

**Chairmanship: United States of America****966th PLENARY MEETING OF THE FORUM**

1. Date: Wednesday, 27 January 2021 (via video teleconference)

Opened: 10 a.m.  
Suspended: 1.15 p.m.  
Resumed: 3 p.m.  
Closed: 4.15 p.m.

2. Chairperson: Ms. C. Austrian

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/2/21 OSCE+.

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

Agenda item 1: GENERAL STATEMENTS

- (a) *Situation in and around Ukraine*: Ukraine (FSC.DEL/25/21) (FSC.DEL/25/21/Add.1), Portugal-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/30/21/Rev.1), United States of America, United Kingdom (FSC.DEL/28/21 OSCE+), Canada, Russian Federation (Annex 1)
- (b) *Winter 2021 joint military exercise to be conducted by Azerbaijan and Turkey from 1 to 12 February 2021*: Armenia (Annex 2) (FSC.DEL/31/21), Azerbaijan, Turkey (FSC.DEL/32/21 OSCE+)

Agenda item 2: SECURITY DIALOGUE: ENHANCED FORWARD PRESENCE

- *Presentation by Ms. B. San, NATO Director of Operations*

- *Presentation by Mr. M. Murphy, Deputy Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs, US Department of State*
- *Presentation by Colonel G. Trohel, French Ministry of Defence*
- *Presentation by Ms. A. Tyskiewicz, Deputy Director of Security Policy, Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs*
- *Presentation by Mr. K. Aleksa, Director for International Relations and Operations, Lithuanian Ministry of Defence*

Chairperson, Ms. B. San (FSC.DEL/21/21 OSCE+), Mr. M. Murphy (FSC.DEL/19/21 OSCE+), Colonel G. Trohel (FSC.DEL/20/21 OSCE+) (FSC.DEL/20/21/Add.1 OSCE+), Ms. A. Tyskiewicz (FSC.DEL/23/21 OSCE+), Mr. K. Aleksa (FSC.DEL/24/21 OSCE+), Albania (Annex 3), Portugal-European Union (with the candidate countries Albania, Montenegro and North Macedonia; the European Free Trade Association countries Iceland and Norway, members of the European Economic Area; as well as Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine, in alignment) (FSC.DEL/29/21/Rev.1), France (Annex 4), United Kingdom (FSC.DEL/27/21 OSCE+), Latvia, Canada, Slovenia (FSC.DEL/16/21 OSCE+), Germany (Annex 5), Denmark, Belarus (FSC.DEL/22/21 OSCE+), Romania (Annex 6), Turkey (FSC.DEL/32/21 OSCE+), Norway (Annex 7), Georgia (FSC.DEL/33/21 OSCE+), Montenegro, Bulgaria (Annex 8), Russian Federation (Annex 9), Ukraine (FSC.DEL/26/21 OSCE+), United States of America

Agenda item 3: ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- (a) *Appointment of Ms. S. Jasinskiene (Lithuania) as FSC Co-ordinator for the 2021 Annual Security Review Conference: Chairperson*
- (b) *High-Level Military Doctrine Seminar, to be held on 9 and 10 February 2021: Chairperson, United Kingdom*
- (c) *Letter and draft OSCE contribution to the 2020-2021 Comprehensive Review of the Status of Implementation of UNSCR 1540 (FSC.DEL/15/21): FSC Co-ordinator on Non-Proliferation Issues (Belarus), Spain*
- (d) *Matters of protocol: Belarus, Chairperson, Representative of the Conflict Prevention Centre*
- (e) *Introduction of an extrabudgetary project on the FSC e-learning programme: Chairperson, Representative of the Conflict Prevention Centre, Switzerland (also on behalf of Finland and Liechtenstein) (Annex 10), FSC Co-ordinator for the Vienna Document (Sweden) (also on behalf of the FSC Co-ordinator for the Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security (Switzerland), the FSC Co-ordinator for Matters Related to UNSCR 1325 (Albania), the FSC Co-ordinator on Non-Proliferation Issues (Belarus), the FSC Co-ordinator for Projects on Small Arms and Light Weapons and Stockpiles of Conventional Ammunition (Austria) and the Chairperson of the*

Informal Group of Friends on Small Arms and Light Weapons and Stockpiles of Conventional Ammunition (Latvia) (Annex 11)

- (f) *Report on the 89th meeting of the OSCE Communications Group, held on 16 December 2020 (FSC.GAL/144/20):* Representative of the Conflict Prevention Centre

The FSC took note that the Global Exchange of Military Information will be held on 29 April 2021 and the annual exchange of military information on 15 December 2021.

- (g) *Request to ensure neutrality in officially distributed OSCE documents and materials on the status of Kosovo:* Serbia (Annex 12)
- (h) *Request for assistance in enhancing the capacity of the national authorities of Azerbaijan for implementing explosive hazards risk reduction and responsive actions:* Azerbaijan (Annex 13)

4. Next meeting:

Wednesday, 3 February 2021, at 10 a.m., via video teleconference



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

FSC.JOUR/972  
27 January 2021  
Annex 1

ENGLISH  
Original: RUSSIAN

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**966th Plenary Meeting**

FSC Journal No. 972, Agenda item 1(a)

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

Madam Chairperson,

Although currently, according to the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine (SMM), the ceasefire regime in eastern Ukraine is generally being observed, shelling of residential areas in Donbas by the Ukrainian armed forces continues to be reported. Instances of the Ukrainian security forces opening fire and engaging in sabotage continued unabated even during the New Year's holiday period. Horlivka, Staromykhailivka, Kominternove, Leninske and Sakhanka in the Donetsk region were among the settlements that were affected again.

