



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

FSC.MDS/20/21
17 March 2021

ENGLISH only

OSCE HIGH-LEVEL MILITARY DOCTRINE SEMINAR

9 and 10 February 2021

CONSOLIDATED SUMMARY

OPENING SESSION

CLOSING SESSION

REPORTS OF THE SESSION RAPPORTEURS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
Decision No. 6/20 on holding a High-Level Military Doctrine Seminar	1
Decision No. 8/20 on the agenda, timetable and organizational modalities for the OSCE High-Level Military Doctrine Seminar	2
Annotated agenda of the OSCE High-Level Military Doctrine Seminar	7
Welcoming remarks by the Chairperson of the Forum for Security Co-operation at the opening session of the OSCE High-Level Military Doctrine Seminar	15
Address by General Robert Brieger at the opening session of the OSCE High-Level Military Doctrine Seminar	16
Address by the OSCE Secretary General at the opening session of the OSCE High-Level Military Doctrine Seminar	18
Address by General Tod D. Wolters at the opening session of the OSCE High-Level Military Doctrine Seminar	21
Address by General Chris Cavoli at the opening session of the OSCE High-Level Military Doctrine Seminar	24
Concluding remarks by the Chairperson of the Forum for Security Co-operation at the closing session of the OSCE High-Level Military Doctrine Seminar	26
Reports of the session rapporteurs	
Session 1: Security situation in the OSCE area and operational trends	33
Session 2: Conventional deterrence panel	37
Session 3: Competition panel	39
Session 4: Co-operation panel	43
Session 5: Crisis response panel	47



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

FSC.DEC/6/20
4 November 2020

Original: ENGLISH

959th Plenary Meeting
FSC Journal No. 965, Agenda item 1

**DECISION No. 6/20
HOLDING A HIGH-LEVEL MILITARY DOCTRINE SEMINAR**

The Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC),

Determined to enhance the security dialogue in the OSCE,

Recalling paragraph 15.7 of the Vienna Document 2011 encouraging participating States to hold periodic high-level military doctrine seminars and paragraphs 30.1 and 30.1.2 on improving mutual relations and promoting contacts between relevant military institutions,

Decides to hold a High-Level Military Doctrine Seminar in Vienna on 9 and 10 February 2021 to discuss doctrinal changes and their impact on defence structures in the light of the present European security situation.



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

FSC.DEC/8/20
16 December 2020

Original: ENGLISH

964th Plenary Meeting
FSC Journal No. 970, Agenda item 2

DECISION No. 8/20
**AGENDA, TIMETABLE AND ORGANIZATIONAL MODALITIES FOR
THE OSCE HIGH-LEVEL MILITARY DOCTRINE SEMINAR**

(Vienna and/or via Zoom, 9 and 10 February 2021)

The OSCE will hold a High-Level Military Doctrine Seminar (HLMDS) in Vienna on 9 and 10 February 2021, the eighth of its kind within the OSCE, to discuss doctrinal changes and their impact on defence structures in the light of the present European security situation.

This Seminar will be held in accordance with FSC Decision No. 6/20 (FSC.DEC/6/20) dated 4 November 2020. Such seminars are encouraged in the Vienna Document 2011 on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures by fostering the process of transparency, openness, and predictability.

I. Agenda and timetable

Tuesday, 9 February 2021

- | | |
|----------------|---|
| 10–11 a.m. | Opening session |
| | – Opening remarks |
| | – Keynote speeches |
| 11 a.m.–1 p.m. | Session 1: Security situation in the OSCE area and operational trends (with coffee break) |
| | – Introduction by session moderator |
| | – Kick-off speaker(s) |
| | – Review of intersessional process |
| | – Overview of strategic and operational trends |
| | – Brief introductions by panellists |

- Discussions with panel and participants from the floor
 - Moderator's closing remarks
- 1–3 p.m. Lunch
- 3–4.15 p.m. Session 2: Conventional deterrence panel
- Introduction by session moderator
 - Kick-off speaker(s)
 - Assess participating States' views on the role combat-credible military has in deterring armed conflict
 - Brief introductions by panellists
 - Discussions with panel and participants from the floor
 - Moderator's closing remarks
- 4.15–4.30 p.m. Coffee/tea break
- 4.30 p.m.–6 p.m. Session 3: Competition panel
- Introduction by session moderator
 - Kick-off speaker(s)
 - Discuss the re-emergence of long-term strategic competition among States and its impact on military doctrines to include competition below the threshold of armed conflict
 - Brief introductions by panellists
 - Discussions with panel and participants from the floor
 - Moderator's closing remarks

