

Chairmanship: Tajikistan

922nd PLENARY MEETING OF THE FORUM

1. Date: Wednesday, 24 July 2019

Opened: 11.10 a.m.

Closed: 1.05 p.m.

2. Chairperson: Ambassador I. Kalandar

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

Agenda item 1: CLOSING STATEMENT BY H.E. MR. MUZAFFAR
HUSEINZODA, DEPUTY MINISTER OF FOREIGN
AFFAIRS OF THE REPUBLIC OF TAJIKISTAN

Chairperson (FSC.DEL/169/19 OSCE+), Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Tajikistan (FSC.DEL/168/19 OSCE+), Czech Republic, Kyrgyzstan, Finland-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/171/19), Belarus (FSC.DEL/166/19 OSCE+), Azerbaijan (Annex 1), Switzerland (FSC.DEL/170/19 OSCE+), Slovakia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, United States of America, Russian Federation, Armenia (Annex 2), Afghanistan (Partner for Co-operation)

Agenda item 2: GENERAL STATEMENTS

None

Agenda item 3: ANY OTHER BUSINESS

(a) *FSC Chairmanship during the third term of 2020:* Chairperson

(b) *Request for the launch of a multi-year project aimed at building national capacity to tackle the problem of expired conventional ammunition:* Georgia,

FSC Co-ordinator for Projects on Small Arms and Light Weapons and Stockpiles of Conventional Ammunition (Hungary)

- (c) *“From Budapest to Budapest (1994–2019)”*, symposium to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the OSCE Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security, to be held in Budapest from 16 to 18 October 2019 (SEC.GAL/122/19 OSCE+): FSC Co-ordinator for the Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security (Romania)
- (d) *Matters of protocol*: Slovenia, Italy

4. Next meeting:

Wednesday, 11 September 2019, at 10 a.m., in the Neuer Saal



922nd Plenary Meeting

FSC Journal No. 928, Agenda item 1

**STATEMENT BY
THE DELEGATION OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN**

Mr. Chairperson,

The delegation of the Republic of Azerbaijan welcomes H.E. Mr. Muzaffar Huseinzoda, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Tajikistan, to the closing session of the Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC) under the Tajik Chairmanship, and thanks him for his concluding remarks. As far as the Tajik FSC Chairmanship is concerned, we would like to stress the following.

As one of the OSCE's regular decision-making bodies, the FSC provides a platform for dialogue on, and co-operation in, the politico-military dimension of security. Over the past years, through the adoption of a number of decisions and commitments, the FSC has solidified its *acquis* for dealing with threats and challenges related to politico-military security. Implementation of these decisions and commitments – which are the result of our collective efforts and consensus – forms the basis for our dialogue and co-operation, and is essential to building trust and confidence among the participating States.

This also holds true for tackling the risks and challenges stemming from illicit transfer, destabilizing accumulation and uncontrolled spread of small arms and light weapons (SALW) and stockpiles of conventional ammunition (SCA). Much has been done by our Organization to consolidate its normative basis in the field of SALW/SCA, also with regard to the provision of practical assistance to participating States. The adoption of relevant Ministerial Council documents, such as the Ministerial Declaration on OSCE Assistance Projects in the Field of Small Arms and Light Weapons and Stockpiles of Conventional Ammunition (MC.DOC/3/16) and Ministerial Council Decision No. 10/17 (MC.DEC/10/17) on SALW and SCA, are cases in point.

The aforementioned documents task the OSCE executive structures, including the FSC Support Section of the Conflict Prevention Centre, with assisting the OSCE participating States with the implementation of SALW- and SCA-related projects, in line with the procedures outlined in the OSCE Documents on SALW and SCA and relevant FSC decisions. In this regard, FSC Decision No. 11/09 (FSC.DEC/11/09) of 25 November 2009 holds particular importance, as it prescribes certain procedures to be followed by any State requesting assistance.

Against this background, we were surprised that the Tajik FSC Chairmanship went ahead with the organization of expert consultations on Armenia's request for assistance in the field of SALW/SCA, despite the fact that Armenia had not complied with the specified procedures. The delegation of Azerbaijan has on numerous occasions expressed its strong view on this matter, stressing in particular the need to ensure compliance with the procedure outlined in FSC Decision No. 11/09 by providing complete and adequate responses to a standard format questionnaire by the requesting State. This position was duly reflected in our letter to the FSC Chairperson of 2 July 2019, which was distributed to the OSCE participating States with reference number FSC.DEL/142/19. However, Azerbaijan's legitimate concerns in relation to this issue remained unaddressed.

Since the prescribed procedures were not followed strictly, Azerbaijan refrained from participating in the mentioned expert consultations. Nevertheless, this meeting, which ultimately raised more questions than answers, demonstrated once again the need for greater clarity in regard to Armenia's assistance request. It also testified to the unsubstantiated decision of the Tajik Chairmanship to hold these expert consultations.

