

Chairmanship: Ukraine**944th PLENARY MEETING OF THE FORUM**

1. Date: Wednesday, 29 April 2020 (via video teleconference)

Opened: 10.05 a.m.

Closed: 12.15 p.m.

2. Chairperson: Ambassador Y. Tsymbaliuk

Prior to taking up the agenda, the Chairperson reminded the Forum for Security Co-operation of the technical modalities for the conduct of meetings of the Forum via video teleconferencing technology during the COVID-19 pandemic (FSC.GAL/37/20 OSCE+).

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

Agenda item 1: OPENING REMARKS BY H.E. AMBASSADOR
DMYTRO KULEBA, MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS
OF UKRAINE

Chairperson, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ukraine (FSC.DEL/71/20), Turkey (Annex 1), United States of America (Annex 2) (FSC.DEL/79/20), Azerbaijan (FSC.DEL/69/20 OSCE+), Albania (FSC.DEL/70/20 OSCE+), Croatia-European Union (with the candidate countries Albania, Montenegro and North Macedonia; the European Free Trade Association countries Iceland and Liechtenstein, members of the European Economic Area; as well as Andorra, Georgia, Moldova and San Marino, in alignment) (FSC.DEL/77/20), Canada, Switzerland (FSC.DEL/68/20 OSCE+), Armenia (FSC.DEL/72/20), Belarus (FSC.DEL/74/20 OSCE+), Georgia (FSC.DEL/75/20 OSCE+), Germany (Annex 3), United Kingdom (FSC.DEL/73/20 OSCE+), Russian Federation (Annex 4), Ukraine, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ukraine

Agenda item 2: GENERAL STATEMENTS

None

Agenda item 3: ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None

4. Next meeting:

Wednesday, 6 May 2020, at 10 a.m., via video teleconference



944th Plenary Meeting

FSC Journal No. 950, Agenda item 1

STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF TURKEY

Mr. Chairperson,

The Turkish Delegation warmly welcomes His Excellency Foreign Minister Ambassador Dmytro Kuleba to the first virtual meeting of the Forum for Security Co-operation, the opening meeting of the new trimester.

Your Excellency, your presence honours us and underscores the value of the FSC and the importance attached to the Forum by Ukraine. We thank you, Excellency, for laying out the programme and priorities of your Chairmanship. I would also like to thank you for your kind words addressed to my country/delegation related to our FSC Chairmanship.

Ambassador Tsymbaliuk, I would like to congratulate you and your team on the assumption of the Chairmanship of the FSC during the second trimester of 2020. We are aware of the difficulties involved in carrying out your Chairmanship under the extraordinary circumstances created by COVID-19. Holding virtual FSC meetings for the first time in the Forum's history is not an easy task. I would like to assure you of my delegation's full support.

As a member of the FSC Troika, I also would like to welcome Germany to the Troika and thank the outgoing Troika member, the Czech Republic, for its excellent work in the Forum.

Mr. Chairperson,

Before reflecting on your programme, I would like to make a few remarks, as we did not have the chance to hold a closing session during Turkey's FSC Chairmanship due to the measures taken related to the COVID-19 pandemic. I won't go into detail as during our Chairmanship we distributed a comprehensive and detailed perception paper on the meetings and the lessons learned/recommendations for future Chairs. However, there is one thing that I would like to reiterate today: we need to make best use of the FSC, bring added value to this unique body, and increase its effectiveness. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all participating States, all members of my delegation, and all those from the OSCE who, I believe, made this possible during our Chairmanship.

Mr. Chairperson,

We thank Ukraine for this comprehensive and balanced programme, even under these challenging circumstances. We welcome the fact that the Security Dialogues cover a wide range of topics, including both traditional topics of the FSC and also themes of growing salience.

Small arms and light weapons (SALW) and stockpiles of conventional ammunition (SCA), UN Security Council resolution 1325, non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), and the Vienna Document 2011 are all core FSC topics. In terms of SALW and SCA, we welcome the choice of focus on mine action. During our Chairmanship we saw that there is a lot of interest and room for improvement in this field, and this topic will also present a good example of the continuity between the consecutive Chairmanships.

