

Chairmanship: Austria

**SPECIAL MEETING OF THE  
FORUM FOR SECURITY CO-OPERATION  
(990th Plenary Meeting)**

1. Date: Wednesday, 20 October 2021 (in the Neuer Saal and via video teleconference)

Opened: 3 p.m.

Closed: 3.50 p.m.

2. Chairperson: Mr. R. Lassmann

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

Agenda item 1: REISSUANCE OF THE VIENNA DOCUMENT 2011

Chairperson, United Kingdom (Annex 1), United States of America (Annex 2), Canada (Annex 3), Slovenia-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) (Annex 4), Ukraine (FSC.DEL/384/21), Turkey (FSC.DEL/390/21 OSCE+), France (Annex 5), Russian Federation (Annex 6), Poland, Switzerland

Agenda item 2: ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None

4. Next meeting:

Wednesday, 27 October 2021, at 10 a.m., in the Neuer Saal and via video teleconference



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

FSC.JOUR/996  
20 October 2021  
Annex 1

Original: ENGLISH

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**990th Plenary Meeting**  
FSC Journal No. 996, Agenda item 1

**STATEMENT BY  
THE DELEGATION OF THE UNITED KINGDOM**

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.

We welcome your initiative to convene a special meeting of the Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC) to reissue the Vienna Document in accordance with paragraphs 151 and 152 contained within it. In 2010, all participating States agreed and the FSC decided that the Vienna Document should be reissued every five calendar years or more frequently. Unfortunately, attempts to do so in 2016 demonstrated a certain participating State's disregard to honour the commitments it signed up to. The United Kingdom is disappointed that the Russian Federation has again chosen to renege on its obligations and oppose the reissuing of the Vienna Document.

Mr. Chairperson, we deplore Russia's deliberate politicization of what is a technical and practical matter. Incorporating Vienna Document Plus decisions already agreed and adopted by consensus of all participating States into one consolidated version of the Vienna Document should be a simple administrative process.

Furthermore, such administrative "housekeeping" is not only good practice but also a minimal expectation of any professional organization. We owe it, and are arguably duty-bound, to ensure our "operators", our highly skilled verification teams, have the most up-to-date publications in order to conduct their missions in a safe and effective manner.

Mr. Chairperson, it is disappointing that we find ourselves in the same situation as in 2016 and we again call on Russia to restore full respect for fundamental OSCE principles and its full and faithful implementation of existing conventional arms control and confidence-building instruments, including the Vienna Document. We remain open to dialogue with all participating States, including Russia, on how best to move forward. Progress relies on all sides engaging in good faith. The United Kingdom remains ready to play its part.



**990th Plenary Meeting**  
FSC Journal No. 996, Agenda item 1

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

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.

From its inception, the Vienna Document was envisaged as a living document that would continuously evolve to better manage changes in the European security environment. Participating States also committed in paragraph 152 that we would convene a special Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC) meeting every five years or more frequently in order to reissue the Vienna Document. In 2011, participating States decided to reissue the Vienna Document.

However, five years ago in 2016, participating States failed to reissue the Vienna Document, despite the FSC having adopted four decisions in the intervening period that added to or adjusted Vienna Document commitments. Now, we regret that this year the Vienna Document will once again not be reissued.

Our failure to reissue the Vienna Document for a second time, and in spite of this Forum's clear mandate, indicates the deterioration of confidence, transparency, and trust among participating States. Furthermore, it demonstrates the unwillingness of some participating States – the Russian Federation in particular – to engage in confidence-building and to keep this Forum's core set of confidence- and security-building measures (CSBMs) effective and relevant.

How is it that we are unable to reissue the Vienna Document, not even to reflect commitments in decisions adopted by consensus years ago that have been implemented by participating States for years? Doing so would greatly facilitate the work of our implementers, who could look to a single instrument for all the relevant Vienna Document-related commitments.

Frankly, we find the inability to reissue the Vienna Document hard to understand. Reissuing the Document in updated form would be a step toward bringing our CSBMs up to date with current military force structures, activities, and postures.

