

Chairmanship: Germany

963rd PLENARY MEETING OF THE FORUM

1. Date: Wednesday, 9 December 2020 (via video teleconference)

Opened: 10 a.m.
Suspended: 1.05 p.m.
Resumed: 3 p.m.
Closed: 3.35 p.m.

2. Chairperson: Ambassador G. Bräutigam
Mr. M. Bleinroth

Prior to taking up the agenda, the Chairperson reminded the Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC) of the technical modalities for the conduct of FSC meetings during the COVID-19 pandemic, as outlined in FSC.GAL/109/20.

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

Agenda item 1: AWARD CEREMONY OF THE OSCE-IFSH (INSTITUTE FOR PEACE RESEARCH AND SECURITY POLICY) ESSAY COMPETITION ON CONVENTIONAL ARMS CONTROL AND CONFIDENCE- AND SECURITY-BUILDING MEASURES

Chairperson, Officer-in-Charge/Secretary General, Mr. C. Friesendorf, Mr. A. Zagorski, Mr. N. Sokov, Mr. M. Finaud, Mr. U. Kühn, Mr. B. Schaller, Ms. N. Egel, Ms. A. Prokhorova, United States of America, Germany-European Union, Switzerland

Agenda item 2: PRESENTATION BY BRIGADIER GENERAL MAUREEN O'BRIEN, DEPUTY FORCE COMMANDER OF THE UNITED NATIONS DISENGAGEMENT OBSERVER FORCE, ON ISSUES RELATED TO UNSCR 1325

Chairperson, Brigadier General M. O'Brien (FSC.DEL/315/20 OSCE+), United States of America, Germany-European Union, Canada, Russian

Federation (Annex 1), United Kingdom, FSC Co-ordinator for Matters Related to UNSCR 1325 (Albania)

Agenda item 3: DISCUSSION ON THE OUTCOME OF THE 2020
MINISTERIAL COUNCIL IN TIRANA

Chairperson, Germany-European Union (with the candidate countries Albania, Montenegro and North Macedonia; 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) (FSC.DEL/324/20), Albania (Annex 2), Sweden (Annex 3), Canada, United Kingdom (FSC.DEL/317/20 OSCE+), United States of America, Switzerland (FSC.DEL/318/20 OSCE+), Russian Federation (Annex 4), Armenia, Azerbaijan, Turkey

Agenda item 4: GENERAL STATEMENTS

Situation in and around Ukraine: Ukraine (FSC.DEL/319/20) (FSC.DEL/319/20/Add.1), Germany-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/325/20), Canada, United Kingdom (FSC.DEL/323/20 OSCE+), United States of America, Russian Federation (Annex 5), Germany

Agenda item 5: ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- (a) *Conduct of the annual exchange of military information on 15 December 2020 via the OSCE Communications Network:* Chairperson
- (b) *Financial contribution to the OSCE Trust Fund for the assistance projects on small arms and light weapons (SALW) and stockpiles of conventional ammunition (SCA) and to the outreach programme on the Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security:* Germany (Annex 6)
- (c) *Launch of an initiative relating to the assistance mechanism under the OSCE Documents on SALW and SCA:* Austria (Annex 7), Chairperson of the Informal Group of Friends on SALW and SCA (Latvia), Montenegro
- (d) *International military co-operation activities:* Serbia (Annex 8)

4. Next meeting:

Wednesday, 16 December 2020, at 11 a.m., via video teleconference



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

FSC.JOUR/969
9 December 2020
Annex 1

ENGLISH
Original: RUSSIAN

963rd Plenary Meeting
FSC Journal No. 969, Agenda item 2

**STATEMENT BY
THE DELEGATION OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION**

Madam Chairperson,

We are grateful to Brigadier General Maureen O'Brien for her interesting report on United Nations Security Council resolution 1325, the theme of which is particularly pertinent on the occasion of the document's 20th anniversary.

Since the adoption of resolution 1325 by the Security Council, common approaches to the implementation of the documents on women, peace and security have been developed, focusing on four areas: prevention, protection, participation and peace-building in situations of armed conflict. The direct participation of women in these activities, as we have heard from first-hand experience today, allows us to achieve very tangible results.

