

Chairmanship: Czech Republic

924th PLENARY MEETING OF THE FORUM

1. Date: Wednesday, 18 September 2019

Opened: 10.05 a.m.

Closed: 12.40 p.m.

2. Chairperson: Ambassador I. Šrámek

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

Agenda item 1: SECURITY DIALOGUE: POLITICO-MILITARY
CO-OPERATION OF VISEGRAD COUNTRIES

– *Presentation by Lieutenant General J. Zůna, First Deputy Chief of General Staff of the Czech Armed Forces*

Presentation by Mr. M. Sklenár, Director, Security Policy Department, Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic

– *Presentation by Mr. T. Śmigielski, Ministry of Defence of Poland*

– *Presentation by Colonel A. Szöllősi, Head of the Defence Policy Department, Ministry of Defence of Hungary*

Chairperson, Lieutenant General J. Zůna (FSC.DEL/182/19 OSCE+), Mr. M. Sklenár (FSC.DEL/181/19 OSCE+), Mr. T. Śmigielski, Colonel A. Szöllősi (FSC.DEL/183/19 OSCE+), Finland-European Union (with the candidate countries Albania, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia; as well as Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine, in alignment) (FSC.DEL/180/19), Slovakia, United States of America, FSC Co-ordinator on Matters Relating to UNSCR 1325 (United Kingdom), Russian Federation

Agenda item 2: GENERAL STATEMENTS

(a) *Situation in and around Ukraine:* Ukraine, Finland-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 and San Marino, in alignment) (FSC.DEL/179/19), Russian Federation, United States of America, Canada

- (b) *Large-scale military exercise in Azerbaijan: Armenia (Annex 1), Azerbaijan (Annex 2)*

Agenda item 3: ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- (a) *Briefing on the military exercise “Center-2019”, being conducted in the Russian Federation from 16 to 21 September 2019: Russian Federation, United States of America, Ukraine, Italy, Norway*
- (b) *Briefing on the military exercise “Operation Thunderstrike”, to be conducted in Baumholder, Germany, from 12 to 16 October 2019: Germany, France*
- (c) *“From Budapest to Budapest (1994–2019)”, symposium to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the OSCE Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security, to be held in Budapest from 16 to 18 October 2019 (FSC.GAL/96/19 OSCE+): FSC Co-ordinator for the Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security (Romania)*

4. Next meeting:

Wednesday, 25 September 2019, at 10 a.m., in the Neuer Saal



924th Plenary Meeting

FSC Journal No. 930, Agenda item 2(b)

STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF ARMENIA

Mr. Chairperson,

This is now the third time this year that the Armenian delegation has taken the floor to alert the Forum for Security Co-operation to a flagrant violation of the Vienna Document by Azerbaijan.

On 13 September, the Ministry of Defence of Azerbaijan published information on its official website that large-scale military exercises would be conducted from 16 to 20 September in accordance with a plan approved by the country's President.

According to the same source, the exercises involve: up to 10,000 military personnel; 100 tanks and other armoured vehicles; 150 artillery pieces, mortars and multiple rocket launchers of varying calibres; and up to 20 aircraft and helicopters.

The number of troops involved in these exercises exceeds the threshold set by Chapter V ("Prior Notification of Certain Military Activities"), paragraph 40.1.1, of the Vienna Document 2011. Hence, a notification should have been given at least 42 days before the start date. However, it is the third time this year that Azerbaijan has intentionally violated this provision of the Vienna Document.

Mr. Chairperson,

It is worth mentioning that it has become a long-standing practice for Azerbaijan to hold unnotified military exercises in violation of the Vienna Document provisions at least three times per year. Under these circumstances, the consistent intentional failure of Azerbaijan to notify military activities subject to notification is a clear indication of its disregard for its own commitments and its defiance of accepted State behaviour in the OSCE.

The delegation of Armenia calls upon the OSCE participating States to demonstrate resolve in bringing Azerbaijan into compliance with its commitments under the Vienna Document 2011, which is designed to ensure transparency, peace and co-operation throughout the OSCE community.

Mr. Chairperson, I request that this statement be appended to the journal of the day.

Thank you.



924th Plenary Meeting

FSC Journal No. 930, Agenda item 2(b)

STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF AZERBAIJAN

Mr. Chairperson,

With regard to the statement delivered by the delegation of Armenia on the issue of military exercises held by Azerbaijan, we would like to stress the following.

As stated in the official information provided by the Azerbaijani Ministry of Defence, operational-tactical military exercises are being held from 16 to 20 September with the involvement of various types and branches of troops, army corps and military formations. These exercises do not fall under military activities requiring prior notification as per Chapter V, paragraph 40.1.1, of the Vienna Document, neither in terms of the composition of the military personnel nor in terms of the quantity of military equipment involved in the exercises. In the spirit of transparency, the Ministry of Defence issued an advance announcement and is issuing regular updates related to different stages of the exercises.

We regret that the delegation of Armenia, despite our clear and exhaustive responses on the issue of military exercises, prefers to continue the practice of making baseless allegations, thus exposing the one-sided, non-co-operative and irresponsible approach of this country towards our shared commitments in the politico-military dimension.

Let us reiterate once again that Armenia for decades illegally deploys its armed forces, conducts illegal military exercises and engages in illegal military build-up in the sovereign internationally recognized territories of Azerbaijan without the consent of the latter, in gross violation of fundamental OSCE principles and commitments, including those underpinning the Vienna Document. The latest egregious example of such activities was registered between 17 and 20 June of this year, when Armenia held illegal military exercises in these territories. This issue was raised by our delegation on 19 June at the 918th meeting of the FSC.

It is also of utmost importance to underline that the comments of the delegation of Armenia should be viewed in the context of ongoing provocative steps taken and annexationist statements made by its own government. The most recent and utterly irresponsible of these is the statement made on 5 August by the Prime Minister of this country during his illegal visit to the occupied territories of Azerbaijan, in which he made an outright claim on the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan by stating that the Nagorno-Karabakh region of the Republic of Azerbaijan is a part of Armenia. Such an attitude at the highest political level is illustrative of Armenia's real intention to preserve the status quo of military

occupation, pursue the path of escalation, and hinder substantive negotiations on finding a lasting solution to the conflict.

On a concluding note, we urge Armenia to cease diverting the attention of the OSCE community from its continuing blatant violations of our shared principles and commitments and, instead, to reconsider its occupational policy and comply with its obligations. We also call upon other participating States to pay due attention to and make due assessment of the actions of the Republic of Armenia which are contributing directly to the ongoing crisis in the OSCE area.

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

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.