This situation is yet another stark indication of the lack of common commitment to advancing what should be a shared OSCE-community effort to rebuild military transparency in Europe. Reissuing the Vienna Document would be a good step. But we need to take two

other steps. One is to implement the terms of the Vienna Document fully and in good faith; the other is to work together to modernize it.

Full implementation of the Vienna Document and of all OSCE political commitments should be a given. It is not. Russia – but not Russia alone – has ignored or selectively implemented its politically-binding commitments to the detriment of regional security.

Obstructing the reissuance of the Vienna Document achieves nothing constructive. It is impossible to justify. We urge Russia to adhere to all its existing OSCE commitments and to join – in a spirit of collegiality – in reissuing the Vienna Document.

Looking ahead, we believe that working together to update the Vienna Document will help us to rebuild confidence in Europe today. The Russian Federation and all other participating States will gain from an effort to better address the ongoing challenges in the current security environment and improve one of the core building blocks of our security architecture.

As presented 25 years ago in the Lisbon Framework and regularly restated in this and other fora, the United States affirms our commitment to preserve, strengthen, and modernize conventional arms control in Europe based on key principles, including reciprocity and transparency.

Two years ago, almost to the day, 34 participating States offered a joint proposal as a basis for negotiating a more substantial update to the Vienna Document.

The joint proposal for modernizing the Vienna Document provides a concrete framework to begin rebuilding military transparency in Europe based on our existing commitments. Many of the ideas contained in the proposal are familiar.

For instance, the proposal offers a way to fill transparency gaps by lowering notification and observation thresholds. It would facilitate real-time insights into large-scale and no-notice “snap” military exercises.

Notably, the joint proposal would enhance the Vienna Document’s Chapter III risk reduction provisions. Even under the current Vienna Document, it is not appropriate for a Chapter III responding State to dismiss the legitimacy of a requesting State’s concerns about unusual military activities near its borders. When Ukraine raised concerns about Russia’s unusual military activities near its borders this spring and requested information under Vienna Document Chapter III, paragraph 16, Russia failed to provide any substantive response. If the joint proposal had been in effect, participating States could have utilized provisions for an above-quota inspection to answer Ukraine’s concerns. That would have helped to alleviate tensions. In addition, participating States would be encouraged and motivated to host voluntary visits under Chapter III during such times of heightened military tension.

In sum, the joint proposal offers a concrete framework to begin to rebuild military transparency in Europe on the basis of our existing commitments. It addresses real issues that have an impact on security perceptions and our security environment today. But it remains for now only a proposal. We invite Russia and all other participating States to join us in a

serious, constructive discussion of these ideas, with a view to modernizing the Vienna Document to the advantage of all.

We must also continue our collective engagement in forums like the Structured Dialogue, which can be a seedbed for new ideas to enrich our work on the Vienna Document. The United States does not accept the view of some participating States that voluntary transparency measures – such as distinguished visitor days – are a sufficient substitute for mutually decided, fully reciprocal confidence and stability measures. Voluntary transparency measures can be useful, not least in promoting military contacts, but they can also advance false and confusing narratives to the detriment of regional security. For instance, during its recent brief to the FSC on “Zapad-2021”, Russia noted that, under the terms of the Vienna Document, the exercise would involve no more than 6,400 troops under a single operational command. Senior Russian officials, however, publicly cited substantially higher figures for the exercise at around 200,000 personnel overall. Despite well-founded requests for Russia to clarify how it reached the low Vienna Document number that it briefed to the FSC, Russia refused to provide any further information, telling us instead to go read the Vienna Document, which we have all duly read.

We reiterate that Vienna Document 2011 and all Vienna Document Plus decisions adopted by this Forum by consensus since November 2011 remain in effect. We further call on all participating States to implement and redouble efforts to modernize the Vienna Document, thereby enhancing security, predictability, and transparency in the Euro-Atlantic area.

In doing so, we may begin the process of restoring mutual confidence and transparency in the European security environment while also seizing opportunities to address new threats. It is through efforts of renewal like these that we honour the principles enshrined in the Lisbon Framework.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.



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**990th Plenary Meeting**  
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**STATEMENT BY  
THE DELEGATION OF CANADA**

Mr. Chairperson,

We regret once again that the Vienna Document will not be reissued, despite the overwhelming support for this effort across participating States.