It is with deep regret that we note that, this year, the United Nations Security Council failed to adopt an anniversary resolution on 1325. The draft submitted by the Russian Presidency not only could have made a serious contribution to strengthening and developing this agenda, but was also a truly balanced document, which reflected all of the agenda's key elements. Nevertheless, a number of Western countries prevented the document from being agreed. This is despite the fact that the United Nations has the prerogative to review the implementation of 1325.

When talking about the resolution in the context of the work of the Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC), it is worth noting the importance of ensuring equal opportunities to include women in efforts to address politico-military security issues. However, the process of involving women in, for example, project activities on small arms and light weapons and stockpiles of conventional ammunition or in inspections under the Vienna Document 2011 or the Treaty on Open Skies should be carried out on the basis of existing needs. Priority should be given not to artificial quotas, but to the professional qualifications of women.

On the whole, as we have repeatedly pointed out, the work of the FSC on 1325 should be carried out exclusively within the framework of its mandate. We will be guided by this in our future interactions in the Forum.

Thank you for your attention. I request that this statement be attached to the journal of the day.



963rd Plenary Meeting
FSC Journal No. 969, Agenda item 3

STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF ALBANIA

Madam Chairperson,
Dear colleagues,
Ladies and gentlemen,
Dear Gesa,

Allow me to commend you, and your able and dedicated team for the leadership, commitment and the tremendous work done in this last trimester. Working with you and your team has been a privilege for us. This close partnership has been one of the most important conditions for steering the negotiations towards the Tirana Ministerial Council in an effective manner.

I would also like to thank all those delegations who engaged constructively during the drafting process of the draft texts for the Ministerial Council, working alongside with Albania and Germany, day by day and week by week through an intense schedule of negotiations.

Dear colleagues,

Let us be frank: when there is no collective effort, mutual and comprehensive understanding and, most importantly, political will, which make up the bedrock of our Organization, there can be no progress towards our collective benefit.

We note with regret and disappointment that no consensus was able to be reached on either of the three draft texts and despite the continuous and valiant efforts by the German FSC Chairmanship, which incorporated a practical vision and approach for tangible results in the FSC framework.

As we have stated before in numerous occasions, Albania strongly supported the efforts of the German FSC Chairmanship's efforts to enhance our commitments in relation to:

- The Vienna Document 2011;
- small arms and light weapons (SALW) and stockpiles of convention ammunition (SCA); and
- United Nations Security Council resolution 1325.

Allow me share some comments on each of the proposals submitted for consideration by the FSC:

First, it is regretful that on the 30th anniversary of the Vienna Document, of this fundamental document which has assisted for decades in building confidence and mutual trust among participating States, we could not reach consensus on a Ministerial Council draft declaration.

Albania reaffirms its commitments to the full implementation in letter and spirit of the Vienna Document 2011 and we remain wilful and determined in supporting its future modernization, which would further on strengthen its fundamentals.

Secondly, we also note with regret that the draft Ministerial Council decision on SALW and SCA text did not meet with consensus, despite the tireless efforts undertaken by the FSC Chair until the very last minute. However, I am convinced that this remains a true milestone proposal which will continue to serve as inspiration for next years. Reducing the threat posed by illicit trafficking and excessive accumulation of SALW and conventional ammunition can provide tangible security dividends for all of us in the OSCE area.

Albania has always attached great importance to this topic and all of us should be able to agree that the uncontrolled spread of SALW has a devastating impact on the daily lives of our citizens, and fuels organized crime and terrorism. We should remind ourselves that we all have the responsibility to do something about it.

Thirdly, in the occasion of the 20th anniversary of this landmark document, I also would like to applaud the German Chairmanship on coming up with a tangible and meaningful vision for a draft Ministerial Council decision on United Nations Security Council resolution 1325 in the areas of work of the FSC, which went beyond commemoration and presented a substantive ideas for injecting a new momentum in the work of the FSC.

Regretfully, even after several amendments made to the draft by the FSC Chairmanship to accommodate the concerns of the participating States, consensus could not be reached in the end.

Madam Chairperson,

We were delighted to note the joint statement on United Nations Security Council resolution 1325 that was delivered at the Ministerial Council, crucially found the support of 52 participating States. This has sent a clear signal of the continued importance and relevance of the women, peace and security agenda for the OSCE.