Additional measures to strengthen the ceasefire regime that were agreed upon in the Trilateral Contact Group (TCG) in July last year have been significantly distorted and disavowed by the Ukrainian Government. Ukraine steadfastly avoids verifying violations of the ceasefire regime in consultation with the parties involved in the armed confrontation. In this context, the words of the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, Ruslan Khomchak, in an interview with *Obozrevatel* on 30 December 2020 to the effect that the Ukrainian military in Donbas should "be on the move" rather than sitting in trenches in order to bring the entire territory of Donbas back under government control make a mockery of the efforts towards a peaceful settlement. Clearly, Ukraine does not rule out a scenario involving the use of force to "resolve" the internal Ukrainian conflict.

The Ukrainian Government keeps on talking about the alleged ineffectiveness of the Minsk Package of Measures and the need to revise it. Towards the end of last year, President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said in an interview with *Focus* on 25 December 2020 that he personally would withdraw from the Minsk agreements altogether. The Ukrainian leader also made no secret of the fact that Ukraine needed the agreements "only in order to maintain anti-Russian sanctions". It turns out that it is not the declared "establishment of peace and stability" in the country that is of paramount importance for the Ukrainian Government, but blatantly exploiting the problem of the "unresolved nature of the conflict" and creating the "appearance" of active work to advance a settlement in Donbas. We urge Ukraine to stop engaging in demagoguery and actually start implementing the Package of Measures for the Implementation of the Minsk Agreements in a full and systematic manner.

In the light of the provocative comments by the delegation of Ukraine, I should like to quote the words of the President of Russia, Vladimir Putin: “We, Russia, have always supported Donbas and will continue to support it. We will even increase our support for Donbas. This includes both support for production and resolving social and infrastructural issues.”

Madam Chairperson,

It is disappointing that, contrary to the loud declarations that we have heard today as well about how the conflict in Ukraine needs to be stopped as a matter of urgency, the Ukrainian Government’s Western “minders” continue to encourage its bellicose actions and rhetoric, financing and training the Ukrainian army and beefing it up with weapons. Large-scale training exercises with Western partners are planned by the Ukrainian Government this year. For example, the Verkhovna Rada (Ukrainian Parliament) is currently considering a draft law allowing foreign military personnel to participate in joint exercises in Ukraine in 2021, for which the Ministry of Defence is planning to allocate over 38 million hryvnias from its budget.

Deliveries of foreign military goods to the conflict-torn country continue unabated. The day before, the United States Embassy in Kyiv reported the transfer of more than a hundred pieces of military equipment: 20 new Humvee military vehicles for the Land Forces and Special Operations Forces and 84 boats for the Navy. 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 should be noted that the Ukrainian Government purchases some of the weapons from the United States of America and other Western countries at its own expense and to the detriment of the social and other pressing needs of Ukrainian citizens. In other words, the militarization of Ukraine is taking place in line with the interests of Western countries and using Ukrainian taxpayers’ money. The catastrophic decline in public support for the leadership in Kyiv and the ruling party is evidence that the trust shown by rational Ukrainian people in what have proved to be bellicose aspirations on the part of the political elite is inexorably running out. It would therefore be very interesting to hear the Ukrainian representative’s opinion on how, in his view, the inhabitants of Donbas should feel about the line being pursued by the Ukrainian leadership in the context of the Ukrainian Government’s continuing military operation against them for some seven years?

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. All of Ukraine’s obligations under the Minsk agreements, along with the instructions of the “Normandy format” summit in Paris, must be fulfilled.

It is time for the Ukrainian Government to finally move away from “political window dressing” and for its Western “minders” to stop pandering to its endeavours to portray the conflict as external rather than internal in order to continue groundlessly accusing Russia – a

guarantor of the settlement – of “undermining” the efforts to achieve peace. We warn that the continuation of this policy is derailing the peace settlement. 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. The Russian Federation is prepared to do everything it can to facilitate this.

In conclusion, a brief word on the reference to Crimea in our colleagues’ statements. We suggest that they familiarize themselves with our previous statements. We have no intention of discussing this matter; it is closed for good.

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



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**966th Plenary Meeting**

FSC Journal No. 972, Agenda item 1(b)

**STATEMENT BY  
THE DELEGATION OF ARMENIA**

Madam Chairperson,

On 17 January, the Ministry of Defence of Turkey made an announcement through its official website concerning the “Winter 2021” joint Turkish-Azerbaijani military exercise in Kars from 1 to 12 February. This was followed by information disseminated by the Ministry of Defence of Azerbaijan on the departure to Turkey of the military personnel and equipment of the Nakhijevan Combined Army of Azerbaijan to take part in the joint military exercise.

According to Turkish media reports, the planned exercise is expected to be one of the largest winter military drills of recent times, aimed at, among other things, improving co-operation and co-ordination during joint military operations and testing combat capabilities under extreme weather conditions. Reportedly, the military exercise will involve tank divisions, heavy artillery, sniper teams, helicopters and special forces.

At the last meeting of the Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC) we drew the attention of the participating States to this exercise. In response to our inquiry, the Turkish delegation here in Vienna insisted that the exercise was not notified under the Vienna Document because of the small number of military personnel and equipment to be engaged in it. We were further informed that Turkey “in good faith” provides information about military exercises through official sources. Whereas, as I have already said, the official announcement mentioned only the dates when the drills were to be conducted.

