



Chairmanship: Estonia

545th PLENARY MEETING OF THE FORUM

1. Date: Wednesday, 7 May 2008

Opened: 10.05 a.m.

Closed: 12.50 p.m.

2. Chairperson: Ms. T. Parts

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

Agenda item 1: GENERAL STATEMENTS

None

Agenda item 2: SECURITY DIALOGUE

(a) *Presentation by the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) on the arms trade treaty (ATT) process, delivered by Ms. Sarah Parker: Chairperson, Ms. S. Parker (FSC.DEL/90/08 OSCE+), Finland, Slovenia-European Union (FSC.DEL/94/08), Germany, United Kingdom, Armenia, France, Turkey, Russian Federation, Belarus*

(b) *Incident involving an unmanned aerial vehicle in Georgia on 20 April 2008: Chairperson (Annex 1), Georgia (Annex 2), Slovenia-European Union, United States of America, Lithuania, Latvia, Russian Federation (Annex 3)*

Agenda item 3: DECISION ON POINTS OF CONTACT ON SMALL ARMS AND LIGHT WEAPONS AND STOCKPILES OF CONVENTIONAL AMMUNITION

Chairperson

Decision: The Forum for Security Co-operation adopted Decision No. 4/08 (FSC.DEC/4/08), the text of which is appended to this journal, on points of

contact on small arms and light weapons and stockpiles of conventional ammunition.

Agenda item 4: ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- (a) *Availability of a report on political guidelines concerning the export, import and transit of armaments: Italy (FSC.DEL/92/08 OSCE+)*
- (b) *Seminar on the role of arms control in dealing with crisis situations, to be held in Zagreb from 9 to 11 July 2008: Germany (SEC.DEL/68/08 Restr.)*
- (c) *OSCE participation in the OAS workshop on the implementation of United Nations Security Council resolution 1540 (2004), to be held in Buenos Aires on 13 and 14 May 2008: Chairperson*

4. Next meeting:

Wednesday, 14 May 2008, at 10 a.m., in the Neuer Saal



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

FSC.JOUR/551

7 May 2008

Annex 1

Original: ENGLISH

545th Plenary Meeting

FSC Journal No. 551, Agenda item 2(b)

**LETTER FROM THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE
PERMANENT COUNCIL TO THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE
FORUM FOR SECURITY CO-OPERATION**

Vienna, 30 April 2008

Ambassador Triin Parts
Head of Mission,
Permanent Mission of the Republic of Estonia to the OSCE
Vienna

Dear Ambassador,

I would like to draw your attention to the discussion on 24 April in the Permanent Council on the incident involving the unmanned airborne vehicle over Abkhazia, Georgia, on 20 April 2008.

The Chairman-in-Office, Minister Alexander Stubb, has expressed his concern about the recent developments in Georgia. Special Envoy Heikki Talvitie is currently in the region with the aim of defusing tensions. The Chairmanship has pledged to examine OSCE's possibilities to build confidence through dialogue.

The FSC is mandated to discuss politico-military issues relating to European security and has proven expertise in this area. The Finnish Chairmanship is committed to developing the co-operation between the Forum for Security Co-operation and other OSCE bodies in order to fully utilize the expertise of the FSC. The FSC can make a significant contribution to the political dialogue within the Organization.

With reference to Bucharest Ministerial Council Decision No. 3 and taking note of the discussions in the Preparatory Committee Meeting on 30 April, I kindly ask you, in your capacity as a Chair of the FSC, to consider providing the FSC's expert advice on the above-mentioned matter, contributing to security dialogue in the OSCE.

Yours sincerely,

[signature]

Antti Turunen
Ambassador
Chairperson of the Permanent Council

cc: OSCE Secretary General
To the Permanent Missions and Delegations to the OSCE
The Conflict Prevention Centre (CPC)



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

FSC.JOUR/551

7 May 2008

Annex 2

Original: ENGLISH

545th Plenary Meeting

FSC Journal No. 551, Agenda item 2(b)

STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF GEORGIA

Madam Chairperson,

I would like to follow up on the discussions held in this forum last Wednesday concerning the UAV incident in Georgia on 20 April 2008 and inform the Chairperson and the distinguished delegates of the latest developments regarding this matter.