With regard to UN Security Council resolution 1325, this year marks the 20th anniversary of the adoption of the resolution. We trust Ukraine and then Germany will succeed in furthering the work of the FSC in the implementation of the resolution. Holding a joint FSC-PC meeting on this issue will enable us to take stock of the OSCE's work in this field and to further the implementation of our women, peace and security agenda.

Non-proliferation of WMD is another timely topic in the run-up to the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, and also to the 2021 Comprehensive Review of the status of implementation of resolution 1540. Promoting the implementation of the resolution in the OSCE area and contributing to the comprehensive review process are of utmost importance.

During our Chairmanship, the Security Dialogue on the Vienna Document was one of those we had to cancel. Turkey attaches great importance to the full implementation and modernization of the Vienna Document. We support all efforts aimed at furthering the Vienna Document and firmly believe that the FSC is the main platform for doing this. We welcome the fact that Ukraine has also included this significant topic in its schedule. We also hope that there will be more support this trimester for the latest Vienna Document Plus proposal, which has been co-sponsored by 34 participating States. An updated Vienna Document will contribute to further transparency and predictability, which is very much needed in view of the developments in the European security architecture.

We commend you for including in the agenda the topics of COVID-19 and its impact on the security situation in the OSCE area, the regional security of the Black Sea and Sea of Azov region, and private military and security companies. Furthermore, we support the dedication of the joint FSC-PC meeting to the issue of hybrid threats and modern warfare. We find all these topics important, timely, and relevant to the FSC.

We are also looking forward to the Annual Discussion on the Implementation of the Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security and the Annual Security Review Conference.

Mr. Chairperson,

We renew our call for the discussions relating to the crisis in and around Ukraine at the Forum to be in line with the spirit of constructive dialogue. We reiterate our full support to the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine (SMM) and emphasize that any aggressive acts, intimidation, threats and interferences targeting the SMM and its assets are unacceptable. We underline Turkey's long-standing stance that the crisis in and around Ukraine needs to be settled through peaceful diplomatic means within the framework of respect for the country's territorial integrity, including Crimea, as well as its independence, sovereignty and political unity, in line with our shared OSCE commitments and international law.

We hope that the discussions in the weeks and months ahead relating to the crisis in and around Ukraine at the Forum will be in line with the spirit of constructive dialogue.

To conclude, let me once again thank H.E. Foreign Minister Ambassador Dmytro Kuleba for his presentation and wish Ukraine every success during its FSC Chairmanship. We are looking forward to working closely with you, Ambassador Tsymbaliuk, and with your delegation. You can count on our support. We wish you every success.

Mr. Chairperson, I kindly ask that my statement be attached to the journal of the day.

Thank you.



944th Plenary Meeting
FSC Journal No. 950, Agenda item 1

**STATEMENT BY
THE DELEGATION OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.

On behalf of the United States, I would also like to congratulate Ukraine on its Chairmanship and warmly welcome Ukrainian Foreign Minister Mr. Dmytro Kuleba to the Forum for Security Co-operation. His statement was well taken and useful. We would also like to take this opportunity to thank the former FSC Chairmanship, Turkey, for its exemplary leadership of this Forum at a very challenging time. Engin, we are grateful for your leadership and successful Chairmanship.

The Ukrainian Chairmanship of the FSC, the primary politico-military forum of the OSCE, is of the utmost importance as Ukraine continues to face serious challenges to its territorial integrity.

Ukraine's Chairmanship is an opportunity to address some of the most pressing security concerns affecting the OSCE area. It also provides an opportunity for participating States to begin to rebuild confidence and trust by taking concrete steps to enhance military transparency in line with the confidence- and security-building measures that the FSC has been so instrumental in developing.