Madam Chairperson,

We would also like to draw the attention of the Forum to the highly provocative and hostile messages towards Armenia contained in the official information provided by the Ministry of Defence of Turkey, in particular references to the so-called “great victory over the Armenian army in Karabakh” and assurances that Turkey will work with Azerbaijan as “one heart and one fist”.

In its statements during the FSC and Permanent Council meetings last week, the Armenian delegation raised concerns about the exercise, stressing that conducting military drills with an obvious offensive intent 50 kilometres from the Armenian State border by two participating States of the OSCE that a few months ago openly and bluntly waged a war

against Artsakh and Armenia speaks for itself. Since the military exercise will be hosted by Turkey, we once again call on Turkey, for the sake of transparency, to provide detailed information on the parameters of the military exercise.

Once again we call on Turkey and Azerbaijan to refrain from any action likely to deepen mistrust and animosity and further diminish the prospect of peace and stability in the region. Furthermore, we call on the participating States to react to this provocative behaviour on the part of Turkey and Azerbaijan by, *inter alia*, putting pressure on these two countries, including through bilateral and multilateral arrangements, to act responsibly, abandon jingoistic policy, and honour their commitments to building trust, confidence and good-neighbourly relations.





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

FSC.JOUR/972  
27 January 2021  
Annex 3

Original: ENGLISH

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**966th Plenary Meeting**  
FSC Journal No. 972, Agenda item 2

**STATEMENT BY  
THE DELEGATION OF ALBANIA**

Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Distinguished speakers,  
Dear colleagues,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

I commend the United States FSC Chairperson for putting forward this topic for discussion. And I would like to thank all of the keynote speakers for sharing their views and experience with us today.

The OSCE is an inclusive forum with a large membership. So, divergent positions are to be expected, across many topics.

But this Organization, and the FSC in particular, is all about bridging those gaps in perception, building understanding and confidence, and helping to prevent conflicts.

So a discussion on the enhanced Forward Presence undoubtedly has a place here.

It gives those participating in the battlegroups – and other North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Allies – an opportunity to explain the purpose of the deployment. It gives an opportunity for those who think differently to hear that and respond. That is the dialogue we need, and I hope we will have it.

Dear colleagues,

Albania is a proud contributor to the Forward Presence, demonstrating our ongoing and steadfast commitment to the Alliance as part of the Canadian-led battlegroup in Latvia. We provide a niche capability of explosive ordnance disposal engineers, and a total of 161 Albanians have contributed there in recent years.

Today, like all Allies, I want to make the following points crystal clear.

The enhanced Forward Presence is purely defensive. It is there to deter any armed aggression, and to better protect Alliance territory along NATO's eastern flank in the event of any such aggression. It is there to preserve peace.

It is not there to confront other States, and poses no risk to those outside the Alliance, however much this narrative – or that of NATO's so-called "encirclement" – are incorrectly pushed in the media.

Enhanced Forward Presence is a proportionate response to events in our region before and after the 2016 Warsaw Summit. It is a tangible expression of NATO's solidarity, determination and ability to defend its Allies. It ensures we can uphold NATO commitments, namely collective defence, in the evolving regional security context.

But it is far more than a symbolic expression of our unity. These multinational forces are combat-ready. That is the only way they can be a credible deterrence and defence force. And that is the only way to ensure intense training and co-operation between Allies, often in conditions many Allies are not accustomed to, often with new equipment, which serves to improve our interoperability and cohesion.

Dear colleagues,

There are no secrets with enhanced Forward Presence. Whether in Brussels or our capitals, we will continue to do all we can to be transparent about this initiative.

With a total of 4,500 troops across four countries, it sits well below any reasonable definition of "substantial combat forces".

And looking across the border to the east of where the enhanced Forward Presence troops are deployed – it is much smaller than the formations which regularly mass and exercise on the other side.

It is – and will remain – open to arms control and confidence- and security-building measures under the Vienna Document and the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe as applicable, as well as bilateral agreements, of course.

We want it to be properly understood by all, so it does not undermine trust. Today's discussion is a welcome step in that regard.

So, I would once again like to thank the United States of America and today's speakers, and look forward to hearing others' interventions.

Thank you.

I kindly ask this statement be attached to the journal of today's meeting.



**Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe  
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FSC.JOUR/972  
27 January 2021  
Annex 4

ENGLISH  
Original: FRENCH

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**966th Plenary Meeting**  
FSC Journal No. 972, Agenda item 2

**STATEMENT BY  
THE DELEGATION OF FRANCE**

Madam Chairperson,  
Dear colleagues,

France fully supports the statement made on behalf of the European Union. We should nevertheless like to add a few comments in a national capacity.

France is pleased to welcome Ms. San, Mr. Murphy, Ms. Tyszkiewicz and Mr. Aleksa to today's Security Dialogue and thanks them sincerely for their high-quality presentations.

We should also like to welcome Colonel Guillaume Trohel, who has shared with us his operational experience as commanding officer of the French contingent deployed in Estonia from August to December 2019 as part of NATO's enhanced Forward Presence (eFP).

We are convinced of the benefits of the exchange of experiences and hope that the forthcoming discussions will make the best use of it.

At the NATO summits in Newport in 2014 and Warsaw in 2016, the NATO member countries decided to strengthen the Alliance's defence and deterrence posture in view of the new security context. In that regard, France contributes directly to the Alliance's military activity through its presence in the Baltic countries via eFP missions.