Upon Georgia's invitation to the OSCE participating States to send qualified military experts to verify and assess the materials provided by the Georgian side, and in response to the PC Chairperson's request to the FSC to provide expertise on this incident, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and the United States deployed their experts to Georgia last week. The expert group was given the possibility of examining all the materials available to the Georgian side, of visiting the UAV control facility and of meeting all the relevant representatives from the Ministry of the Interior. The experts have already finalized their work in Georgia. The results of the work will be made available to other experts who may be further deployed in Georgia to investigate the incident.

As I have touched upon this issue, I would like to inform the FSC meeting that Georgia is continuing consultations with the OSCE participating States on sending a further group of experts to Georgia. This is being done with one single goal in mind, namely, to ensure that the assessment of this incident is as comprehensive and all-inclusive as possible. Apart from that, the United Nations Department for Peacekeeping Operations has forwarded a request to the UN field missions and, possibly, to troop-contributing countries, with a view to obtaining qualified military experts to be deployed in Georgia for the UNOMIG fact-finding team. The staffing of this team will be completed in the next few days, and it will commence its work on materials related to the incident.

Herewith, I would like to reiterate our invitation to the participating States to deploy their qualified experts to carry out further verification and assessment. Needless to say, all the materials provided by the Georgian side were obtained and distributed through official channels by the Georgian authorities, and we vouch for their authenticity.

Madam Chairperson,

I would like to refer to the deliberations in the FSC last Wednesday and to comment on some points made at it and on questions put forward, which to our mind are of prime importance.

With reference to the statement made by the Russian ambassador at the last FSC meeting, I would like to reiterate that the Georgian side in its statements has already made clear that, through the UAV flight at issue, Georgia did not violate any international or other agreements. It is irrelevant to raise the issue of non-compliance with the provisions of the 14 May 1994 cease-fire agreement and UN Security Council resolutions, since the flight of an unarmed UAV of the Ministry of the Interior can in no way be considered as a military activity.

It would have been much more pertinent for the Russian side to recall the numerous recent statements of the Abkhaz separatist regime on deployment of additional military equipment within the security zone, and their ultimatums threatening to attack Upper Abkhazia/Kodori Valley and the Gali district of Abkhazia, Georgia, not to mention the endless military training operations involving heavy military equipment in close proximity to the security zone. It is quite obvious that, under these circumstances, the Georgian Ministry of the Interior had to choose to use the reconnaissance UAV to verify the above-mentioned information, and I stress once again, usage of such an unarmed UAV is not restricted by any international or other agreement.

Against this background, I need to ask and I think we all have to ask the distinguished Russian delegation a question, which has so far escaped their attention, although it is of the utmost importance: Is it a relevant and adequate reaction by the Russian side when it assesses the flight of an unarmed and unmanned reconnaissance UAV as a serious breach of existing agreements and of the provisions of UN Security Council resolutions, whilst considering the appearance and attack by a fully armed jet fighter over the same security zone to be fully in line with the same agreements and resolutions? Without regard to whether it was a MIG-29 or a SU-27, it is clear that the Abkhaz regime do not possess any of these aircraft types, and their attempts to claim responsibility for this incident are absolutely groundless, since the video footage clearly shows that the attacking aircraft could in no way be of the L-39 type. Even if one follows the Russian findings, assuming that the UAV was shot down by the Abkhaz air defence forces, “whose armaments include missile-equipped aircraft of the L-39 type”, the same question should apply here: Does not the presence and utilization of air defence systems by the Abkhaz separatist side represent a serious violation of the same agreements and resolutions?

