

Chairmanship: Austria

994th PLENARY MEETING OF THE FORUM

1. Date: Wednesday, 24 November 2021 (via video teleconference)

Opened: 10.05 a.m.

Closed: 11.20 a.m.

2. Chairperson: Mr. R. Lassmann

Prior to taking up the agenda, the Chairperson offered condolences to the participating States affected by the bus accident in Bulgaria on 23 November 2021, in particular North Macedonia and to the families of the victims.

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

Agenda item 1: GENERAL STATEMENTS

Situation in and around Ukraine: Ukraine (FSC.DEL/421/21 OSCE+)
Slovenia-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/423/21), United States of America (FSC.DEL/420/21 OSCE+), United Kingdom (FSC.DEL/424/21 OSCE+), Canada, Russian Federation (Annex 1),
Chairperson

Agenda item 2: DECISION ON THE AGENDA AND MODALITIES OF THE
THIRTY-SECOND ANNUAL IMPLEMENTATION
ASSESSMENT MEETING

Chairperson

Decision: The Forum for Security Co-operation adopted Decision No. 6/21 (FSC.DEC/6/21) on the agenda and modalities of the thirty-second Annual Implementation Assessment Meeting, the text of which is appended to this journal.

Agenda item 3: ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- (a) *Resumption of certain verification activities under COVID-19 pandemic conditions: United States of America*
- (b) *Briefing on the meeting of the Informal Group of Friends on Small Arms and Light Weapons and Stockpiles of Conventional Ammunition held via video teleconference on 18 November 2021: Chairperson of the Informal Group of Friends on Small Arms and Light Weapons and Stockpiles of Conventional Ammunition (Latvia) (Annex 2)*

4. Next meeting:

To be announced



994th Plenary Meeting
FSC Journal No. 1000, Agenda item 1

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

Mr. Chairperson,

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak. I was not intending to take the floor today, since during the last two meetings of the Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC) I set out in detail the Russian Federation's position on the current developments pertaining to the internal Ukrainian conflict. Anyway, the latest unsubstantiated accusations raised today by the representatives of Ukraine and the Western patron States of its puppet regime awaken not so much irritation as mirth on our part.

A joke on this score is already making the rounds in Russia: "All the while an attack is being prepared on Ukraine, President Putin is afraid lest the Russian army should bump into the other Russian army that invaded eight years ago."

I see no point in playing nursery games and yet again start looking for "goodies" and "baddies". Everyone knows the answer, namely that the collective West under US leadership is to blame. This is not about Ukraine: its interests are being disregarded.

Let us consider the facts. Our Western colleagues constantly accuse Russia of deliberately aggravating the situation on the border with Ukraine. They claim that the Russian army is "flexing its muscles" and ready to start a war any minute now. They first came up with the figure of more than 100,000 personnel; now it is 92,000. It would be good if they could make up their mind.

One can also hear them talk about how Russia, by means of "information warfare", is creating a pretext for invading Ukraine. Speculations by US intelligence have even been voiced to the effect that the likelihood of this is "increasing as the weather gets colder". Once again, I do not intend to discuss the competence of those who are drawing such conclusions; I shall merely say that no facts whatsoever have been presented to back them up.

The efforts of our country to render humanitarian assistance to the war-weary people of Donbas are completely ignored. Significantly, in a "joint statement on support for Ukraine" issued on 15 November, France and Germany express their concern about the

deteriorating humanitarian situation in Donbas. We urge them to help Donbas too, as opposed to engaging in idle talk.

Manifestly provocative exercises are being conducted in the Black Sea by the United States of America and other NATO countries, the objective of these being preparation for military operations in the event that the Kyiv regime should opt for the use of force to “resolve” the conflict that it unleashed on its own people. It is in this vein that one must also regard the deployment of yet another US cruiser to the Black Sea.

Moreover, as part of the “Global Thunder” exercise of strategic forces in November, the United States rehearsed the launching of nuclear strikes against Russian territory within 20 km of our border. This is something that the Minister of Defence of the Russian Federation, Sergei Shoigu, has already spoken about.