Having been engaged since March 2017 in Estonia and then in Lithuania, France has continuously adapted its presence through redeployment of its contingent. In 2020, it pursued its engagement within the eFP in spite of its considerable operational commitments and the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, once again deploying a company in Lithuania. The visit of the Presidents of France and Lithuania to the Rukla camp on 29 September 2020 highlighted their action.

At a ceremony at this camp on 8 December 2020, the French soldiers from the Lynx tactical subgroup marked the official end of their mission in Lithuania.

From March 2021, France will once again be engaged within the eFP but with different modalities. The combined-arms tactical subgroup equipped with Leclerc tanks under British command will be deployed in Estonia for a year.

Madam Chairperson,

By investing resources at a high level and maintaining regular operational activity in the region, France demonstrates its continued involvement in confidence-building measures on the eastern European flank for the protection and security of the population.

As part of a prevention and defence posture, the main aim of this mission is one of deterrence. The planned military activities have no aggressive purpose and demonstrate our solidarity and commitment to our Baltic allies, helping in this way to enhance security and stability on the European continent for the benefit of all.

I thank you, Madam Chairperson, and 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/972  
27 January 2021  
Annex 5

ENGLISH  
Original: GERMAN

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**966th Plenary Meeting**  
FSC Journal No. 972, Agenda item 2

**STATEMENT BY  
THE DELEGATION OF GERMANY**

Madam Chairperson,  
Dear colleagues,

Germany supports the statement by the European Union. As one of the four framework nations in NATO's enhanced Forward Presence in the Baltic countries and Poland, which is the subject of today's Security Dialogue, I would like to make the following additional comments from a German perspective.

I join others in thanking the United States Chairmanship of the Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC) for placing this important and complex subject on the agenda of today's meeting.

The FSC Dialogue should focus on questions concerning our common security. In our view, a frank exchange of perceptions of the security situation is the key to improving understanding of our partners' security concerns.

I therefore hope that our Dialogue today will help to remove possible misconceptions and increase transparency and mutual understanding.

The events of 2014 – the occupation of Crimea and the conflict in Donbas – were a severe shock to the European security order and hence to the basic consensus within the OSCE. We are working with France to overcome this crisis and, indeed, discuss it regularly in the Permanent Council and also here in the FSC.

The events of 2014 also prompted us to give visible form to our determination within NATO to defend the Alliance together.

I repeat that it is a matter of defence. The measures adopted by us as a NATO partner do not in any way give grounds for military escalation. This is clearly evident when one considers the extent of this engagement.

In February 2017, Germany assumed command of the multinational battalion in Rukla (Lithuania) and makes up a considerable part of this group, providing around 550 troops on a

rotating basis. We wish in this way to make our contribution to the security and stability of the region, together with the Alliance and at the invitation of our Lithuanian partners and friends.

The enhanced Forward Presence gives no cause whatsoever for concern and should not be seen as an obstacle to intensifying our collaboration in the FSC. Confidence-building measures are still possible and necessary. I therefore appeal to our Russian colleagues to put aside their concerns and open up the possibility for setting about the modernization of the Vienna Document. We, along with 44 other participating States, are willing to do so.

I request 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/972  
27 January 2021  
Annex 6

Original: ENGLISH

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**966th Plenary Meeting**

FSC Journal No. 972, Agenda item 2

**STATEMENT BY  
THE DELEGATION OF ROMANIA**

Madam Chairperson,

While we are fully aligned with the EU statement, allow me to make some short remarks in my national capacity.

I would first like to thank the FSC Chairmanship for its initiative in scheduling these discussions. Indeed, here is a right place and now is a right time to seek to dispel, in all transparency and openness, any suspicion, misunderstanding or wrong interpretation regarding the NATO Forward Presence.

Those who took the floor before me, panellists and representatives of NATO countries alike, have emphasized with the best of arguments the defensive nature of the Forward Presence. So, I will try not to repeat them.

But let me stress some aspects which are very important from Romania's perspective.

The NATO Forward Presence on the eastern flank was a legitimate and proportional response to the grave deterioration of the security situation in the Alliance's immediate neighbourhood, especially after the illegal and illegitimate annexation of Crimea in 2014, followed by the heavy militarization of the peninsula. Without a doubt, these developments have had profound effects on the security situation in the Black Sea region, being therefore naturally of concern to Romania.

In order to strengthen the defence of the southern-eastern part of NATO's eastern flank, at the Warsaw Summit of 2016 the Allies adopted a tailored Forward Presence, covering the Black Sea region and complementing the enhanced Forward Presence in the north-east. These two components are linked and should be approached with the same logic. Romania is a contributor to the implementation of both.

We thank all the Allies that support our efforts. The Forward Presence is meant to improve our interoperability and to increase our readiness not only in the region but across all the Alliance. It demonstrates Allied solidarity and the strength of the transatlantic link.

The public in my country fully supports this NATO presence, which is not meant to threaten anybody, and is fully in line with the international commitments and obligations of NATO and all the Allies. Its goal is to prevent conflict, protect the NATO Allies and preserve peace.

I thank you Madam Chairperson.





**Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe  
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27 January 2021  
Annex 7

Original: ENGLISH

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**966th Plenary Meeting**

FSC Journal No. 972, Agenda item 2

**STATEMENT BY  
THE DELEGATION OF NORWAY**

Madam Chairperson,

Norway fully subscribes to the statement just delivered by the European Union. I would however like to share some additional points in my national capacity.

First, we join others in complimenting the Chairperson on choosing this topic for the first Security Dialogue of 2021. We think dialogue and discussion are the right means to address differing opinions, in the security policy area as elsewhere.