As we are all aware, it is the Chairmanship's prerogative to shape the discussions in this Forum. The Ukrainian Chairmanship has introduced a comprehensive work plan that includes discussions directly relevant to Ukraine's security and the security of all OSCE participating States, including: the situation in the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov region; updating the Vienna Document to reflect current day realities; mine action; and private military contractors; as well as joint FSC-PC meetings on hybrid threats and women, peace and security.

We look forward to the first Security Dialogue next week on the impact of COVID-19 on confidence-building and security measures – an extremely timely and relevant issue to all of us. This topic will allow participating States to share accurate and objective information on the situation on the ground, which is the best way to slow or stop the spread of disinformation and propaganda. The United States gives our full support to the Ukrainian Chairmanship and to this robust work plan.

Mr. Chairperson,

Allow me to again highlight the Vienna Document modernization proposal which is now co-sponsored by 34 participating States, including Ukraine. Unfortunately, our security dialogue on this key FSC agenda item under the Turkish Chairmanship was cut short due to the COVID-19 crisis. We look forward now to resuming the constructive dialogue on this proposal under Ukraine's Chairmanship. A genuine, collective effort by all OSCE participating States that results in a modernized Vienna Document will help us to rebuild trust and confidence and provide for military transparency now and in the future. Reaching consensus on an updated Vienna Document this year would be a historic achievement and a sign that our countries and this Organization are committed to take meaningful steps to improve the security environment in Europe and that improvement is much needed right now.

Mr. Chairperson,

We will also continue our participation in the FSC weekly thematic discussions on the Russian-fomented conflict in Ukraine in the hopes of promoting a resolution. We continue to welcome the positive and difficult steps that Ukraine has taken in good faith toward that end and we welcome the Orthodox Easter prisoner exchange that occurred on 16 April. There have been several developments since this body last met, and while I will not expand on them at this opening session, I will note that the restrictions placed on SMM (Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine) monitors and humanitarian operations by the forces Russia arms, trains, finances, leads, and fights alongside under the pretext of the COVID-19 pandemic are unacceptable and exacerbate the risks to already vulnerable populations. Additionally, we condemn in the strongest terms Russia's actions to conscript 3,300 Ukrainians from Crimea into Russia's armed forces for duty in the Southern Military District. This would bring the total number of Ukrainians in Crimea forcibly conscripted by Russia to over 22,000 total and would be a blatant violation of international law. We call on Russia, in the strongest terms, to end immediately its campaign of forced conscription of Ukrainian nationals on Ukrainian territory. The United States takes special note of this violation of international law.

Mr. Chairperson,

Please also allow me to take a moment to commemorate the sombre third anniversary of the death of American monitor Mr. Joseph Stone, the SMM monitor killed in the line of duty. Thank you, Mr. Minister, for your expression of condolence today. You asked me to share with his family your appreciation for those who place their lives in danger every day to resolve this conflict and rest assured that I will do so. Mr. Joseph Stone chose to pursue a career of service – caring for others in dangerous conditions that put his own life at risk. The United States honours his service, and that of all SMM monitors, and we urge participating States to redouble their efforts to support the ongoing and difficult work of our brave monitors.

Mr. Chairperson,

In conclusion, the United States wishes every success to the Ukrainian Chairmanship. We also welcome Germany to the FSC Troika and thank the Czech Republic very much for their leadership as they leave the Troika. We continue to assure our FSC partners of our co-operation and support in the coming session.

Mr. Chairperson,

I request that this statement be added to the journal of the day. Thank you.



944th Plenary Meeting

FSC Journal No. 950, Agenda item 1

STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF GERMANY

Mr. Chairperson,

Germany supports the statement by the European Union in its entirety.

As the new member of the Troika, we would, however, like to make a few further observations at today's meeting in our national capacity.

We should like to thank the Turkish delegation, whose programme provided an interesting and thematically wide-ranging start to the year but was unfortunately hampered by the onset of the COVID-19 crisis towards the end of the Turkish Chairmanship. We regret in particular that the planned Security Dialogue on the Vienna Document, which was very important for us, could not take place.