The reissuance of technical publications is a hallmark of all professional organizations, in particular those that deliver an operational effect, such as the Vienna Document. This recurrent, administrative rewrite ensures that our personnel tasked with the implementation of the Vienna Document are certain that both they, and their counterparts on the receiving end of Vienna Document directed operations are both, unequivocally utilizing the same, identical version of the Vienna Document. In effect, these routine, scheduled rewrites are a form of version control which keeps our implementers safe and their activities operationally effective.

It is our responsibility to ensure that our implementers are conducting their activities with the best and most current tools possible. This includes the Vienna Document.

It should be very clear, that this administrative rewrite, would, at present, simply incorporate the Vienna Document Plus decisions which have already been approved. It would in effect, create a clean version of the Document. This is reasonable and necessary.

The politicization of this, clearly administrative task speaks volumes regarding the value that Russia puts in our shared CSBM *acquis*. This obstructionist approach continues a trend of opaque and minimalist engagement within the Vienna Document most recently personified by the large-scale military exercises, recently conducted by the Russian Federation, with troop totals of 200,000 troops and yet apparently nothing of a sufficient scale to trigger any Vienna Document activities.

We would encourage the Russian Federation to embrace the transparency which the Vienna Document offers when it is fully applied in both letter and spirit. We renew our call for all participating States to consider the value of engagement in ongoing efforts to modernize the Vienna Document. This engagement would serve as a clear signal of a desire to continue to invest in the value of our CSBM *acquis* and to establish a future where

transparency and openness once again are the hallmarks of a more stable and secure Euro-Atlantic area.

Thank you.



**990th Plenary Meeting**  
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**STATEMENT BY  
THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE EUROPEAN UNION**

The delegation of Slovenia, in its capacity as EU Presidency, passed the floor to the representative of the European Union, who delivered the following statement:

The European Union and its Member States regret that despite the tireless efforts of the FSC Chairmanship, consensus on reissuing Vienna Document 2011 could not be reached, due to the opposition of the Russian Federation. We continue to believe that reissuing the Vienna Document is a technical and practical matter. We note that Vienna Document 2011 and agreed Vienna Document Plus decisions remain in force.

We believe that our work on further strengthening the Vienna Document must continue. The changes in the security environment and in the military sphere make the necessity to substantially update and modernize the Vienna Document more than obvious. In this context, we recall the proposals for updating the Vienna Document, including the joint proposal co-sponsored by 34 participating States, and encourage all participating States to engage in constructive discussions focused on the Vienna Document's role in reducing the risks of conflict in the OSCE area by promoting transparency, predictability and stability. Furthermore, we recall the joint statement of 45 participating States at the Tirana Ministerial Council and reaffirm our strong commitment to the full implementation of the Vienna Document in letter and spirit. We are determined to support constructively the process of its substantial modernization.

The numerous texts suggested by many around this table on various chapters of the Vienna Document underline the need and desire to advance further our commitments and instruments, to make them more resilient in times of crisis, to dispel concerns and strengthen confidence between OSCE participating States, which in the current security situation is needed more than ever. We appreciate and support the FSC Chairmanship's and FSC Co-ordinator's efforts to continue discussions on the Vienna Document modernization and stand ready to engage actively in these discussions. We encourage others, including the Russian Federation, to take the same approach. Genuine dialogue is needed, as progress can only be achieved if all partners in the OSCE display the necessary political will.

Finally, we stress the need for the full implementation of the existing OSCE commitments in the politico-military area, including the Vienna Document. We believe that



full implementation will enhance trust and confidence in the Euro-Atlantic area to the benefit of all of us.

The candidate countries the Republic of North Macedonia<sup>1</sup>, Montenegro<sup>Error! Bookmark not defined.</sup>, and Albania<sup>Error! Bookmark not defined.</sup>, the country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the EFTA countries Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, members of the European Economic Area, as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, Georgia, Andorra and San Marino align themselves with this statement.

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1 The Republic of North Macedonia, Montenegro and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.



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

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**990th Plenary Meeting**  
FSC Journal No. 996, Agenda item 1

**STATEMENT BY  
THE DELEGATION OF FRANCE**

Mr. Chairperson,

France aligns itself with the statement by the European Union, but in its national capacity wishes to reaffirm its full support for the proposal by the Austrian Chairmanship of the Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC) to reissue the Vienna Document on the basis of the Vienna Document Plus documents approved by a decision of the FSC.