We thank the speakers for their insightful and interesting inputs, which will certainly enlighten us in our future discussions in the FSC.

As we heard today, Norway participates in the German-led battlegroup in Lithuania, to which we have contributed with a mechanized company on a rotational basis since 2017, in the framework of the enhanced Forward Presence.

The presence is a defensive and reassuring measure that emphasizes the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's will with regard to collective defence. Collective defence is crucial to a small country like Norway and is a fundamental part of our defence structure.

Through our participation in enhanced Forward Presence, our soldiers benefit from training and exercises with other Alliance partners. Furthermore, we strengthen co-operation and not least increase the interoperability of our forces.

Madam Chairperson,

For Norway, openness and transparency are important elements in all our international operations, and our intentions and reasons for participation should not cause concern to other States Parties. And we indeed know that this is not the case.

Dialogue and discussion of the kind we are having today enhance military transparency and help to dispel misunderstandings.

The Vienna Document is a tool that can, among other things, be used to clarify and reduce concerns a State Party might have, and an update of the current document could even increase this potential. In this context we recall the joint statement of 45 participating States marking the thirtieth anniversary of the Vienna Document at the last Ministerial Council in Tirana. We are very much open to discussions on the measures proposed for improving the implementation of the Vienna Document. The Vienna Document plays an essential role in promoting military transparency and political stability within the OSCE area.

Norway once again thanks the Chairperson for putting this on the agenda. We will continue to be predictable in our security and defence policy and to offer transparency concerning our activities.

Thank you.

Please attach this statement to the journal of the day.



**Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe  
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FSC.JOUR/972  
27 January 2021  
Annex 8

Original: ENGLISH

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**966th Plenary Meeting**  
FSC Journal No. 972, Agenda item 2

**STATEMENT BY  
THE DELEGATION OF BULGARIA**

Madam Chairperson,  
Dear colleagues,

Bulgaria fully aligns itself with the statement of the European Union. I would like to add some remarks in my national capacity, being also a representative of a Black Sea State.

We much appreciate the initiative of the US FSC Chairmanship to put NATO's Forward Presence on the agenda. Our great appreciation also goes to the panellists for their very interesting and informative contributions. We believe that having this security dialogue today is most instrumental in promoting transparency, understanding and trust. It is also certainly an opportunity to dispel any security concerns and misperceptions.

Madam Chairperson,

As we have stated, major challenge in the Euro-Atlantic area remains the erosion of the commitment to the principles of independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity and respect for the internationally recognized borders. In this respect, Russia's actions against Georgia and Ukraine as well as the illegal annexation of Crimea have been a matter of great concern for us, especially in the context of the Black Sea regional security.

Having this in mind, Bulgaria regards the 2016 Warsaw decision on NATO's Forward Presence as one of the most important in terms of defence posture. With the same decision NATO allies developed tailored Forward Presence (tFP) in the Black Sea region. The Forward Presence measures, including the tailored Forward Presence, are of purely defensive nature, proportionate, as well as in line with international law and commitments.

Enhancing NATO's presence in the Black Sea region is a clear demonstration of solidarity and determination also to defend principles, one of which being the right of each sovereign State to choose its own security arrangements. This effective reinforcement provides the necessary guarantees for our security. The tailored Forward Presence measures contribute to increasing the situational awareness and interoperability among Allies and to the effective prevention of conflicts in the region.

NATO's Forward Presence measures does not pose a threat, having also the opportunity to be subject to arms control regimes as well as confidence- and security-building measures under the Vienna Document.

I would like to use this opportunity and reiterate Bulgaria's full commitment to the principles and norms of arms control regimes and confidence- and security-building measures which aim to reduce risk, improve predictability and trust in the politico-military area. We would like in this respect once again to reiterate our full support for substantial modernization of the Vienna Document as a significant step towards rebuilding trust and reviving our culture of co-operation, including on the topic of the NATO's Forward Presence measures.

Thank you. I request that this statement be attached to the journal of the meeting.



**Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe  
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FSC.JOUR/972  
27 January 2021  
Annex 9

ENGLISH  
Original: RUSSIAN

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**966th Plenary Meeting**  
FSC Journal No. 972, Agenda item 2

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

Madam Chairperson,

Today's meeting of the Forum, intended by the United States Chairmanship to provide a frank justification for the enhanced Forward Presence of NATO forces on the eastern flank, gives us an opportunity to present a detailed assessment of the situation in that area, to provide concrete facts and to refute the unfounded allegations and propaganda myths that have been voiced.

The reports by the representative of the NATO Secretariat and senior officials from three member countries left a depressing impression and showed once again how far the thinking of NATO strategists is from reality. We found the statement by the Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs, Mr. Michael Murphy, bewildering and discouraging. It was full of politicized assessments and hardly conducive to finding answers to the current problems of hard security on the European continent.

In a similar vein, we understand that the US Chairmanship intends to continue the discussion at the forthcoming OSCE High-Level Military Doctrine Seminar on 9 and 10 February. We have repeatedly warned our partners about the counterproductive nature of confrontational schemes and have suggested moving away from them. We are confident that no one will now question why representatives of the Russian Ministry of Defence will not attend the Seminar.

Madam Chairperson,

In contrast to the unsubstantiated claims heard today, I should like to point out that NATO's long-standing activities have not brought any added value to Europe in terms of stability and security. On the contrary, they have resulted in an increase in conflict potential and mutual distrust, and in militarization and the drawing of new artificial dividing lines on the continent.