And, moreover, do our Russian colleagues seriously want us to believe that the introduction of new military reinforcements into the security zone on the pretext of boosting the Peacekeeping Force (PKF) complies with the international agreements and UN resolutions, given the conditions of total absence of transparency and control over the numbers and types of military equipment? This is all the more the case when it is being done against the background of belligerent statements by various Russian military or other officials. Here, I have to refer to the interview with an anonymous general of the Russian General Staff, which appeared yesterday in the mass media, stating that over 400 fully armed

Russian paratroopers had just been introduced into Abkhazia. “Their task is not to replace the Peacekeeping Force, but to provide conditions for unhindered implementation of its tasks”, stated the general.

Madam Chairperson,

As to the question by the Russian ambassador concerning the one-day delay in confirming that the drone belonged to Georgia, I have to draw the attention of the delegations to the fact that the first statements on 20 April were made by the Ministry of Defence of Georgia, which obviously could in no way have information on the UAV instantly available, since it was a vehicle belonging to the Ministry of the Interior. The Ministry of the Interior confirmed the downing of a Georgian UAV the next day, after careful clarification and analysis of the facts. This is a normal and obligatory procedure followed by every responsible Government for making official statements.

I would also like to reply to the question of the Russian ambassador regarding the so-called “strange conduct of the fighter pilot, who seemed to have deliberately made his plane visible by flying beneath the reconnaissance aircraft before the attack”. The simple truth is that it is considerably more convenient for a jet fighter to detect and attack a small target against the background of the sky, since otherwise its silhouette would blend into the land background, thus significantly impeding visual detection and targeting. This may well be the reason for the above-mentioned manoeuvre by the pilot.

I do not wish to enter into a detailed description of all the technicalities connected with the incident at this time, since I believe we will still have the possibility to hear all the explanations from the experts, who are far more qualified than I. Hence, I would like to stress that clarifying all these technical issues was the main reason for our proposal to the participating States to deploy qualified experts to assess and verify the materials and provide the findings to the FSC, thereby ensuring that we have an independent, unbiased and competent assessment of the situation, since it seems that our Russian colleagues are just instructed to refute everything the Georgian delegation says.

Madam Chairperson,

Finally, I would like to comment on the statements made by my Russian colleague with regard to the earlier incidents on Georgian territory involving Russian military equipment. I am curious to know which sources my Russian colleague was referring to when stating at the FSC on 30 April that the “UNOMIG fact-finding teams” had disproved the Georgian allegations regarding Russian involvement in the incidents in Upper Abkhazia on 25 October 2006 and 11 March 2007.

With regard to the incident on 25 October, even the conclusions of the preliminary UNOMIG report were rendered no longer tenable by the UN Secretary-General in his report of 11 January 2007, due to new evidence that had come to light in the course of further close investigation. No final UNOMIG report was produced. Hence, the statement of the Russian delegation on UNOMIG’s disproving the Georgian allegations is an outright lie.

As to the investigation of the incident on 11 March 2007, none of the UNOMIG reports contains any statement disproving or endorsing any kind of assumptions. The Joint Fact-Finding Group consisting of UNOMIG, the CIS PKF, and the Abkhaz and Georgian representatives tasked to investigate the incident also did not produce final conclusions, mainly due to the unconstructive attitude of the CIS PKF representatives. Nevertheless, the Russian delegation stated absolutely the opposite. Yet another lie.

Madam Chairperson,

Having said all this, I would like to reiterate that Georgia welcomes the work of UNOMIG and looks forward to the deployment of its fact-finding team along with external experts. We believe that, today, the prerequisites will be given for this team to be far more effective and provide unbiased conclusions without the participation of representatives of the countries in question, namely, the Russian Federation and Georgia.

Concluding my statement, I would also like to touch upon the issue of the missile incident at Tsitelubani in August 2007, regarding which the Russian ambassador stated that most of the arguments raised last year by the Russian military specialists had been left unanswered by the Georgian side.