Wednesday, 10 February 2021

- 10 a.m.–1 p.m. Session 4: Co-operation panel
- Introduction by session moderator
 - Kick-off speaker(s)
 - Within the context of increasing security challenges, how can doctrine address the need for co-operation among States?

- Brief introductions by panellists
 - Discussions with panel and participants from the floor
 - Moderator's closing remarks
- 1–3 p.m. Lunch
- 3–4.15 p.m. Session 5: Crisis response panel
- Introduction by session moderator
 - Kick-off speaker(s)
 - Highlight the need for military forces to support civilian authorities during crisis response and how the lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic is shaping doctrine development
 - Brief introductions by panellists
 - Discussions with panel and participants from the floor
 - Moderator's closing remarks
- 4.15–4.30 p.m. Coffee/tea break
- 4.30–5 p.m. Closing session: Concluding remarks
- Conclusion and topics identified for further discussion or possible OSCE engagement
 - Concluding remarks by FSC Chairperson

II. Organizational modalities

Preparation for the Seminar

Chiefs of defence/general staff or other senior officials and relevant academics from participating States will be invited to attend the Seminar. Following appropriate consultations, the FSC Chairperson will invite relevant international organizations, institutions and personalities. The Partners for Co-operation will be invited to attend the Seminar.

The FSC Chairperson will nominate a moderator and rapporteurs for each session. The FSC Chairperson will also select keynote speakers and panellists for each session from among the names proposed by participating States.

The deadline for online registrations will be 5 February 2021.

The incoming FSC Chairperson will announce on 17 December 2020 whether the meeting will be held in a virtual or blended (1+2 at minimum) format.

Keynote speakers will be requested to submit their presentation for circulation to delegations no later than Monday, 1 February 2021.

A final preparatory meeting will be organized on 8 February 2021 (possibly via Zoom) between the FSC Troika, moderators, keynote speakers, rapporteurs and panellists to discuss in detail the conduct of the Seminar and how to best to manage it to achieve the desired results.

The Secretariat, in accordance with its departmental responsibilities, will support the FSC Chairperson in administrative and budgetary preparations for the Seminar.

A welcome reception and/or dinner might be organized by the OSCE/FSC Chairmanship, depending on the seminar's conduct modalities blended or fully virtual.

Other necessary organizational arrangements will be dealt with by Working Group A of the FSC.

Conduct of the Seminar

Due to the exceptional circumstances resulting from the COVID-19 situation, the Seminar will be held remotely via Zoom/in a blended format.

A key objective of the Seminar is to have interactive dialogue inspired by the keynote speakers and panellists. Therefore, delegations are encouraged not to read out prepared general statements during the Seminar.

Each working session will be introduced by the session moderator, followed by presentations by up to three kick-off speakers (up to fifteen minutes each), after which discussions will take place. The debate will be stimulated by appropriate interventions from up to four panellists per session (up to five minutes each). Interventions from the floor will be very welcome and should be limited to a maximum of three minutes per speaker. If a delegation (participating via Zoom) wishes to make an impromptu intervention, it can use the chat function to request to take the floor. In order to ensure the effective conduct of the Seminar, the moderator of each session will facilitate and focus the discussions and stimulate an interactive debate by introducing questions related to the topics dealt with by that session or by reordering the sequence of interventions. The moderator is also responsible for ensuring equal access to the floor and for providing all participants with the opportunity to intervene within the established time frame of the session. During each session, the moderator may adjust time limits depending on the number of requests for the floor and the time available. Speakers who exceed the time limits will be notified by the moderator.

Prior to the closing session of the Seminar, each rapporteur, after appropriate consultation with the relevant session moderator, will submit a bulleted briefing to the FSC Chairperson covering the issues addressed during their respective working sessions.