Moreover, the joint statement on the 30th anniversary of the Vienna Document was endorsed by 45 participating States, which reflects a clear and growing trend of support for the Vienna Document modernization and should not be overlooked.

We believe that the German FSC Chairmanship, and, in particular, you, Madam Chairperson, have left behind an important legacy that needs to be built on. The end result of such a legacy is the common benefit for the 57 participating States within the FSC.

We are convinced that such co-operation would serve the people of our countries better than political differences.

I thank you for your attention.



963rd Plenary Meeting
FSC Journal No. 969, Agenda item 3

STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF SWEDEN

Madam Chairperson,

Sweden aligns itself with the statement of the European Union and wishes to make a statement in its national capacity.

First, Sweden would like to thank Albania for its excellent OSCE Chairmanship and for hosting a successful Ministerial Council in Tirana. By conducting the first ever virtual Ministerial, Albania was in a way leading the OSCE into the future. As the incoming holder of the OSCE Chairmanship, Sweden learned a lot from this experience, from which we will definitely profit when we assume the Chairmanship in a few weeks' time.

Regarding the first-dimension, politico-military texts, we would also like to thank Germany for its immense efforts to find a way forward on three very important topics. From our point of view, consensus on those texts would have been very beneficial for the future work of the OSCE. We regret that this was not possible.

However, we see it as very encouraging that, despite challenging circumstances, the vast majority of the participating States endorsed two strong statements, one on the Vienna Document and one on women, peace and security. Both these topics will certainly be among the Swedish priorities for 2021.

We also believe that the text on small arms and light weapons, which in general also had strong support, could well be reactivated at a later date. In this connection, illicit trafficking of small arms and light weapons and stockpiles of conventional ammunition will be high on the Swedish agenda next year.

We firmly believe that there is more to do in all these areas and therefore regard the work done on these texts and the statements made by like-minded representatives as constituting important stepping stones for future common efforts.

Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Please attach my statement to the journal of the day.



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

FSC.JOUR/969
9 December 2020
Annex 4

ENGLISH
Original: RUSSIAN

963rd Plenary Meeting
FSC Journal No. 969, Agenda item 3

**STATEMENT BY
THE DELEGATION OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION**

Madam Chairperson,

Allow us to join the delegations that have expressed their gratitude to the German Chairmanship for the huge amount of work accomplished in preparing the Forum's contribution to the OSCE Ministerial Council in Tirana. We note the high diplomatic prowess of our German colleagues, their professionalism, flexibility and skill in making use of all possibilities for finding compromise language.

We regret that, despite the great efforts made by the participating States in the Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC), it has not been possible this year to achieve tangible results in the drafting of the three documents. Of course, reaching consensus requires that the positions of all participating States without exception be taken into account. However, there is a need for political realism here. We consider it important in these current quite difficult circumstances that participating States have been able to lay the groundwork for some of our future work.

Regarding the outcome for the FSC of the OSCE Ministerial Council in Tirana, there is naturally a feeling that more could have been achieved, but it is our understanding that the FSC still has significant creative potential to enable it to demonstrate the importance of the politico-military dimension of the OSCE's work many times over.

In our view, the discussion in preparation for the Ministerial Council meeting on ways to rebuild trust and de-escalate tensions is valuable in itself. At the same time, we cannot but mention with regret that the prevailing atmosphere of mistrust and confrontation in the Euro-Atlantic area has also had a negative impact on the OSCE's politico-military dimension. Unless NATO abandons its policy of "containing" Russia, we see no point in modernizing the Vienna Document 2011 on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures. We await progress in NATO's position. We have patience enough.

We agree that there is a need for equal opportunities to include women in the complex issues of politico-military security. We expect the Forum's activities in this area to be carried out strictly within its mandate, focusing on the impact of the destabilizing accumulation and illicit trafficking of small arms and light weapons (SALW) and ammunition on women and

children, on the contribution of women to combating the illicit trade in SALW and on the implementation of the Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security. We would point out that it is these very aspects that our ministers have entrusted us with during OSCE Ministerial Council meetings in recent years.

