



PERMANENT MISSION
OF ICELAND
to the OSCE

**Closing Statement by the Chairperson of the
Forum for Security Co-operation
H.E. Ambassador Stefán Skjaldarson
at the 643 FSC Plenary Meeting
13 April, 2011**

Excellencies,
Dear Colleagues. Ladies and Gentlemen

It is an honour and a pleasure for me to make some remarks at the closing of the Icelandic Chairmanship of the Forum for Security Co-operation in the first trimester of 2011 in the wake of the Astana Summit.

As you may recall, I underlined in my opening remarks last January that we would focus our work based on the guidance and the tasking given by our Ministers in Athens and our Leaders at Astana as they relate to the FSC.

In light of the tasking and the spirit from Athens and Astana, our work in the Forum has naturally focused much on advancing the updating of the Vienna Document 1999. Before Iceland assumed the FSC Chairmanship, the work had of course already started and several important decisions were prepared and taken last year under the very able leadership of Greece, Hungary and in the run up of the Astana Summit, Ireland.

To jumpstart that work in 2011, the Chairmanship organised a special FSC on Conventional Arms Control, Confidence- and Security Building Measures and the Vienna Document last February. In our endeavour to update the VD99, we have also enjoyed the very able assistance of our Vienna Document coordinator. But needless to say, we still do not have consensus on moving forward on further updating of the VD99. I would certainly encourage all delegations to work intensively in the months ahead with the Italian and Kazakh Chairmanships and the VD co-ordinator to secure substantive progress in good time for the Vilnius Ministerial in December.

We all know that our work here at the OSCE, including at the Forum for Security Co-operation, is a process that needs careful deliberations and consultations and it may take time, patience and a lot of work to come to consensus on important issues. And even though we have the guidance and the tasking from Athens and Astana, it may take time to find consensus on appropriate decisions. But that does not mean that we should give in. Delegations must work more closely together in good faith to come to consensus and deliver before Vilnius.

As regards the very important work of the FSC on Small Arms and Light Weapons, SALW, as well as on Stockpiles of Conventional Ammunition, SCA, this work has continued to make

steady progress in terms of the practical implementation of SALW projects as well as in designing new ones in cooperation with participating and requesting States. The FSC has furthermore adopted Decision No. 3/11 on Destruction of Conventional Ammunition to strengthen the implementation of the Document on Stockpiles of Conventional Ammunition by recognizing destruction as the preferred method of disposal.

On the OSCE Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security the FSC Chair engaged in finalizing the Draft Decision on the Reference Guide. One participating State is still awaiting instructions so the Draft Decision will have to be followed upon by the incoming FSC Chair and will hopefully be adopted soon after the Easter recess. However, several participating States have already informed the FSC that they will make use of the reference guide for the 2011 response to the Questionnaire on the OSCE Code of Conduct. Improving the implementation of the Code of Conduct is common effort and depends on the contribution of all and I would like to use the opportunity to remind delegations that the deadline for submitting responses to the questionnaire is approaching full speed and is the 15th of April.

The first important task of the FSC under the Icelandic Chairmanship was the preparations for and conduct of the OSCE 1540 Workshop on Non-proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction, in close cooperation with the CPC and the UN 1540 Committee. This workshop was an important event which attracted wide interest and participation. A final report on the Workshop has been issued by the Chairmanship where the main discussions and proposals are summarised.

A second event was the Annual Implementation Assessment Meeting that took place on 1 – 2 March. As usual, this meeting was very informative and useful and there were substantive discussions on the implementation of our common CSBM commitments under the Vienna Document 1999 and the Code of Conduct on Military Aspects of Security.

The first Decision of the FSC in 2011 was regarding the Agenda and Modalities of the High Level Military Doctrine Seminar to be held on 24-25 May. Preparations for the Seminar are well advanced under the able leadership of the FSC Co-ordinator for the seminar and it is already clear that there will be very high level participation in the Seminar.

As regards the preparations for the Annual Security Review Conference, the FSC and PC Chairmanships have worked closely together, assisted by the FSC's *chef de file*, in order to ensure the best possible preparations and to pave the way for a successful event. We have at times faced challenges in our preparations, not least due to procedural complications. The procedures need in my view to be simplified and I would encourage participating States to consider ways on how to improve the procedural aspects of this endeavour in order to pave the way for smooth preparations for the ASRC in the future. But in spite of this we did indeed today manage to finalize our work in this regard and I'm grateful to all of you for your co-operation. This will help making the ASRC a success.