Let me kindly remind the distinguished Russian ambassador that the findings in the report of the joint monitoring group (which, by the way, was signed by the Russian Lt. Colonel), the OSCE spot report and the reports by the independent intergovernmental experts groups all supported the facts as presented by the Georgian Government.

In addition to that, we had comprehensive and inclusive discussions on this matter here at the FSC last year in the autumn. It is the unequivocal understanding that all the arguments were extensively discussed and answered either by the Georgian or the international military experts. If the Russian side still believes that some elements require further explanations, despite our being somewhat surprised by such a statement, I would like to request the Russian delegation to provide (in writing) all the questions as regards the incident that they still consider to require further clarifications.

Thank you.



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

FSC.JOUR/551

7 May 2008

Annex 3

ENGLISH

Original: RUSSIAN

545th Plenary Meeting

FSC Journal No. 551, Agenda item 2(b)

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

Madam Chairperson,

Allow me to thank the distinguished representative of Georgia for his answers to some of the questions we put to him on 30 April 2008. We note, however, that a few of them have simply remained unanswered, contrary to the promises made.

I should like first of all to express my bewilderment at the Georgian side's assertions, heard here today, that unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) flights do not constitute any type of military activity, as referred to in the Moscow Agreement of 1994 and in United Nations Security Council resolution No. 1808. Such claims do not stand up to criticism, since we are talking here about military reconnaissance aircraft, which, moreover, can be used to correct fire.

In assessing the Georgian delegation's statement as a whole, it is worthwhile noting that it confirms the conclusions we drew in our statement in the Forum on 30 April. The Georgian side is strenuously trying to shift attention from the initial causes to the consequences. The initial cause of the incident in question was Georgia's blatant disregard of the United Nations Security Council's strong urging that no unauthorized military activities be permitted in the security zone.

Unfortunately, according to all indications, our assessment that Tbilisi has adopted a deliberate policy of increasing incidents of this kind has also been confirmed. On 4 May, the Abkhaz air defence forces shot down two more Georgian unmanned reconnaissance aircraft which had carried out unauthorized flights over the security zone.

The reappearance of Georgian reconnaissance aircraft in the prohibited zone over Abkhazia, and their lawful destruction, clearly shows that Tbilisi has ignored our repeated warnings concerning the danger of the violations by the Georgian side of the provisions of the Moscow Agreement on a Ceasefire and Separation of Forces, of 14 May 1994, and of the relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions, in particular, resolution 1808, adopted on 15 April 2008.

By resorting to risky ventures involving unmanned reconnaissance aircraft, and stepping up military preparations in proximity to conflict zones, the Tbilisi authorities have embarked upon a conscious policy of increasing tensions in the region. The Georgian side bears full responsibility for the consequences of such a policy.

Allow me also to mention one important procedural point connected with the Chairmanship's intention to invite to the Forum national experts who responded to the Georgian side's appeal to take part in the investigation of the incident that occurred on 20 April. We believe, as we already pointed out at the last meeting, that there is no need for such an invitation on the Chairmanship's part. It is hardly worthwhile to give individual "investigations", the status of which is unclear, a kind of official, almost international, character in this way. We take the position that the Forum's rules of procedure allow any delegation to give its microphone to its own experts, who may speak in a national capacity while sitting in the national seat of the country of which they are citizens. We do not think, incidentally, that any delegation will consider it appropriate for its experts to make statements setting forth their own assessments or opinions before the official investigation by the United Nations is completed. That would be an extremely arrogant and not entirely proper step to take in relation to the United Nations. Nevertheless, if any delegation feels that considerations of political propriety can be disregarded, it has, I repeat, the right to give the floor to its experts without any invitation from the Chairmanship.