The wide-ranging issues related to the provision of assistance to participating States in the field of SALW and stockpiles of conventional ammunition (SCA) have long served as a framework for the joint efforts of all participating States, and it makes a concrete, practical contribution to strengthening security in the OSCE area. In the current context of the Forum's work, the importance and relevance of this framework have increased considerably, not least as a consolidating factor in shaping a positive agenda. We look forward to further interested consideration of this topic and concrete results in the normative and practical work on SALW and SCA.

Madam Chairperson,

In conclusion, we should like to confirm the utility of the discussions held in the Forum in preparation for the Ministerial Council meeting. We believe it necessary to make use of this potential and very concrete intellectual input to give impetus to the work of our decision-making negotiating body in the coming year. We should also like to thank the Albanian OSCE Chairmanship for the excellent organization and conduct of the Ministerial Council meeting. We thank Germany and all the delegations that accompanied us during this difficult negotiating marathon.

Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I request that this statement be attached to the journal of the day.



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

FSC.JOUR/969
9 December 2020
Annex 5

ENGLISH
Original: RUSSIAN

963rd Plenary Meeting
FSC Journal No. 969, Agenda item 4

**STATEMENT BY
THE DELEGATION OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION**

Mr. Chairperson,

Today the last discussion in the current year of the politico-military aspects of the situation in Ukraine is taking place in the Forum. We propose to use this opportunity to take stock of the discussions that have been held and assess how far we have progressed in a settlement of the internal Ukrainian conflict.

The conflict in Donbas is entering its seventh year. The armed confrontation has already claimed over 13,000 lives, and some 30,000 people have been injured. Such is the price that the inhabitants of Donbas have had to pay for expressing their disagreement with the course pursued by the politicians who came to power after the anti-constitutional coup d'état in Kyiv in February 2014.

The current leadership of Ukraine promised to implement the Minsk agreements and ensure peace in Donbas by the end of 2020. The deadlines given are expiring and still there are no results. Instead of making targeted efforts to resolve the conflict, the Ukrainian Government has resorted to public demagoguery and a cynical manipulation of the facts, and has been mutely inactive in the fulfilment of its commitments under the Package of Measures and the "Normandy format" instructions. The Joint Action Plan for the implementation of the Minsk agreements recently presented by the Ukrainian side fundamentally contradicts the spirit and content of those agreements.

There is nothing to "celebrate" either in connection with yet another milestone anniversary – exactly one year ago, on 9 December 2019, the Normandy Four summit took place in Paris. Owing to the destructive position of the Ukrainian Government, the overwhelming majority of the decisions reached back then have not yet been implemented. The Ukrainian side continues to balk at reaching agreement with Donbas on the legal aspects of its special status. The "Steinmeier formula" has not been incorporated into Ukrainian legislation. There is still no real progress in the agreement of new areas for the disengagement of forces and hardware along the line of contact or demining areas. I am sure that you need no reminding that the Paris summit instructions should have been carried out back in April of this year.

And although, thanks to the additional measures to strengthen the ceasefire regime that have been in effect since 27 July of this year, violations of the “silence regime” in Donbas are generally at a low level, civilians continue to sustain injuries because of shelling or die as a result of unexploded ordnance and mines. The Ukrainian armed forces are deploying military equipment in settlements near the line of contact and also amassing a large number of tanks and air defence systems in the region. The Russian delegation has urged the delegation of Ukraine on numerous occasions in the Forum to provide detailed information on the troop strength of the Ukrainian armed forces in Donbas, the places where their units are stationed, the weapons systems used in the shelling and their origin. Despite the military transparency declared by the Ukrainian Government, no response has been forthcoming so far. Clearly, the Ukrainian side has something to hide.

It is not surprising that in these circumstances the official Ukrainian representatives continue to make vigorous use of propagandistic clichés about some kind of “aggression” in an attempt to cover up the fact that the Ukrainian Government is continuing its punitive operation against its own people in Donbas. The tragic results of this “defensive” policy – as the Ukrainian representatives describe it – are documented in the reports of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine (SMM). Over the past three years, 75 per cent of the casualties among the civilian population have come from territories that are not controlled by the Ukrainian Government. So who is really responsible for this aggression?

