



One of the recurring themes of the Slovenian FSC Chairmanship will be the role of women in security processes

Statement by Ambassador Andrej Benedejčič, Permanent Representative of Slovenia, at the 879th Meeting of the Forum for Security Co-operation, in response to the closing remarks by the Chairperson of the FSC, 14 March 2018

Mr. Chairperson,

Let me say it up front: I very much enjoyed the Slovak FSC Chairmanship. It was well run, with a balanced program. I especially liked the Security Dialogue on UNSCR 1540, which highlighted the important work of the CTBTO and the substantial Slovak contribution to its on-site inspection training. The joint FSC-PC meeting was also impressive and it highlighted Slovak leadership in the area of security sector governance and reform. I also appreciated the attention that you gave to the International Women's Day last week. Let me therefore thank you for giving me the floor on that occasion in my capacity as the Chairperson of the OSCE MenEngage Network. I think that the fact that a total of 41 participating States joined the statement represents a very good sign. In short, it has been a pleasure working side by side with you in the FSC Troika.

As the handover ceremony has shown, however, soon the turn will come for Slovenia to formally take over the Chairmanship. I would therefore like to point out that the general approach to our work in the coming months was outlined already by our Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister in December. At the Ministerial Meeting in Vienna he emphasized the desire of Slovenia to contribute actively to the ongoing efforts to restore confidence within the OSCE area. This means that the goal during our FSC Chairmanship will be to advance collaboration among participating States, including on arms control and confidence- and security-building measures. My Minister also pointed out that we intend to provide a platform for promoting security cooperation in the Western Balkans and also to continue the consideration of important topics such as small arms and light weapons. I am therefore glad that he will officially open our Chairmanship on April 18.

The indicative schedule of the Slovenian FSC Chairmanship will be distributed soon. There will be more than a dozen meetings, but at this moment I would like to single out just a couple of them. In particular, I would like to point out that the role of women in security processes will be high on our agenda. This also overlaps with one of the priorities of the Italian OSCE Chairmanship. Let me therefore use this opportunity to announce that the discussion devoted specifically to the issue of women, peace and security will take place on May 9. In addition, we will endeavor to include a gender perspective in other events as well.

I would also like to point out that there will be two joint FSC-PC meetings during our Chairmanship. The first one will be devoted to the Structured Dialogue and it will take place on June 6. I think it is safe to say that we all attach great significance to this process, which can importantly contribute to cooperative security. I am therefore glad that we were able to identify this date together with our Belgian colleagues. The second one will focus on the Mediterranean and is scheduled for July 11. As such, it testifies to the closeness of

Slovenia and Italy, not only as neighboring countries, but also as participating States that are acutely aware of the special importance of security of the OSCE's southern region.

I also cannot but mention the Seventh Annual Discussion on the Implementation of the Code of Conduct on politico-military aspects of security, planned for June 13. Here I would also like to inform you that we intend to organize a side event the day before the meeting, on June 12, together with our Swiss and German friends as co-sponsors. The topic of this panel discussion will be the role of private military security companies, including from the perspective of human rights. We look forward to this event also in light of the Slovenian chairmanship of the UN Human Rights Council this year.

As far as the FSC working groups are concerned, I would like to say already now that we believe that the modernization of the Vienna Document is much needed. I therefore commend our Slovak colleagues for having reignited the discussion on this issue in the WG "A". We intend to follow this practice also during our Chairmanship. And of course, as is the tradition, I am also looking forward to presenting the work of the FSC at the Annual Security Review Conference at the end of June.

Before concluding, I would like to say a couple of words about our Serbian friends. I want to thank them for their committed work, which allowed for the adoption of the Decision on Small Arms and Light Weapons and Stockpiles of Conventional Ammunition at the Ministerial Meeting in December. The attention that they paid to gender issues was also inspiring. As they leave the FSC Troika, I would therefore like to say clearly that it was great working with them. I also know that it will be just as enjoyable to work with our Swedish colleagues. And all the more so, since we keep following each other from one challenge to another. Let me assure them, however, that the experience in the FSC Troika is not as Sisyphean as the one in the Open Skies Consultative Commission.

Finally, I want to say that we look forward to cooperating with all the OSCE participating States. We also count on constructive discussions during the FSC meetings under the Slovenian Chairmanship. My Delegation looks forward to an even closer cooperation with the FSC Troika members, the Italian OSCE Chairmanship, the FSC coordinators, as well as the OSCE Secretariat. I am convinced that together we will be able to make a positive contribution to strengthening dialogue among the OSCE participating States.

Thank you.