We congratulate Ukraine on assuming the Chairmanship of the Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC) and thank you, Mr. Chairperson, for the friendly words from Minister Kuleba on our admission to the FSC Troika.

I should also like to thank you for presenting your work programme for the coming months.

I should like to assure you and your team of our full support for your Chairmanship and to reiterate our desire for close co-operation.

This applies particularly to three issues to which your Chairmanship intends to devote particular attention:

- Small arms and light weapons and stockpiles of conventional ammunition;
- The Vienna Document; and
- The implementation of United Nations Security Council resolution 1325, which will celebrate its 20th anniversary in October this year.

We want to take up these issues in our work programme in the final third of this year and discuss them in greater depth in various Security Dialogues. We are looking forward to close co-operation between our teams to that end.

Finally, we should like to thank the Albanian OSCE Chairmanship and the Ukrainian FSC Chairmanship for seeking ways together with the Secretariat to make our work possible even in the face of the difficulties of the current COVID-19 crisis. Here too, we shall seek a close exchange with your delegation so as to prepare and organize our Chairmanship accordingly.

We thank you, Mr. Chairperson, and wish you and your team a successful FSC Chairmanship.

I request that this statement be attached to the journal of the day. Thank you very much.



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

FSC.JOUR/950

29 April 2020

Annex 4

ENGLISH

Original: RUSSIAN

944th Plenary Meeting

FSC Journal No. 950, Agenda item 1

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

Mr. Chairperson,

First of all, I should like to congratulate the delegation of Ukraine on the start of its Chairmanship of the OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC). We regret that the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, Mr. Dmytro Kuleba, had to leave today's meeting and trust that the Deputy Minister, Mr. Yehor Bozhok, will familiarize him, among other things, with our position.

We agree with the positive assessments expressed about the results achieved by Turkey's Chairmanship. We thank Ambassador Rauf Engin Soysal and his professional team warmly for the huge amount of work they have accomplished to develop fruitful dialogue on various and at times quite complex agenda issues. Special thanks go to the staff of the Turkish mission, who continued to exercise their Chairmanship functions under quarantine conditions, after co-ordinating an important letter on verification activities. We note the usefulness of the perception paper prepared to take stock of Turkey's Chairmanship.

We welcome the delegation of Germany as the new member of the FSC Troika and express our gratitude to our Czech colleagues, who are leaving the Troika.

Mr. Chairperson,

The new session of the Forum's work under the Chairmanship of Ukraine is beginning against the backdrop of the COVID-19 outbreak, which has sorely tested all countries. Today, there is a particular need to consider together where to go from here so as to ensure a peaceful and secure future for the OSCE participating States. In the current difficult emotional situation arising from the pandemic, it is important to remain calm and maintain a balanced approach. The time has come for mutual support and constructive co-operation that is not conditioned by a narrow political agenda and preferences. This is what historical experience also calls us to do.

The world is just a few days away from marking a momentous date – the 75th anniversary of victory in the Second World War. In that connection, we should like to emphasize that the importance of building trust and the idea of co-operating in pursuit of a

greater cause, any possible differences notwithstanding, are among the central elements of the joint statement issued by the President of the Russian Federation and the President of the United States of America on the occasion of the anniversary of the meeting of the two powers' troops on the Elbe. As we confront the important challenges of the twenty-first century, the need for the "Spirit of the Elbe" is greater today than ever. We regret that the tone of today's statement by the US representative was at odds with the spirit of the aforementioned statement by the two leaders.

Mr. Chairperson,

We listened with great interest to the statement by the Minister for Foreign Affairs outlining the approach of the Ukrainian Chairmanship. As Mr. Kuleba said, for the first time in the history of the Forum its plenary meetings will be held in an unfamiliar digital format. We are moving along an uncharted path and at the same time are learning to work in a completely new, unprecedented environment. It is therefore important to strictly observe the existing Rules of Procedure of the OSCE when holding meetings in the form of videoconferences, as no specific rules have been developed yet for this situation. The possibility cannot be ruled out that these online working arrangements will be called into question in the event that the Rules of Procedure are violated or video recordings are leaked.