In violation of the Minsk agreements, the Ukrainian authorities continue to stubbornly reject dialogue with the representatives of certain areas of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions. The fact that the Ukrainian Government is “muzzling” the people of Donbas is hardly surprising – as the saying goes “an uneasy conscience betrays itself”. But the fact that this is being actively condoned by Ukraine’s Western “minders” and by the co-mediators in the peace settlement raises a number of questions. In particular, the behaviour of the French and German Governments, which made every effort to wreck an informal Arria-formula meeting of members of the United Nations Security Council on progress in implementing the Minsk Package of Measures, is inexplicable. Above all, they wanted to prevent the representatives of Donbas, who are directly involved in the settlement negotiations, from making statements. The meeting nevertheless took place on 2 December 2020, but France, Germany and the other Western countries preferred to ignore it.

Such steps are based on an unwillingness to reveal what is really happening in eastern Ukraine. After all, the *raison d’être* of any settlement is to give a voice to the parties to the conflict. The incident compromises the role of the French and German Governments as mediators in the resolution of the Ukrainian crisis and demonstrates their desire to “cover up” the actions of the authorities in Kyiv. In that context, serious doubts arise regarding the assurances of the distinguished French representative at the 962nd meeting of the Forum for Security Co-operation as to the impartiality of France and Germany as participants in the “Normandy format”. We reiterate: the evidence suggests otherwise.

As a co-mediator in the peace process, Russia stresses that any further prolongation of the armed violence in eastern Ukraine is unacceptable. The Ukrainian Government should put an immediate stop to the punitive operation against the civilian population of Donbas, withdraw its weapons and move them to the designated storage sites, disarm all illegal groups, and pull the foreign military equipment and mercenaries out of Ukraine. It is essential that the inhumane socio-economic blockade of Donbas be lifted and the region itself be

granted special status as a matter of urgency. All of Ukraine's obligations under the Minsk agreements must be fulfilled. Political and security measures are closely interlinked and should be implemented simultaneously. Without resolving the political issues, a comprehensive settlement of the crisis in Ukraine is impossible. We emphasize the direct responsibility of the Ukrainian Government for the practical implementation of all aspects of the Minsk Package of Measures and the instructions from the "Normandy format" summit held in Paris.

Mr. Chairperson,

The ongoing crisis in Ukraine is the result of the February 2014 coup d'état, which was orchestrated, funded and organized from abroad and has led to the armed confrontation in Donbas and the suffering of millions of Ukrainian civilians. For more than six years now, the Ukrainian Government's Western "minders" have not really sought to promote a real cessation of hostilities, but have instead been financing and training the Ukrainian army and beefing it up with weapons. The United States of America is breaking all records in that regard. According to the US Defense Security Cooperation Agency, in the 2020 financial year the US Government sold military goods worth 510 million US dollars to the Ukrainian Government as part of the Foreign Military Sales programme, which is double the figure for previous years. The figures announced by the US delegation today that since 2014 the US Government has allocated over 2 billion US dollars to the Ukrainian Government for its military needs are staggering. Recently, the 28th Separate Mechanized Brigade of the Ukrainian armed forces conducted tactical exercises using US Javelin anti-tank missile systems. None of this is conducive to reducing military tensions, as the United States and other Western partners regularly call for – rather, it is giving a boost to the "war party" in Kyiv and its belligerent aspirations regarding Donbas. We would emphasize that OSCE participating States that provide military-technical assistance in any form to the Ukrainian Government share responsibility with the Ukrainian military for the casualties among the civilian population and for further destruction in Donbas.

It is time for the Ukrainian Government's Western "minders" to finally stop pandering to its endeavours to portray the conflict as external rather than internal in order to continue groundlessly accusing Russia – a guarantor of, and mediator in, the settlement – of "undermining" the efforts to achieve peace. We well remember the comments by the authorities in Kyiv that they need the Minsk agreements so that the pressure of sanctions can continue to be exerted on Russia. We warn that the continuation of this policy is fraught with unpredictable consequences and – at the very least – is derailing the peace settlement.

Mr. Chairperson,

Our position on the internal Ukrainian conflict is known and remains unchanged – the Minsk Package of Measures of 12 February 2015 needs to be fully implemented through direct dialogue between the Ukrainian Government and the authorities in Donetsk and Luhansk. As a mediator, the Russian Federation is prepared to do everything it can to facilitate this. All opportunities and mechanisms for promoting a comprehensive peaceful settlement are available. Progress depends on the Ukrainian Government being genuinely ready for direct dialogue, geared towards practical results, with the representatives of Donbas.