During the Icelandic Chairmanship, we have had several substantive Security Dialogues. In addition to the Special FSC on Conventional Arms Control, Confidence- and Security Building Measures and the Vienna Document that I mentioned earlier, we had a good and substantive dialogue on the Code of Conduct on Private Military and Security Companies as well as a special workshop on that issue. We also had a Security Dialogue on the Dayton Peace Accords, Article IV explaining its importance for Conventional Arms Control in the

Western Balkans as well as its success. Furthermore, we had a visit of the First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Georgia explaining the presence of Russian Military Forces and equipment in the Georgian regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia. The Forum also had a visit from the State Secretary of the Ministry of Defence in Serbia explaining the reform of the Serbian military forces. And finally, the forum had a specialist coming to brief on the importance of Human Rights and Crisis Management, including the importance of UNSCR 1325 on Women, Peace and Security.

At the outset, the Icelandic Chairmanship had the intention to hold joint FSC/PC meeting or meetings, in particular regarding human rights, gender and security. Regrettably, we did not succeed in that endeavour. But those that were invited for that purpose did not decline the invitation but rather said that they might be able to come at a later stage. We will pass that information to our Italian colleagues for further consideration as appropriate.

There are many that deserve our thanks now that we are concluding our Chairmanship. I would firstly like to express my deepest gratitude to the FSC Chairs Co-ordinator for the Vienna Document, Dr. Pierre von Arx. Although his tireless efforts in working with delegations to move forward on updating the VD99 have not yet born tangible fruit in terms of decisions, the discussions and deliberations under his guidance have certainly moved forward and will hopefully culminate in substantive updating of the Vienna Document before the Vilnius Ministerial as tasked by our Leaders.

I would also like to thank our Co-ordinator for the Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security, Colonel Anton Eischer, who has worked tirelessly to strengthen this very important aspect of our co-operation, including by pushing forward our work on the Reference Guide on the Code of Conduct.

My appreciation also goes to Lieutenant Colonel László Szatmári, who is responsible for the work of the FSC on Stockpiles of Conventional Ammunition, SCA. His enthusiasm and dedication is of great value for the FSC and the Chairmanship.

Thanks also to Colonel Steve Hartnell for his invaluable work on Small Arms and Light Weapons projects. His untiring efforts in this regard are much appreciated.

My thanks also go to Colonel Anders Byrén, our Chairperson of the Informal Group of Friends for SALW's normative work. His dedication to this aspect of the FSC work on SALW is very important and cannot be overestimated.

As regards the co-ordination on the preparations for the High Level Military Doctrine Seminar, my thanks go to Minister Counsellor Loretta Loria who has done a tremendous good job in securing the preparations to this important seminar with the assistance of the informal Group of Friends on logistics and substance that I would also pay tribute to.

Our *chef de file* for the ASRC Dr. Berenice Gare certainly deserves our thanks for her invaluable and able guidance and assistance to the FSC Chair concerning the FSC's contribution to the 2011 ASRC.

I would also like to express my gratitude to the Director of the CPC, the staff of the FSC Support Section, the Conference Services and the interpreters for their professional support and dedication.

Allow me also to thank Lithuania for their support from the PC side of our cooperation. It has been a pleasure working with you and we wish you continued success at the helm of the OSCE.

Very special thanks go to our Irish colleagues that are now leaving the FSC troika. We really owe you dear Eoin, and your team, a great deal for your support and professional advice. We will really miss you on the FSC troika and we wish you well in your soon upcoming endeavour in the Chair of the OSCE.

Allow me furthermore to welcome our Kazakh friends and colleagues on the troika. We look forward to working with you on the troika in our common effort to move the FSC's agenda forward.

As we are now about to pass the Chairmanship to our Italian colleagues and friends, allow me to express my sincere gratitude to you, Ambassador Varvesi, dear Gianfranco, and to your team, for the excellent co-operation and support we have enjoyed from you during our Chairmanship and to wish you and your team all the best in steering the FSC in the months to come. You can count on our support.

And finally, dear colleagues and friends, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of you for your support and friendship during our Chairmanship. We have really appreciated working with you all. I wish you all and your families happy OSCE Spring Recess Holydays and hope that you will manage to use that opportunity to rest and recuperate after a very busy and at times cumbersome first trimester at the FSC.

Thank you all very much.