Confrontational rhetoric currently prevails over constructive approaches at the OSCE and in the Forum. Under these circumstances, the role of the Chairmanship becomes even more prominent. With its neutrality, impartiality and focus on finding compromises, while taking into account the interests of all participating States, the Chairmanship must help the Organization return to a culture of mutually respectful dialogue.

Unfortunately, the statement by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ukraine leaves us concerned about the future of discussions on pan-European security issues. We have witnessed attempts to promote an opportunistic national agenda, rather than a unifying one. The statement by Mr. Kuleba was full of non-consensus politicized attitudes bearing little relation to the real state of affairs. We consider it inappropriate that any attempts should be made by the country chairing the Forum to exploit its position in order to undermine the consensus-based principles underpinning the work of the OSCE. We call on the Ukrainian FSC Chairmanship and our partners to adhere to the approaches agreed by all participating States with regard to the work of our Organization and to strictly follow the Rules of Procedure of the OSCE.

The claims about the situation in eastern Ukraine that we have heard from the Minister are nothing new. As in the past, they are used to gloss over the fact that the Ukrainian Government continues to wage a war against the population of Donbas. The situation is exacerbated by the lack of political will on the part of the Ukrainian Government to implement the Minsk Package of Measures (endorsed by United Nations Security Council resolution 2202), which is the sole internationally recognized framework for the settlement of the conflict in Donbas. Unfortunately, we did not hear a single word about that document from the high-ranking representative of Ukraine.

Despite all the diplomatic efforts, the process for the settlement of the internal Ukrainian conflict remains stalled. The main reason for this is that the Ukrainian Government stubbornly refuses to engage in direct dialogue with the representatives of the authorities in

Donetsk and Luhansk and encourages belligerent rhetoric, shifting the blame for all its misfortunes on to a neighbouring State. Incidentally, some Western countries at the OSCE are actively playing along with this approach. This is not conducive to a settlement; rather, it merely locks the situation in a stalemate.

The Ukrainian Government continues to ratchet up tensions in Donbas. For example, it conducts live-fire exercises and increases the threat posed by mines, notably through the use of anti-personnel mines, as confirmed in recent reports by the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine (SMM). For example, on 24 April the monitors spotted four boxes with “MON-90” written on them at a Ukrainian armed forces checkpoint in Popasna. The delegation of Ukraine regularly claims at the OSCE that anti-personnel mines are not manufactured or used in that country. The question remains: how then did anti-personnel mines end up in the hands of Ukrainian military personnel in the zone of armed confrontation?

As for the so-called “occupied territories”, for six years the Ukrainian authorities, first the old ones and now the new ones, have been exploiting what is for them a very convenient narrative. Allegedly, it is not a civil conflict, but rather some kind of Russian aggression against Ukraine. This is a convenient position. It makes it possible to avoid implementing the Minsk agreements and at the same time to pretend to be the victim rather than the aggressor which in 2014 sent in the army and nationalist battalions to quell popular protests in the east of the country.

Mr. Chairperson,

I should like to say a few words about the plans for the Forum’s work in the summer session. Russia has always paid due attention to developing and enriching a substantive, open and inclusive Security Dialogue on current politico-military issues in the OSCE area. We intend to continue contributing to the discussion of the Forum’s traditional unifying topics, which are reflected in its agenda: small arms and light weapons (SALW), stockpiles of conventional ammunition (SCA) and the implementation of UN Security Council resolutions 1540 and 1325.

However, as regards a meeting on the Vienna Document 2011, we should like to recall that our position regarding the prospects for its modernization in the current security environment is well known and remains unchanged. We believe that instead of modernization, which some regard as a panacea, close attention should be paid to improving the implementation of the Vienna Document and making specific efforts to reduce military tension. With that approach in mind, at the end of March Russia suggested to the NATO countries that, during the pandemic, military exercises in Europe be suspended and military restraint shown.