On the basis of the reports provided by the rapporteurs for each of the five sessions, the FSC Chairperson will present a summary report of the discussions (after the completion of the Seminar) that will be brought to the attention of the FSC.

Interpretation will be provided between the official languages of the OSCE.

Rooms for informal meetings will be provided in form of breakout rooms via Zoom.

Other OSCE rules of procedure and working methods will, *mutatis mutandis*, be applied to the Seminar. The guidelines for organizing OSCE meetings (PC.DEC/762) will be taken into account and participants are strongly encouraged to read the procedural and technical guidelines for remote meetings (SEC.GAL/45/20) and the addendum on naming conventions (SEC.GAL/45/20/Add.1/Rev.1).

ANNOTATED AGENDA OF THE OSCE HIGH-LEVEL MILITARY DOCTRINE SEMINAR

9 and 10 February 2021, via Zoom

I. Agenda and timetable

Tuesday, 9 February 2021

- 10–11 a.m. Opening session
- Ms. C. Austrian (FSC Chairperson), United States of America
- Welcome
- General R. Brieger, Austria
 - Ms. H. M. Schmid, OSCE Secretary General
- Keynote speech
- General T. D. Wolters, United States of America
- Additional remarks
- General C. Cavoli, United States of America
- Questions and answers
- 11 a.m.–1 p.m. Session 1: Security situation in the OSCE area and operational trends
- (i) Overview of strategic and operational trends
 - (ii) Review of intersessional process
- Moderator: Ms. T. Yrjölä, Director of the OSCE Conflict Prevention Centre
Rapporteur: Mr. M. Muchitsch, Austria
- Speakers:
- Air Marshal E. Stringer, United Kingdom
 - Major General B. Hofbauer, Austria
 - Major General J.-P. Theler, Switzerland
 - Major General O. Voinov, Belarus

Discussion¹

1–3 p.m.

Lunch

3–4.15 p.m.

Session 2: Conventional deterrence panel

Moderator: Lieutenant General (retired) K. W. Dayton,
George C. Marshall European Centre for Security Studies
Rapporteur: Major A. Beckman, United States of America

Speakers:

- Brigadier General M. Bazeley, United Kingdom
- Brigadier General M. Steponavičius, Lithuania

Discussion

4.15–4.30 p.m.

Coffee break

4.30 p.m.–6 p.m.

Session 3: Competition panel

Moderator: Lieutenant General (retired) K. W. Dayton,
George C. Marshall European Centre for Security Studies
Rapporteur: Lieutenant Colonel G. Cromwell, United States of
America

Speakers:

- Major General E. Patry, France
- Major General H.-A. Frantzen, Norway
- Ms. R. Garbers, Department of National Defence, Canada
- Mr. T. Swejjs, The Hague Centre for Strategic Studies

Discussion

Wednesday, 10 February 2021

10 a.m.–1 p.m.

Session 4: Co-operation panel

Moderator: Brigadier General J. Meyeraan, United States of America
Rapporteur: Colonel C. Bitterlich, Sweden

¹ In each of the working sessions, participants wishing to intervene from the floor may do so by subscribing to the speakers' list in advance of that session or using the chat "to everyone" function during the session.

Speakers:

- Vice Admiral J. Haggren, Sweden
- Lieutenant General S. Korniychuk, Ukraine
- Major General P. Välimäki, Finland
- Major General P. Boucké, Belgium
- Major General E. Sharaf Khudoyberdi, Tajikistan
- General M. Salah, Egypt

Discussion

1–3 p.m. Lunch

3–4.15 p.m. Session 5: Crisis response panel

Moderator: Ms. M. E. G. Castro, Ministry of Defence, Spain
Rapporteur: Captain F. Clément, Switzerland

Speakers

- Lieutenant General M. Laubenthal, Germany
- Vice Admiral M. Mellett, Ireland
- Major General A. Lázaro Sáenz, Ministry of Defence, Spain

Discussion

4.15–4.30 p.m. Coffee break

4.30–5 p.m. Closing session:

- Concluding remarks
- Conclusion and topics identified for further discussion or possible OSCE engagement
- Concluding remarks by the FSC Chairperson

CONCEPT NOTE

High-Level Military Doctrine Seminar

Session: Security situation in the OSCE area and operational trends

9 February 2021, 11 a.m.–1 p.m.

1. Objective

This session is an opportunity to discuss participating States' perceptions of the present European security situation and assessment of recent operational trends, which serve as the basis for doctrinal changes to be further discussed in the subsequent sessions on conventional deterrence, competition below the threshold of armed conflict, co-operation, and crisis response.