Strict compliance with our collectively agreed-upon commitments, decisions and related procedures is the benchmark against which one shall estimate the degree of success of the FSC Chairmanship. Thus being said, our Delegation is not in position to assess the Tajik FSC Chairmanship as successful.

We would like to emphasize once again that assistance to participating States in the field of SALW/SCA shall be provided in an efficient and transparent manner, in accordance with Ministerial Council Decision No. 10/17, and in full compliance with the procedures outlined in FSC Decision No. 11/09. To this end, we call upon the incoming FSC Chairmanship, the incoming FSC Troika, the FSC Co-ordinator for Projects on Small Arms and Light Weapons and Stockpiles of Conventional Ammunition, and the Conflict Prevention Centre to ensure compliance with the prescribed procedures before taking any action in regard with furthering this particular assistance request.

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

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.



922nd Plenary Meeting

FSC Journal No. 928, Agenda item 1

STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF ARMENIA

Mr. Chairperson,

On behalf of the Armenian delegation to the OSCE, I should like to thank H.E. Mr. Muzaffar Huseinzoda, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Tajikistan, for his closing statement. We also wish to extend our warm congratulations to the Tajik delegation's entire team for ably conducting the work of the Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC) throughout the last three months.

We highly appreciate the Tajik FSC Chairmanship's efforts in organizing Security Dialogues with a subregional security focus that have helped to shed light on various matters of importance for regional organizations in Central Asia and also for the Collective Security Treaty Organization. Likewise, we very much value the well-balanced attention accorded to the FSC's traditional security topics, such as small arms and light weapons (SALW), confidence-building measures, and United Nations Security Council resolutions 1540 and 1325.

Furthermore, we recognize the Tajik Chairmanship's key role in successfully holding this year's Annual Discussion on the Implementation of the Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security and the Annual Security Review Conference. The joint FSC-Permanent Council meeting conducted under the respective Chairmanships of Tajikistan and Slovakia was an excellent opportunity to take stock of our discussions on the Structured Dialogue.

Mr. Chairperson,

We should like to take this opportunity to thank Switzerland, the outgoing member of the FSC Troika, and welcome the Czech Republic as the incoming FSC Chairmanship. We trust that the new Chairmanship will also base its work on the participating States' joint commitments. In this regard, our delegation pledges its full support.

On behalf of my delegation, I should like to thank the Tajik delegation once again and wish its officials further success in their future endeavours.

Mr. Chairperson,

Since I have the floor, I shall exercise my right of reply to respond to the delegation of Azerbaijan, which mentioned my country in its statement.

We have already exhaustively set out our opinion on Azerbaijan's continued attempts to manipulate the request for assistance in the field of SALW and stockpiles of conventional ammunition (SCA) submitted by Armenia in November 2015 (FSC.DEL/217/15). I shall refrain from restating these points here, as this is neither the right time nor place to discuss the SALW/SCA assistance projects. However, we do wish to make several things clear.

First of all, we should like to express our gratitude to the Tajik FSC Chairmanship and the Swiss delegation for their tireless efforts in organizing the expert consultations on Armenia's request for assistance with a SALW/SCA project, which were held on 18 July 2019.

We fully share the position enunciated by the Tajik Chairmanship in its "Lessons learned and recommendations for incoming and future FSC Chairs" (FSC.DEL/165/19), in particular the recommendation that participating States should refrain from "erosive actions and artificial barrier-creating" with regard to such technical topics as SALW and SCA.

The SALW/SCA project for which Armenia is requesting assistance is an initiative for practical co-operation that should on no account be politicized. Yet, over the last two years we have witnessed repeated attempts by Azerbaijan to do precisely that by linking the request to some narrow political agenda. My delegation has always spoken out against Azerbaijan's deplorable practice of seeking to blackmail or paralyse the whole Organization in order to thwart the processing of our request.

Mr. Chairperson,

Armenia attaches great importance to this project, which is aimed at enhancing the safe and secure storage of SALW by improving, in line with OSCE best practices, the safety standards that are applied at relevant sites in our country. The assistance project should also help to increase transparency, thereby becoming a confidence-building measure in its own right and setting a good example for other countries in the region.

The OSCE commitments on SALW and SCA were adopted by all participating States, which means that all participating States should have equal opportunities to seek assistance in addressing SALW- and SCA-related risks. The OSCE and its participating States should stand firm in resisting Azerbaijan's attempts to politicize purely technical issues, particularly in the field of SALW, which is one of the most important topics considered by the FSC.

In conclusion, we should like to draw the participating States' attention to the fact that Azerbaijan's statements and actions clearly show that its position has nothing to do with SALW assistance projects as such. We once again urge this country to stop playing the victim and artificially linking everything to its narrow-minded agenda.

Mr. Chairperson, I request that this statement be appended to the journal of the day.

Thank you.