according to the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine's thematic report from May. The presence of mines affects people's everyday lives in eastern Ukraine, their freedom of movement, access to services, education, health, and economic opportunities. Civilians, many of them elderly and female, in settlements along the contact line have been unable to visit relatives in safety and cemeteries along the contact line are contaminated by mines, unexploded ordnance and other explosives. We can and must do everything we can to support

this important OSCE office. The United States is a major donor to humanitarian demining efforts in Ukraine, most recently contributing 560,000 US dollars along with several million dollars to SALW projects. We commend Ukraine's demining activities and efforts to improve the lives of civilians while Russia and the forces it leads continue to lay mines throughout eastern Ukraine, including those that are banned by the United Nations.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. Please attach this statement to the journal of the day.



**Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
Forum for Security Co-operation**

FSC.JOUR/997
27 October 2021
Annex 2

Original: ENGLISH

991st Plenary Meeting

FSC Journal No. 997, Agenda item 1

**STATEMENT BY
THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE INFORMAL GROUP OF FRIENDS ON
SMALL ARMS AND LIGHT WEAPONS AND STOCKPILES OF
CONVENTIONAL AMMUNITION (LATVIA)**

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.

Dear colleagues,

Distinguished speakers,

In my capacity as Chairperson of the Informal Group of Friends on Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) and Stockpiles of Conventional Ammunition (SCA), I should like to start by thanking the distinguished speakers for their valuable and thought-provoking presentations.

In the spirit of today's Security Dialogue on ongoing initiatives in the field of SALW and SCA with a particular focus on gender mainstreaming, I wish to recall Ministerial Council Decision No. 10/17 on SALW and SCA and, in particular, to draw attention to how that decision tasked the Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC) with "[a]ddressing the impact of excessive and destabilizing accumulation and uncontrolled spread of SALW and SCA on women and children" and with "[c]reating equal opportunities for women's participation in policymaking, planning and implementation processes to combat illicit SALW as well as with regard to the OSCE Assistance Projects in the field of SALW and SCA" (MC.DEC/10/17). In the 2018 Ministerial Council Declaration on OSCE Efforts in the Field of Norms and Best Practices on Small Arms and Light Weapons and Stockpiles of Conventional Ammunition (MC.DOC/5/18), the foreign ministers of the OSCE participating States reaffirmed the urgency of those tasks by declaring themselves "concerned about the negative impact of illicit trafficking in SALW on our societies, ... in particular the impact on women and children", and by acknowledging "the need for the OSCE to continue to enhance its SALW- and SCA-related norms and best practices and their implementation".

At the second Biennial Meeting to Assess the Implementation of the OSCE Documents on SALW and SCA, which took place in October 2020, the need for gender mainstreaming in the OSCE's work on normative and practical assistance was highlighted. Incorporating gender aspects both into participating States' SALW- and SCA-related policies and into OSCE standards and practical assistance in this field would contribute significantly to our joint efforts to combat illicit trafficking in SALW and conventional ammunition

effectively. I would argue that the rationale for gender mainstreaming in SALW and SCA action is threefold, namely:

- To contribute to gender equality;
- To promote more effective SALW control and SCA management; and
- To advance the implementation of global commitments and obligations.

Mr. Chairperson,

As we are now well into the process of updating the OSCE Best Practice Guides (BPGs) on SALW and conventional ammunition, and are also considering the development of new guides, it is the right moment to ensure that gender aspects are reflected, where appropriate, in the text of these and all other relevant OSCE documents.

I should like to reiterate that the updating of the BPGs relies entirely on the participating States. Although this process is complex and time-consuming, it is very much worthwhile to follow a regular update cycle and thereby strengthen part of our common normative framework.

Currently, 9 out of 17 BPGs have been reviewed and updated; new initiatives are also being developed. Two updated BPGs were adopted by the FSC. The draft updated versions of six additional BPGs and two new initiatives have been proposed for consideration within Working Group A. These efforts are being led by Austria, France, Germany (jointly with Austria and Switzerland), Spain, Sweden, the United Kingdom and the United States of America. Other participating States, such as Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cyprus, Montenegro, the Russian Federation and Switzerland, have provided support. Moreover, several OSCE executive structures have submitted their lessons learned and recommendations on the use of the BPGs.

I would encourage you to make use of FSC Working Group A to elaborate on gender aspects when discussing the drafts of updated BPGs and proposals for revising the OSCE's assistance mechanism. Moreover, it would be beneficial to involve national gender experts from the field of SALW and SCA when updating the BPGs.

Allow me to conclude by expressing the hope that the lessons learned from, and the discussions held during, today's meeting of the FSC will further motivate and guide us in our efforts aimed at mainstreaming a gender perspective into best practices and mechanisms related to SALW and SCA so as to promote the full, equal and meaningful participation of women in conflict prevention, conflict resolution and post-conflict rehabilitation.

Thank you for your attention.

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