2. Background

The Vienna Document (paragraph 15.7) encourages participating States to hold periodic High-Level Military Doctrine Seminars. In these seminars, participating States can discuss doctrinal changes and their impact on defence structures in light of the present European security situation. The previous High-Level Military Doctrine Seminar was held in 2016.¹ Since then, two intercessional dialogues hosted by Austria were organized in 2017² and 2019³. This session provides an opportunity to review whether trends that were being observed earlier have continued, and what that means for now and the future.

3. Guiding questions

- What were the major themes and takeaways from the previous seminars and intercessional dialogues? Are the lessons learned from past seminars and dialogues still relevant based on the current European security situation?
- What are the participating States' perceptions of the current European security situation and recent operational trends?
- How can confidence-building measures address security concerns and trends?

1 Consolidated report – FSC.MDS/5/16, 18 March 2016
2 Summary report – FSC.DEL/107/17, 24 March 2017
3 Summary report – PC.DEL/699/19, 18 June 2019

CONCEPT NOTE

High-Level Military Doctrine Seminar

Session 2: Conventional deterrence

9 February 2021, 3 p.m.–4.15 p.m.

1. Objective

This session is an opportunity to assess participating States' views on the role of combat-credible military forces in deterring armed conflict.

2. Background

While definitions vary, conventional deterrence has been described as the prevention of military action by the existence of a credible threat of unacceptable counteraction and/or belief that the cost of military action outweighs the perceived benefits.

In response to a perceived deterioration of the European security environment and conventional arms control architecture and challenges to the rules-based international order, many participating States have prioritized conventional deterrence within their military doctrines, assessing that a combat-credible military force is essential to deter armed conflict.

3. Guiding questions

- In light of the present European security situation, how are participating States modifying their conventional deterrence doctrines and corresponding training and defence structures?
- Can conventional deterrence be perceived as escalatory? How do participating States differentiate between changes in the other States' doctrine, training, and defence structures that are necessary for deterrence of defence versus changes that are aggressive or escalatory?
- Are troop deployments and exercises by their nature viewed as a more significant threat to regional security than changes in military doctrine and force structures?

CONCEPT NOTE

High-Level Military Doctrine Seminar

Session 3: Competition below the threshold of armed conflict

9 February 2021, 4.30 p.m.–6 p.m.

1. Objective

Discuss the re-emergence of long-term strategic competition among States and its impact on military doctrines, to include competition below the threshold of armed conflict.

2. Background

Many participating States have recognized the re-emergence of long-term strategic competition among States and have adjusted military doctrines accordingly. This includes addressing competition below the threshold of armed conflict through development of new tasks for their armed forces.

Rather than a world either at peace or at war, some describe a world of enduring competition conducted through a continuum of co-operation, competition below the level of armed conflict, and armed conflict. As States and non-State actors seek to protect and advance their own interests, they continually compete for diplomatic, economic, and political advantage, which can also include the use of military forces at or below the threshold of armed conflict in pursuit of policy objectives.

Military competition below the level of armed conflict can be consistent with international norms, as in the case of security co-operation or freedom of navigation exercises. Other forms of “grey zone” competition are more nefarious, including disinformation campaigns, malicious cyber activities, and the use of private military companies and paramilitary forces for malicious activities, which serve to mask attribution.

3. Guiding questions

- In light of the present European security situation, how are participating States developing doctrines for their military forces to compete and defend below the threshold of armed conflict?
- What is the line between appropriate and inappropriate forms of competition? Are the latter forms of competition escalatory, potentially leading to armed conflict?

CONCEPT NOTE

High-Level Military Doctrine Seminar

Session 4: Co-operation

10 February 2020, 10 a.m.–1 p.m.

1. Objective

The purpose of this session will be to discuss how doctrine, within the context of increasing security challenges, can address the need for improved co-operation among participating States.