The Alliance continues on its baseless course of so-called "containment" of Russia. It is building up coalition capacities and upgrading the military infrastructure near Russia's borders. The "rotating" presence in the Baltic States and Poland in fact basically takes the

form of the permanent deployment on the ground of four NATO battalion groups, which together are equivalent to a reinforced motorized infantry brigade with heavy equipment. The Baltic States are often among the key supporters of the anti-Russian line, assiduously cultivating the myth of a possible Russian “invasion”. By NATO’s own admission, there are now “more military forces deployed in the area than ever before”.

As part of NATO’s tailored Forward Presence in the Black Sea region, a multinational brigade (with troops from six countries: Romania, the United States of America, Poland, Bulgaria, Spain and Portugal) of about 4,000 troops was formed on the basis of a Romanian military unit.

The Baltic Sea region is undergoing dramatic changes as NATO builds up its presence in immediate proximity to the Russian Federation’s borders.

We are concerned about the prospect of a growing US military presence in Poland. There are plans for a significant increase in the total number of US military personnel there, in addition to the 4,500 troops already deployed. This could be accomplished in part by transferring forces currently stationed in Germany. The infrastructure being created will allow the group of US forces in Poland to be increased at short notice to 20,000 troops.

Such a move, if it comes about, would deal a serious blow to the 1997 NATO-Russia Founding Act. We recall one of its key provisions: “[T]he Alliance will carry out its collective defence and other missions by ensuring the necessary interoperability, integration, and capability for reinforcement rather than by additional permanent stationing of substantial combat forces.”

With the entry into operation of the US ballistic missile defence base in Deveselu, Romania, and the construction of a similar base in Poland, the strategic situation in Europe has been further significantly complicated. In that context, we view the destructive missile defence activities of the United States and its allies as a direct threat to international and regional security and stability.

Even against the backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Alliance has conducted exercises on its eastern flank, including scenarios against a “comparable” enemy, by which it means Russia. We consider such manoeuvres to be provocative and, in the current circumstances, at the very least short-sighted.

NATO’s Baltic air-policing mission, stepped up in 2014 under the spurious pretext of a “threat” from Russia, continues. Let me remind you that this mission was established for no real reason back in 2004 (i.e., ten years before the crisis in Ukraine began), and has now been quadrupled, with flights conducted close to the Russian border. The same applies to the naval presence. NATO pilots and warship crews are deliberately provoking Russian combat alert forces and, in the opinion of our military experts, testing our readiness for an adequate response.

The number of so-called “intercepts” of our aircraft during the NATO mission to patrol the Baltic is increasing, despite Russia’s compliance with agreements – aircraft flying outside regular flight paths have transponders activated and are in radio contact with civilian air traffic controllers and follow flight plans submitted in advance.

NATO aircraft fly out to “intercept” our fighters whose transponders are deactivated as they escort Tu-134 passenger airliners. According to EUROCONTROL regulations (as amended on 1 February 2019 – Specifications for harmonized Rules for Operational Air Traffic), when flying in formation, one lead aircraft with a flight plan, transponder switched on and in communication with ground air traffic control services is sufficient.

We cannot help but also be concerned by the efforts of the leadership of the North Atlantic bloc to draw traditionally neutral States into its sphere of influence.

All this inevitably changes the balance of forces in Europe and is provoking a slide towards another arms race. Despite this, Russia continues to be guided by the principle of restraint in planning the combat training of its armed forces.

We believe that expert military-to-military contacts between Russia and NATO should be resumed in order to de-escalate and prevent unintended incidents. We are open to dialogue. We regret that the NATO-Russia Council (NRC), established as the primary mechanism for resolving disagreements and communicating emerging security challenges, is being used by the Alliance to lecture us on issues that are not part of the NRC’s work.

A discussion of the theme of today’s meeting would not be complete without highlighting the issue of NATO’s military expenditure. It is regularly raised at Alliance meetings at all levels and is practically the main topic at meetings of leaders of NATO member countries. It should be noted that since the end of the Cold War there has been a consistent and significant reduction in defence spending by the NATO countries, and since 1991 most of them have channelled the savings into socio-economic development. By 2016, according to data from the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, the “peace dividend” was about 2.6 trillion US dollars, with about half attributable to the United States.

Since the events of 11 September 2001, there have been repeated attempts to increase the military spending of European States. At the NATO Prague Summit in 2002, the Prague Capabilities Commitment was approved, calling for a target of 2 per cent of the gross domestic product (GDP) for defence spending by future members (prior to the admission of Bulgaria, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia and the Baltic States to the Alliance in 2004). The summit in Wales in 2014, in particular in the face of the “threat from the East”, set a requirement for all members of the Alliance to increase the level of defence spending to 2 per cent of their GDP, of which 20 per cent should be spent on weapons, military equipment and research and development. It is worth noting that during the Brussels summit in 2018, the United States raised the bar to 4 per cent.

The total defence expenditure of the Alliance in 2019 was 1.04 trillion dollars, of which 730 billion, or more than 70 per cent, came from the United States, while spending by Canada and the European members of the Alliance amounted to 309 billion.

To answer the question as to which side the threat to peace comes from, suffice it to say that the total NATO military expenditure exceeds the Russian defence budget of 46 billion dollars by a factor of 22.6, of which spending by the European countries alone is 6.7 times higher.