By way of military assistance to the Ukrainian Government, the United States is pumping lethal weapons, including Javelin anti-tank missiles, into a Ukraine torn apart by internal conflict. Considerable sums of money are being earmarked for this purpose: 60 million US dollars as part of the September “aid package”; in November, it emerged that there was a further 400 million US dollars coming.

The United Kingdom recently granted Ukraine a loan of 1.7 billion pounds to meet the needs of its navy, notably the construction of new bases.

These are by no means all the actions undertaken by the Western countries to stoke up the internal Ukrainian conflict. In the light of what has been said, it is legitimate to ask from which quarter, then, is the threat to peace coming from and who actually bears complete responsibility for what is happening in Ukraine – though, as I see it, this has already become a rhetorical question.

We once again call upon the Western countries to temper their “ardour” and compel the authorities in Kyiv to return to implementation of the Minsk agreements and prevent any further escalation, which could well lead to lamentable consequences, including the definitive collapse of Ukrainian statehood.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. I request that the text of this statement be attached to the journal of today’s FSC meeting.



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

FSC.JOUR/1000
24 November 2021
Annex 2

Original: ENGLISH

994th Plenary Meeting

FSC Journal No. 1000, Agenda item 3(b)

**STATEMENT BY
THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE INFORMAL GROUP OF FRIENDS ON
SMALL ARMS AND LIGHT WEAPONS AND STOCKPILES OF
CONVENTIONAL AMMUNITION (LATVIA)**

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.
Dear colleagues,

In my capacity as Chairperson of the Informal Group of Friends on Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) and Stockpiles of Conventional Ammunition (SCA), I should like to take this opportunity to inform you about the most recent meeting of the Informal Group of Friends (IGoF), which took place on 18 November 2021 via video teleconference.

The meeting was attended by 51 participants from 30 OSCE participating States and by representatives of the OSCE Secretariat. Of the total number of participants, 15 were women.

The OSCE participating States used the meeting to deliver briefings on and discuss progress achieved in updating the existing OSCE Best Practice Guides (BPGs) on SALW and Conventional Ammunition (CA), and to give updates on new initiatives.

The participating States leading the updating of the existing OSCE BPGs on SALW and CA – namely, Germany, the United Kingdom, the United States of America, Sweden and France – provided information on progress made. Moreover, Sweden reported on the expert meeting held on 12 November 2021 on the updated draft BPG on SALW in Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration.

With regard to the development of the new OSCE BPGs and initiatives aimed at facilitating the implementation of the OSCE Documents on SALW and SCA, Austria reported on the outcomes of the expert meeting held on 16 November 2021 on a reference guide on combating the illicit trafficking of SALW and CA in the OSCE area. Furthermore, Austria provided updates on the initiative to further strengthen the assistance mechanism under the OSCE Documents on SALW and SCA. In addition, Spain informed about the plans on how to proceed further with the draft BPG on Prevention of Illicit Trafficking of SALW and/or Ammunition by Sea and Inland Waterways.

Dear colleagues,

Let me summarize. The review and update process has been applied to over 50 per cent of all the existing OSCE BPGs on SALW and CA. Currently, nine out of seventeen BPGs have been subjected to the process of being reviewed and updated, and new initiatives are being developed. Two updated BPGs have been adopted by the FSC. I would like to reiterate that the BPGs are not mandated decisions that States must adhere to unflinchingly, which means that, on the whole, they are not politically sensitive and so should be able to attract consensus.

Although draft updates of six BPGs and three new initiatives are proposed for consideration in FSC Working Group A, the Informal Group of Friends continues to serve as an informal platform for clarifying and commenting on issues pertaining to the process.

I would like to stress that the BPGs review and update process, and development of new initiatives relies entirely on the participating States. These efforts are being led by Austria, France, Germany (jointly with Switzerland and Austria), United Kingdom, the United States of America, Spain and Sweden. Other States such as Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cyprus, Montenegro, the Russian Federation and Switzerland are actively supporting these efforts. Moreover, several OSCE executive structures have provided their lessons learned and recommendations on the application of BPGs.

I encourage the participating States that originally authored or sponsored the remaining eight BPGs to initiate the update processes for these, or at least to lead the discussions aimed at assessing whether they are still up to date or need to be updated. I'll be delighted to provide further details at the meeting of FSC Working Group A today.