2. Background

Even within the context of conventional deterrence and increased competition, the military doctrines of participating States emphasize the benefits of security co-operation.

Military doctrines recognize and seek mutually beneficial and differentiated co-operation among all States, whether allies, partners, or competitors. Co-operative activities can take many forms, ranging from formal security assistance programmes to improving defence institutions, to conducting multilateral training and exercises and multinational operations, expanding on Vienna Document military contacts and regional co-operation measures, to countering transnational threats like piracy and terrorism.

3. Guiding questions

- In light of the present European security situation, how are participating States adapting their co-operation doctrines?
- Is there scope for increased co-operation with competitors as well as with allies and partners?

CONCEPT NOTE

High-Level Military Doctrine Seminar

Session 5: Crisis response

10 February 2020, 3 p.m.–4.15 p.m.

1. Objective

The purpose of this session is to highlight the need for military forces to support civilian authorities during crisis response and to discuss how the COVID-19 pandemic is shaping doctrine development.

2. Background

Military participation in civil emergency response is not a new phenomenon but has typically been limited to humanitarian and disaster assistance, domestically and internationally. The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the need for military forces to support civilian authorities during a sustained crisis response situation in a manner that may entail performing non-traditional tasks. Lessons learned from this pandemic will likely shape the development of military doctrine on responding to future crises.

3. Guiding questions

- In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, how are participating States updating their crisis response doctrines?
- Is pandemic response fundamentally different from the role of the military in more traditional forms of emergency and disaster relief?

**WELCOMING REMARKS BY
THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE FORUM FOR SECURITY
CO-OPERATION AT THE OPENING SESSION OF THE OSCE
HIGH-LEVEL MILITARY DOCTRINE SEMINAR**

9 and 10 February 2021, via Zoom

It is my distinct honour and privilege as US Chairperson of the OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation to convene this High-Level Military Doctrine Seminar, held once every five years in accordance with the Vienna Document, which encourages participating States to hold such doctrinal exchanges periodically. The annotated agenda for the seminar has been distributed to all participants under document number FSC.MDS/3/21/Rev.1 dated 5 February.

Our aim here today, as with previous High-Level Military Doctrine Seminars, is to foster a better understanding of doctrinal changes in a dynamic and evolving security environment. We will examine military doctrine developments related to developing threat perceptions and emerging security challenges, and their impact on regional defence planning and armed forces structures.

As outlined in the annotated agenda, following this opening session, we will begin with a first working session on strategic and operational trends and a review of the intersessional dialogues held since the 2016 High-Level Military Doctrine Seminar. Subsequent working sessions will address doctrinal changes within the framework we have coined as the four “Cs”: conventional deterrence, competition, co-operation, and crisis response. A transparent and constructive exchange on conventional deterrence and competition doctrine in the sessions this afternoon will set the stage for the sessions tomorrow addressing opportunities for co-operative security and crisis response in the light of the current COVID-19 pandemic. Our hope is that these exchanges will contribute to better understanding for increased mutual security among participating States.

A second important goal of these high-level seminars has been to promote military-to-military contacts and relations among military institutions. In this regard, we would have wished to welcome you all here at the Hofburg palace with us for an in-person seminar, as in previous years. While the pandemic has forced us to adapt to a virtual exchange (as with many other high-level meetings at this time), we will seek to promote a fulsome and interactive discussion and hope this high-level seminar can be followed-up later in the year with an in-person dialogue in the Forum for Security Co-operation.

**ADDRESS BY
GENERAL ROBERT BRIEGER AT THE OPENING SESSION OF THE
OSCE HIGH-LEVEL MILITARY DOCTRINE SEMINAR**

9 and 10 February 2021, via Zoom

Dear Secretary General,
General Wolters,
Generals,
Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen,

I deeply regret that I am not able to welcome you personally here in Vienna. Even more, it is a great pleasure for me to deliver online a few words of welcome to you at the opening of this year's High-Level Military Doctrine Seminar. First, I would like to thank the United States of America for their extensive efforts they have undertaken to make this important event possible.