545th Plenary Meeting

FSC Journal No. 551, Agenda item 3

**DECISION No. 4/08
POINTS OF CONTACT ON SMALL ARMS AND LIGHT WEAPONS
AND STOCKPILES OF CONVENTIONAL AMMUNITION**

The Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC),

Reaffirming the commitments undertaken by the participating States in the OSCE Document on Small Arms and Light Weapons (FSC.DOC/1/00) and the OSCE Document on Stockpiles of Conventional Ammunition (FSC.DOC/1/03),

Recalling Section VI of the OSCE Document on Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW), in which participating States agreed to the establishment of a list of small arms contact points in delegations to the OSCE and in capitals,

Recalling Section VII of the OSCE Document on Stockpiles of Conventional Ammunition (SCA), which allowed for the voluntary provision of Points of Contact on conventional ammunition, explosive material and detonating devices, in delegations to the OSCE and in capitals,

Noting paragraph 33 of the OSCE Document on SCA, which charges the OSCE with a clearing-house function, including that of bringing together, ensuring liaison between, and exchanging information with requesting States, potential assisting/donor States and other (international) actors in this field,

Recognizing that matters relating to control over small arms and light weapons and SCA pertain to the national sovereignty and responsibility of the respective States,

Recognizing the need for updated and ready information on national and OSCE Points of Contact on SALW and on SCA,

Decides to establish a directory of national and OSCE Points of Contact on SALW and SCA, in accordance with the provisions annexed to this decision;

Decides to include an update on Points of Contact on SALW and SCA in the existing annual information exchange on SALW conducted in accordance with FSC.DOC/1/00 adopted on 24 November 2000.

DIRECTORY OF POINTS OF CONTACT ON SMALL ARMS AND LIGHT WEAPONS AND STOCKPILES OF CONVENTIONAL AMMUNITION

In the OSCE Document on Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW), the participating States agreed to establish a “list of small arms contact points in delegations to the OSCE and in capitals, to be held and maintained by the CPC.” The OSCE Document on Stockpiles of Conventional Ammunition (SCA) also sets out the possibility of sharing the names of points of contact on conventional ammunition, explosive material and detonating devices, in delegations to the OSCE and in capitals, on a voluntary basis.

The OSCE Documents on SALW and SCA specify that the CPC is to be the main point of contact on issues relating to SALW and SCA between the OSCE and other international organizations and institutions. The OSCE Directory of Points of Contact (“the POC directory”) on SALW and SCA is an additional tool for co-operation and co-ordination among participating States on projects relating to SALW and SCA.

The POC directory on SALW and SCA will comprise of:

- POCs in the participating States and in the delegations in Vienna;
- POC(s) in the FSC Support Section of the OSCE CPC in Vienna;
- POCs in OSCE field operations, as appropriate.

The primary purpose of the directory is to facilitate information-sharing between participating States on issues related to SALW and SCA projects.

As a prerequisite for efficient international co-operation in this field, participating States should arrange for their POCs to co-operate with all relevant national agencies dealing with SALW and SCA issues. The responsibilities of the POC will be defined by participating States according to their national procedures and practice. Participating States will be responsible for providing the OSCE Secretariat with updated POC information (names, contact details, addresses, etc.) using the annual information exchange on SALW or an interim update, should any changes occur.

Responsibilities for National POCs might include:

- To be available for contact by other POCs and to ensure that communications from the OSCE and other POCs reach the appropriate government agencies dealing with specific SALW and SCA project issues (e.g., destruction of SALW and conventional ammunition, SALW and conventional ammunition stockpile security and management, training programmes etc.);

- To co-ordinate the collection of information from the appropriate governmental agencies dealing with specific SALW and SCA issues, as outlined in the assistance mechanisms on SALW and SCA set out in FSC Decision No. 15/02 and the OSCE Document on SCA, and to communicate this information to the CPC and relevant POCs, as appropriate;

Administrative responsibilities of the CPC:

- To maintain the POC directory on SALW and SCA and electronically distribute up-to-date information on POCs;
- To process incoming information and requests from the participating States on SALW and SCA within the mandate of the OSCE Documents on SALW and SCA and FSC Decision No. 15/02;
- To keep POCs informed about relevant SALW and SCA activities in the OSCE area.