Madam Chairperson,

Discussion of security issues on the line of contact between our country and the Alliance member countries would be incomplete without considering Russia's position. We have a good memory and recall that the majority of the wars have come to our land from the west. Russia did not start these wars, but it finished them, sometimes liberating a significant part of Europe from enslavement at great cost. We have always believed that there are no unsurmountable differences, let alone issues, in this long-suffering region as a whole that would require a military solution or the significant presence here of politico-military blocs. However, the state of affairs in reality and the build-up of a NATO military presence on our western borders show that the Alliance thinks otherwise. The leaders of the North Atlantic Alliance, in keeping with its propaganda regarding the need to "contain Russia's aggressive policies by force", have consistently implemented measures to militarize the countries of Central and Eastern Europe.

We would like to remind you that it was our country that made what can be described without exaggeration as an unprecedented contribution in the 1990s to removing the legacy of the Cold War. In record time, Russia withdrew troops and armaments from the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, disbanded large groups of forces in Germany, Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia and the Baltic States, over 800,000 troops in total, and destroyed and disposed of tens of thousands of pieces of heavy weaponry and equipment. Today, many in the West prefer not to remember this, as these facts do not tally well with the cultivated myth of Russian "aggression".

Our opponents are discomfited by the recollection of how ardently we were assured back then that NATO membership would relieve the Eastern European countries of the phantom pains of their historical legacy, improve relations with Russia and surround the Alliance with a "belt" of States friendly towards us. This was not the case.

Now there is talk in NATO of the need for special protection of the Central and Eastern European States in view of their effectively "front-line position". It is hard not to notice that Russophobia, which by its nature cannot be cured by tanks, is at the heart of the foreign policy of several countries in this region, and what is worse, is becoming part of the defence planning process and taking the form of a build-up of arms and equipment.

It is a fact today that "hard" security on the continent as a whole, and in Central and Eastern Europe in particular, is in deep systemic crisis.

The North Atlantic Alliance continues to implement the NATO Readiness Action Plan adopted at the Wales summit in September 2014 and subsequent decisions by ministers of defence in the North Atlantic Council. All this is aimed at shifting the balance of military forces in the European region in its favour, including in the immediate vicinity of Russia's borders. The return of a "heavy" US military presence to Eastern Europe is well under way, including the continued development of the military infrastructure in those territories, which is clearly anti-Russian in orientation.



Madam Chairperson,

In our view, the subject of this meeting should also have included an exchange of views on possible ways of remedying the situation. This is what we hoped to hear, but instead we have heard ideas that are far from new on how to further “saturate” Central and Eastern Europe with armaments in order to counter the so-called “Russian threat”. That being the case, Russia will take all the necessary steps to counter risks and threats to our national security.

At the same time, Russia remains committed to building an architecture of mutually beneficial and wide-ranging pan-European security co-operation based on the principle of the indivisibility of security, backed by international law. We hope that common sense will eventually prevail in NATO and that our Western partners will find the strength to abandon confrontational schemes driven by the desire to ensure their own security at the expense of others.

Both Russia and NATO face the same challenges and threats. In the light of the spread of terrorism and extremism around the world, the Alliance needs to stop worrying itself and its partners with the imagined Russian threat and consider joining forces with Russia to ensure global and regional security. Even now, we could set about drawing up a joint list of challenges and threats, whose elimination would help to strengthen European security. The first step in this direction has been taken with the decision by Russia and the United States to extend the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty without preconditions.

Madam Chairperson,

During the meeting, we noted with particular concern that statements by a senior US diplomat, some keynote speakers and delegations attempted to justify and even promote the NATO principle of “containment” of Russia. We have been assured unconvincingly, not to mention maladroitly, that in the realm of military security “deterrence” is now the paradigm underlying the justification for the Alliance to build up a forward presence on its eastern border.

Such statements are deeply worrying for the future of the pan-European Security Dialogue. We are all aware that the founding documents on which the OSCE’s work is based give pride of place to the principle of the comprehensive strengthening and development of co-operation among participating States.

A departure from the concept of “co-operative security” and attempts to erode it or replace it with elements alien to the OSCE are fraught with serious consequences for the functioning of our Organization and European security.

In conclusion, I once again urge the abandonment of futile attempts to call into question the territorial integrity of the Russian Federation. The issue of Crimea’s affiliation is not up for discussion any more. The peninsula was, is and will remain Russian.

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**

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27 January 2021  
Annex 10

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**966th Plenary Meeting**

FSC Journal No. 972, Agenda item 3(e)

**STATEMENT BY  
THE DELEGATION OF SWITZERLAND (ALSO ON BEHALF OF  
FINLAND AND LIECHTENSTEIN)**

Madam Chairperson,

This statement is held on behalf of Finland, Liechtenstein and Switzerland as the (current) donors of the FSC e-learning initiative.

Allow me to thank the FSC Support Section for the presentation of the FSC e-Learning Programme.

Madam Chairperson,

Multilateralism has been put to a test over the past years – globally and also regionally – and must be strengthened to effectively address our current and common challenges. The OSCE as the largest regional security organization must continue to play an important role in rebuilding trust and confidence in the politico-military domain. The FSC was created in 1992 precisely for that purpose. Yet, the FSC is more than a platform for dialogue. It is a decision-making body with – as you all know – a vast array of practical tools at its disposal.

The e-Learning Programme aims to enhance/broaden the knowledge of participating States, Points of Contact in capitals and the OSCE field missions about the FSC and the issues it is concerned with, in particular conventional arms control and confidence- and security-building measures (CSBMs).

This initiative is not a “one-off” event. The aim is to strengthen the work of the FSC on a long-term basis and thereby the OSCE as a whole. It is also more than an introductory course for new colleagues. It should allow all of us to deepen our knowledge on FSC-related matters, and to better understand their importance in the arms control architecture and the broader picture. We hope that the delegations of participating States in Vienna and capitals will find the e-learning modules useful and encourage them to actively take part in it.