We expect our French and German “Normandy format” partners to take a responsible approach to their role as co-mediators, which presupposes an impartial attitude towards the Ukrainian Government and the authorities in Donetsk and Luhansk, encouraging them to fully implement the Minsk Package of Measures and the “Normandy format” decisions.

In conclusion, a brief word on the remarks made today about the situation in Crimea. This topic is definitively closed and we have no intention of discussing it.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. I request that this statement be attached to the journal of the day.



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

FSC.JOUR/969
9 December 2020
Annex 6

ENGLISH
Original: GERMAN

963rd Plenary Meeting
FSC Journal No. 969, Agenda item 5(b)

STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF GERMANY

Madam Chairperson,
Excellencies,
Distinguished colleagues,

I am pleased to announce that Germany has decided once again to provide funds for the OSCE programme for small arms and light weapons and stockpiles of conventional ammunition (SALW/SCA).

Our contribution will be 1,000,000 euros.

During our Chairmanship of the Forum for Security Co-operation, we emphasized the enormous significance that this programme in the OSCE area has had for Germany for years. We will therefore be continuing our financial support until at least 2023.

I am also pleased to announce that Germany has decided once again to provide funds in 2021 for the planned outreach of the Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security.

Our contribution will be 60,000 euros.

We hope that the pandemic situation will soon allow us to carry out the outreach activities that were postponed indefinitely in 2020.

We would be pleased if other participating States were also to provide financial support for the SALW/SCA and Code of Conduct projects.

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



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

FSC.JOUR/969
9 December 2020
Annex 7

Original: ENGLISH

963rd Plenary Meeting

FSC Journal No. 969, Agenda item 5(c)

STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF AUSTRIA

Mr. Chairperson,
Madam Chairperson,
Excellencies,
Distinguished colleagues,

During the second Biennial Meeting to Assess the Implementation of the OSCE Documents on Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) and Stockpiles of Conventional Ammunition (SCA), which was held on 13 and 14 October, a large number of suggestions were put forward for consideration. These were compiled into a document entitled “Survey of Suggestions” that was distributed on 27 November under reference number SEC.GAL/179/20. A wide range of topics were covered at the meeting, reflecting the complex, multi-layered nature of the field of SALW and SCA.

The assistance mechanism under the OSCE Documents on SALW and SCA was one of the topics most intensively discussed during the biennial meeting. It is beyond question that the OSCE Documents themselves provide a sufficient normative framework and that there is no need to adapt them in any way. Nevertheless, it is essential to ensure the continued relevance, responsiveness and consistency of existing mechanisms.

Accordingly, Austria, together with Germany and Switzerland, has taken up this issue and would like to announce that a subject matter review will be launched at the start of next year. The process established for the ongoing review of the best practice guides will be used as the working method for this new review, which is to be performed in an inclusive and transparent manner following a phased approach. More detailed information on the initiative will be provided at the meeting of the Informal Group of Friends on SALW and SCA tomorrow.

Thank you for your attention.



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

FSC.JOUR/969
9 December 2020
Annex 8

Original: ENGLISH

963rd Plenary Meeting

FSC Journal No. 969, Agenda item 5(d)

STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF SERBIA

Mr. Chairperson,
Your Excellencies,
Dear colleagues,

At the 954th plenary meeting of the Forum for Security Co-operation, held on 16 September 2020, the Serbian delegation informed all participating States that the Government of the Republic of Serbia had decided, on 9 September 2020, to suspend all military exercises and military activities with all partners for the next six months, without exception (FSC.JOUR/960, Annex 10).

In that regard, allow me to inform you that the Serbian Government, on 3 December 2020, revoked its decision of 9 September 2020.

The Serbian Government also decided on 3 December 2020 to suspend the country's participation in all international military exercises until 8 March 2021.

By revoking its earlier decision and adopting this most recent one, the Government has created all the necessary conditions for the execution of all activities falling within the scope of international military co-operation, except for the participation of personnel from the Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Serbia and the Serbian Armed Forces in international military exercises until 8 March 2021.

I thank you for your attention and kindly ask that this statement be attached to the journal of the day.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.