In conclusion, let me inform you that a perception paper reflecting the discussions held and presentations provided at the Informal Group of Friends meeting of 18 November will be distributed to the delegations and missions of the OSCE participating States.

I should like to thank all the participants and all the distinguished delegations of OSCE participating States that supported this meeting and contributed to its success.

I also wish to extend my gratitude to the FSC Support Unit for providing invaluable subject matter expertise and technical support.

Thank you very much for your attention.

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

994th Plenary Meeting

FSC Journal No. 1000, Agenda item 2

**DECISION No. 6/21
AGENDA AND MODALITIES OF THE THIRTY-SECOND
ANNUAL IMPLEMENTATION ASSESSMENT MEETING**

(1 and 2 March 2022, in Vienna or via video teleconference, or both)

Vienna Document:

- (148) *The participating States will hold each year a meeting to discuss the present and future implementation of agreed CSBMs. Discussion may extend to:*
- (148.1) – *Clarification of questions arising from such implementation;*
- (148.2) – *Operation of agreed measures, including the use of additional equipment during inspections and evaluation visits;*
- (148.3) – *Implications of all information originating from the implementation of any agreed measures for the process of confidence- and security-building in the framework of the OSCE.*
- (149) *Before the conclusion of each year's meeting the participating States will normally agree upon the agenda and dates for the subsequent year's meeting. Lack of agreement will not constitute sufficient reason to extend a meeting, unless otherwise agreed. Agenda and dates may, if necessary, be agreed between meetings.*
- (150) *The Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC) will hold such meetings. It will consider, as required, suggestions made during the Annual Implementation Assessment Meeting (AIAM) aiming at the improvement of the implementation of CSBMs.*
- (150.4) *Participating States which, for whatever reason, have not exchanged annual information according to this document and have not provided an explanation under the FSC announcing and reminding mechanism, will during the meeting explain the reasons why and provide an expected date for their full compliance with this commitment.*

I. Agenda and indicative timetable

Tuesday, 1 March 2022

- 10–11 a.m. Opening session
- Opening of the Meeting by the Chairperson
 - Remarks by the Chairperson of the FSC
 - Presentation of a summary report and of the report on the Meeting of the Heads of Verification Centres by the Conflict Prevention Centre (CPC)
 - General statements
- 11.30 a.m.–1 p.m. Working session 1: Implementation of the Global Exchange of Military Information (GEMI) and the Vienna Document, Introduction and Chapters I to III: Clarifications, assessments and conclusions
- GEMI
 - Vienna Document
 - Introduction
 - Annual exchange of military information:
 - (i) Information on military forces
 - (ii) Data relating to major weapon and equipment systems
 - (iii) Information on plans for the deployment of major weapon and equipment systems
 - Defence planning
 - (i) Exchange of information
 - (ii) Clarification, review and dialogue
 - Risk reduction
 - (i) Mechanism for consultation and co-operation as regards unusual military activities
 - (ii) Co-operation as regards hazardous incidents of a military nature
 - (iii) Voluntary hosting of visits to dispel concerns about military activities
- 1–3 p.m. Lunch break

3–6 p.m. Working session 1 continued if necessary

Working session 2: Implementation of the Vienna Document,
Chapters IV to XII: Clarifications, assessments and conclusions

- Contacts:
 - (i) Visits to air bases
 - (ii) Programme of military contacts and co-operation
 - (iii) Military contacts, military co-operation
 - (iv) Demonstration of new types of major weapon and equipment systems
 - (v) Provision of information on contacts
- Military activities:
 - (i) Prior notification of certain military activities
 - (ii) Observation of certain military activities
 - (iii) Annual calendars
 - (iv) Constraining provisions
- Compliance and verification
 - (i) Inspection
 - (ii) Evaluation
- Regional measures
- Communications Network

Wednesday, 2 March 2022

10 a.m.–1 p.m. Working session 2 continued if necessary

Working session 3: Suggestions aiming at improvement of the
implementation of CSBMs