In closing, allow me to thank the Conflict Prevention Centre FSC Support Section for taking up this initiative and for running the platform in an inclusive and transparent manner. We would welcome a regular update on the progress of the initiative and thank the US FSC

Chairmanship for putting this item on today's agenda. We also welcome the FSC Co-ordinators' involvement.

I kindly ask you to attach this joint statement to the journal of the day.

Thank you, Madam Chairperson.



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**966th Plenary Meeting**

FSC Journal No. 972, Agenda item 3(e)

**STATEMENT BY  
THE FSC CO-ORDINATOR FOR THE VIENNA DOCUMENT  
(SWEDEN) (ALSO ON BEHALF OF THE FSC CO-ORDINATOR FOR  
THE CODE OF CONDUCT ON POLITICO-MILITARY ASPECTS OF  
SECURITY (SWITZERLAND), THE FSC CO-ORDINATOR FOR  
MATTERS RELATED TO UNSCR 1325 (ALBANIA), THE FSC  
CO-ORDINATOR ON NON-PROLIFERATION ISSUES (BELARUS),  
THE FSC CO-ORDINATOR FOR PROJECTS ON SMALL ARMS AND  
LIGHT WEAPONS AND STOCKPILES OF CONVENTIONAL  
AMMUNITION (AUSTRIA) AND THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE  
INFORMAL GROUP OF FRIENDS ON SMALL ARMS AND LIGHT  
WEAPONS AND STOCKPILES OF CONVENTIONAL AMMUNITION  
(LATVIA))**

Madam Chairperson,  
Excellencies,  
Dear colleagues,

Please allow me to take the floor on behalf of all of the FSC Chairperson's Co-ordinators, and also on behalf of the Chairperson of the Informal Group of Friends on Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) and Stockpiles of Conventional Ammunition (SCA), in order to speak about the extrabudgetary project entitled "Forum for Security Co-operation e-Learning Programme".

The Forum for Security Co-operation is a unique platform and decision-making body within the OSCE that focuses on the politico-military dimension of security. It supports the work of the Organization's 57 participating States on a wide range of topics, including conventional arms control regimes; confidence- and security-building measures; the OSCE Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security; SALW and SCA; United Nations Security Council resolution 1325 on women, peace and security; and United Nations Security Council resolution 1540 on the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Especially for those who have recently joined the OSCE and for the focal points at the national level, it may often be challenging to get to grips with the FSC's extensive agenda.

Bearing this in mind, the FSC Support Section within the OSCE Secretariat's Conflict Prevention Centre has developed the FSC e-Learning Programme, which has significant potential to increase various target audiences' knowledge and understanding of the manifold topics covered by the Forum. The objective of this extrabudgetary project is to support the systematic transfer of knowledge about the FSC's work to delegates, national focal points and other interested parties in participating States and their verification centres. My colleagues and I all share the conviction that the FSC e-Learning Programme can enhance participating States' ability to fulfil their commitments and bring added value to the discussions and dialogue taking place within the OSCE's politico-military dimension.

The programme was launched in October 2020, and we are grateful to Finland, Liechtenstein and Switzerland for having immediately shown their support for this new initiative. Thanks to their extrabudgetary contributions, a pilot module on the Vienna Document is currently being developed and it is planned to give a demonstration on its initial progress during a side event at the Annual Implementation Assessment Meeting to be held in early March.

In closing, we, the FSC Chairperson's Co-ordinators and the Chairperson of the Informal Group of Friends on SALW and SCA, should like to express our strong support for the FSC e-Learning Programme and to thank the FSC Support Section for leading this initiative. We stand ready to help to raise awareness of the various e-learning modules as they are gradually developed and released in the course of the year. We are grateful to the existing donors for their contributions and invite other participating States to consider also providing financial support for this very promising project.

Thank you, Madam Chairperson, for your attention. May I ask you to attach this joint statement to the journal of the day.



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

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**966th Plenary Meeting**  
FSC Journal No. 972, Agenda item 3(g)

**STATEMENT BY  
THE DELEGATION OF SERBIA**

Madam Chairperson,  
Your Excellencies,  
Dear colleagues,

We kindly ask the Chairmanship to ensure that the status-neutral position of the OSCE towards Kosovo and Metohija is respected in all documents and materials officially distributed.

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

Thank you, Madam Chairperson.



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

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**966th Plenary Meeting**

FSC Journal No. 972, Agenda item 3(h)

**STATEMENT BY  
THE DELEGATION OF AZERBAIJAN**

Madam Chairperson,

The delegation of Azerbaijan, using the platform of the Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC), would like to request practical assistance from the OSCE for enhancing the capacities of the national authorities of Azerbaijan in implementing explosive hazards risk reduction and response action. This practical assistance request is made on the basis of our shared commitments in the politico-military dimension, in accordance with the OSCE Document on Stockpiles of Conventional Ammunition (FSC.DOC/1/03/Rev.1, re-issued on 23 March 2011).

As Azerbaijan is embarking upon the process of rehabilitation of conflict-affected territories, we would highly value practical assistance by the OSCE which would help us implement our commitments on explosive ordnances. To this end, supporting the relevant national authorities by strengthening their technical and operational capacities for more effective, smooth and safe clearance of areas contaminated with explosives is of the utmost importance.

The delegation of Azerbaijan will provide further information about needs and requested assistance in due course.

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

Thank you, Madam Chairperson.