We call on the Russian Federation to engage in substantive dialogue to allow a substantial modernization of the Vienna Document.

We also recall that concrete proposals for modernization exist in the form of a package of proposals, agreed by 34 participating States, on which the Russian Federation has refused to engage in any dialogue.

Mr. Chairperson,

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

Thank you.



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

FSC.JOUR/996  
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Annex 6

ENGLISH  
Original: RUSSIAN

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**990th Plenary Meeting**  
FSC Journal No. 996, Agenda item 1

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

Mr. Chairperson,

We should like to express our gratitude to you for preparing and holding a special meeting of the OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC) on the reissuance of the Vienna Document 2011 on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures (CSBMs).

The Russian delegation would like to ask you to place on record the lack of consensus on this issue.

In doing this, we are guided by the following considerations.

First of all, today's meeting is taking place in accordance with paragraph 152 of the Vienna Document 2011, which addresses the periodicity of updating the Vienna Document. We should like to recall that, on the initiative of a group of States, which for ten years has been strongly opposed to the modernization of confidence-building measures, a "safety feature" has been added to this paragraph in the form of the well-known expression: "as appropriate". As a result, paragraph 152 is a recommendation, rather than an obligation. It provides for such a meeting, but in no way predetermines its results, which naturally depend on the position of all the participating States without exception.

Secondly, I do not think there is a need to remind this highly professional audience that virtually all versions of the Vienna Document were adopted at meetings of the OSCE Heads of State or Government. These decisions were only adopted when significant and multiple amendments were being introduced that would have a serious impact on confidence-building on the continent. The consensus rule and the key principle of "nothing is agreed until everything is agreed" played a major role. Most importantly, the participating States never regarded the reissuing of the Vienna Document as a purely technical process. At the moment, as we can see, this approach prevails.

Thirdly, we have heard statements today that the reissuance of the Vienna Document will "benefit" the overall security environment and "reaffirm" the ability of participating States to work together. However, for some reason, our distinguished colleagues are not bothered that the adoption of a new version of the Vienna Document would send a false

political signal that everything is “rosy” in this area and that we are “harmoniously implementing optimistic plans from ten years ago” as if nothing had happened.

Unfortunately, the exact opposite is true. The past decade has seen a significant deterioration in the security situation. Our Western partners frequently say that, in the current politico-military situation, “business as usual” with Russia is no longer possible. We are also in agreement with this – we really have no need for the kind of “business” in which ever more demands, accompanied by false accusations, are made of Russia.

This brings me to my fourth point. The fate of the Vienna Document is inseparable from the general situation regarding European security.

We can envisage prospects for the modernization of the Vienna Document 2011 only if the North Atlantic Alliance abandons its policy of “containment” of Russia, recognizes and respects Russian interests and restores normal relations with our country, also in the military sphere. The policies of consolidating military superiority, sanctions, accusations and curtailing military co-operation are fundamentally at odds with the goal of military confidence-building and rule out the possibility of reaching agreements on CSBMs.

We take the position that, until then, the FSC needs to concentrate on the practical implementation of the Vienna Document 2011 and the subsequent Vienna Document Plus decisions (and here by no means all are ideal). It is clear to us that simply changing the date of issue on the cover of a document will in no way influence the effectiveness of its implementation, which remains the responsibility of each participating State.

Now to my fifth and final point. The history of the European security system confirms that the development of CSBMs has been most active during a period of co-operation rather than confrontation between the participants in the pan-European process. Moreover, the Vienna Document was developed not in isolation, but in conjunction with the conventional arms control regime and other agreements related to European security. In this context, we are convinced that the FSC needs to focus on creating the necessary conditions for the resumption of constructive discussions on strengthening European security and the participating States need to focus on practical steps to de-escalate the politico-military situation.

In closing, we should like to emphasize that we see nothing tragic in the FSC being unable to adopt a decision today on the reissuance of the Vienna Document. However, we do not rule out such a possibility in the future when the necessary conditions have come about.

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