1–3 p.m. Lunch break

3–4 p.m. Working session 3 continued

4.30–5.30 p.m. Closing session

- Discussion
- Possible recommendations on the dates and the agenda and modalities of the 2023 AIAM
- Concluding remarks
- Closure

II. Organizational modalities

1. The AIAM will last two days and will have opening and closing sessions and working sessions dealing with the topics contained in the agenda (Section I, above). The annotated agenda and indicative timetable will provide a greater detail. Due to the exceptional circumstances resulting from the COVID-19 situation, the AIAM will be held in a blended format.
2. The chairpersons, moderators, rapporteurs, and the CPC will co-ordinate on their respective activities before the AIAM, and hold meetings to that aim as required. The working hours of the AIAM will be on the first day from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and from 3 to 6 p.m., and on the second day from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and from 3 to 5.30 p.m.
3. Interpretation into the official languages of the OSCE will be provided at all sessions of the AIAM.
4. The sessions will be chaired by representatives of the participating States, in rotation, in accordance with the French alphabetical order, following on from the chairing of the closing plenary meeting of the 2021 AIAM by Montenegro. The chair of the opening session and working sessions will be Norway. The chair of the closing session will be Uzbekistan.
5. Debates in the working sessions will be oriented towards problems and solutions and there will be no formal statements. Any national statements for the opening session should be presented in written form only and are to be distributed in advance. The working sessions are designed to be informal meetings of national experts with the objectives of answering questions, exchanging information and allowing for constructive debate between participating States. Delegations are strongly encouraged to provide detailed presentations and concrete examples of their own implementation experiences. Delegations are welcome to distribute written contributions prior to the Meeting, both on agenda items and on related matters for possible discussion. If a delegation (participating via Zoom) wishes to make an impromptu intervention, it can use the chat function to request to take the floor. All delegations are strongly encouraged to provide national experts to participate in the AIAM.
6. To serve as a basis for preparatory work by delegations and moderators, the CPC will circulate the following no later than 31 January 2022:
 - The revised Annual Survey on CSBM Information Exchanged and the AIAM Survey of Suggestions 2021;
 - A summary report on recent trends in the implementation of the Vienna Document and other measures;
 - A summary report on the Meeting of the Heads of Verification Centres.
7. Each working session will have one designated moderator and one rapporteur throughout. The task of the moderators will be to facilitate and follow the discussion, while the immediate task of the rapporteurs will be to present brief written summary reports for use by the Chairperson of the closing session.

8. The moderators will circulate a list of topics and questions designed to facilitate discussion in their working sessions no later than 11 February 2022. They will be supported by the CPC in this regard. They will ensure that all relevant areas are addressed. The moderators are also encouraged to focus discussions on suggestions that might be supported by the delegations.
9. Delegations that have volunteers to act as moderators and/or rapporteurs for the working sessions should provide the names of the individuals to the Chairperson of the FSC as soon as possible, but no later than 1 February 2022. The names of the moderators and rapporteurs for all the working sessions will be made known to all delegations no later than 2 February 2022.
10. At the first FSC plenary meeting following the AIAM, the Chairperson of the closing session will report to the FSC on the AIAM. Within two months after the AIAM, the Chairperson will provide the consolidated summary containing the Chairperson's statements and the presentations in the opening session, the reports of the rapporteurs of the working sessions and the Chairperson's closing remarks. Prior to publication, the rapporteurs are encouraged to circulate their draft reports to the delegations of those participating States that contributed to the relevant working session. Within a month after the AIAM, the CPC will circulate a written report on suggestions made during the Meeting aimed at improving the implementation of CSBMs.
11. In order to ensure the most productive discussion in the FSC when the participating States consider, as required, suggestions for improvement of the implementation of CSBMs made during the Meeting, the approach recommended is for delegations to bring forward suggestions or topics of interest by means of food-for-thought papers. Discussions on initial papers could lead to further work in the FSC.
12. Before the conclusion of the 2022 AIAM, the participating States are encouraged to consider recommendations for the agenda and dates for the 2023 AIAM. The agenda, modalities and dates of the 2023 AIAM should be adopted by a decision in the FSC before the end of 2022.
13. The Partners for Co-operation and the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly are invited to attend all sessions of the 2022 AIAM.