Discussion of the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction is a feature of the work plan presented by the Chairmanship. The relevance of this topic is clear and is motivated both by the need to prepare a meaningful contribution by our Organization to the review process within the 1540 Committee, which is something we discussed at the Forum in February, and by the 50th anniversary of the entry into force of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, in connection with which a joint statement by the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom and the United

States was recently adopted. In that context, we would request clarification as to what issues the Chairmanship proposes to address at the forthcoming meeting.

We were surprised at the plans to hold a meeting of the Forum devoted to security issues in the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov, which are proposed for discussion from the perspective of “militarization” and various “impediments” to the freedom of navigation. We disagree in principle with such an approach and, if this is the main purpose of the forthcoming discussion, then, frankly, we do not see any point in it.

When considering the utility of including in the Forum’s programme of work the non-core issue for the FSC of private military and security companies (a topic that is being examined in detail on other multilateral platforms), it is important to take into account the continuing wide range of views among the OSCE participating States, and the absence of a legal definition or of common approaches to the legal regulation of such companies’ activities. For our part, we see no great practical sense in shifting the Forum’s attention to such secondary themes, the significance of which is being artificially inflated. This can only lead to further disagreement.

We note that a joint meeting of the Forum and the OSCE Permanent Council on “hybrid” threats has a prominent place in the Chairmanship’s programme. Our Ukrainian partners are well aware that this topic is highly confrontational and does not fall within the mandate of the autonomous decision-making bodies, such as the Forum for Security Co-operation, whose main task is to develop constructive dialogue, exchange positive experiences and find common ground in the approaches of the participating States. As the repeated attempts to raise the question of “hybrid” threats on various OSCE platforms have shown, it has never proved possible to achieve a proper discussion on this issue. Instead, the consideration of this topic has been reduced to verbal jousting, which has not resulted in any “added value” in the end. Within the framework of the Structured Dialogue, we have repeatedly stated that the potential for discussing this topic has been completely exhausted, and we therefore urge our Ukrainian colleagues to consider removing it from the Chairmanship’s programme. For our part, we cannot guarantee that we would participate in that meeting.

We should like to emphasize that our assessments of the Forum’s work plan are primarily aimed at increasing the effectiveness and constructiveness of delegations’ co-operation and at freeing dialogue from outdated politicized clichés.

Mr. Chairperson,

We regret that our colleagues from the delegations of the United States of America, the European Union, Canada, the United Kingdom and Georgia who spoke in today’s discussion have lost their diplomatic sense of proportion. It is as pointless trying to get them to change their mind as it is to argue with flat-earthers. Neither the inauguration of the Ukrainian Chairmanship nor the need to create a positive climate ahead of as important an event as the consultations of the Normandy Four foreign ministers scheduled for tomorrow has managed to restrain their rhetoric.

As regards the politico-military situation in Ukraine touched upon in the statements by those delegations, we should like to point out that Russia welcomes the latest stage –

which took place ahead of Orthodox Easter – in the release of detainees by the parties to the conflict. At the same time, the Ukrainian Government has yet to implement the remaining decisions of the Normandy Four summit held in Paris on 9 December 2019. We firmly believe that resolution of the key issue of granting special status to Donbas on a permanent and constitutionally guaranteed basis, as prescribed by the Minsk agreements, will lead to positive developments in the settlement of the internal Ukrainian crisis.

Mr. Chairperson,

We trust that the forthcoming plenary meetings under the Chairmanship of Ukraine will be held in line with the current FSC mandate and the rules of the OSCE and will also help to strengthen the role of our body as a platform for mutually respectful dialogue in the interests of all participating States without exception.

In conclusion, let me once again express the hope that our Ukrainian colleagues will demonstrate a responsible approach to performing their Chairmanship functions at the FSC. We look forward to constructive co-operation with you and the members of the Troika.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.

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