Austria is very pleased that, despite the current difficult circumstances, a large number of high-ranking militaries are taking their time to attend this seminar on military doctrines, thereby contributing to its success. This exchange of experiences and information at a high level, which according to the Vienna Document takes place every five years, is essential in order to generate a comprehensive military-strategic assessment of the current security situation in the OSCE area as well as of relevant operational trends.

The topics on the agenda allow extensive discussions on security challenges and co-operative measures to address them together. In addition, the High-Level Military Doctrine Seminar is an important opportunity to promote military contacts and therefore has direct value for security policies, especially in times of change and crisis.

The COVID-19 pandemic has shaken fundamental certainties. Much of what we have taken for granted over decades is now being questioned. Tremendous efforts have been made to address the resulting risks. In many of the participating States of the OSCE armed forces have played an important role and are still deployed – including here in Austria. The last year has therefore also been an extraordinary one for the Austrian armed forces.

At the same time, the military challenges in the OSCE area are more acute than ever. Inter-State tensions are on the rise. We are also reminded, that some conflicts have not been resolved for years or even decades and can therefore erupt at any time.

The participating States of OSCE, all of us, have a special responsibility in this respect, resulting *inter alia*, from the commitments we made in Helsinki. We are called upon to preserve the European security architecture, which was a guarantee for security and stability in the region for decades, and to adapt it to the new challenges. Despite the difficult situation, joint efforts are needed to work towards greater security.

In this context, I would like to draw your attention on the two OSCE dialogues that Austria organized since the last High-Level Military Doctrine seminar in 2016. We see these events as a suitable opportunity to strengthen military contacts and contribute to common

security. Major General Hofbauer will go into details regarding this initiative during the first session.

Generals,
Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen,

Let us use this High-Level Military Doctrine Seminar to exchange information on the current security situation in the OSCE area in a structured and constructive manner. Many topics and reasons make such a dialogue necessary. In this sense, I wish us two successful days.

Thank you very much.

**ADDRESS BY
THE OSCE SECRETARY GENERAL AT THE OPENING SESSION OF
THE OSCE HIGH-LEVEL MILITARY DOCTRINE SEMINAR**

9 and 10 February 2021, via Zoom

Madam Chairperson,
Excellencies,
Generals,
Ladies and gentlemen,

I am delighted to address this important high-level seminar. It is unfortunate that owing to the pandemic we have to meet virtually and it would have been so much better to meet in the Hofburg, but I am very glad to see that so many senior-ranking military officers are participating today.

The OSCE area is currently experiencing a multiplicity of security challenges unlike any we have seen in decades, as General Robert Brieger just noted. Divisions and mistrust among participating States are on the rise. The risk of military conflict has re-emerged amidst increasing unpredictability and an erosion of the European security architecture.

Throughout its history, the OSCE has been an instrument for building trust and stability. As you well know, the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe was established in the midst of the Cold War to facilitate dialogue with the concrete aim of preventing conflict.

It is now high time for us to revive this kind of results-oriented dialogue to promote politico-military security. The OSCE's inclusive and comprehensive platform is the right place for this.

The present seminar provides an excellent opportunity to discuss current perceptions of European security and to rebuild confidence by presenting and exchanging views on key trends and developments in military doctrines.

To maximize this dialogue's contribution to peace and stability in our region, we need to involve decision-makers in capitals at the highest possible levels, both in government and in military spheres, and mobilize the political will to re-establish and reinvigorate existing channels of communication.

So I encourage you to actively engage in these discussions, which are in themselves indispensable trust-building exercises.

But this dialogue should not be limited to doctrine. It should take a wider approach, one that includes confidence- and security-building measures. Indeed, we need to renew our political and military commitments to fulfil our confidence- and security-building measures both in spirit and letter.

I am counting on your commitment in this endeavour.

Dear colleagues,

The United States, as current Chairmanship of the Forum for Security Co-operation, has put together an extremely interesting agenda for the next two days. I thank you, Madam Chairperson, for your excellent and, in my view, very operational proposal.

Please allow me to share just a few ideas about how we can make best use of this opportunity.

Since participating States are not yet ready to agree to reciprocal transparency on every issue, a smart way to avoid confrontational approaches would be to separate discussions on confidence- and security-building measures from issues currently outside the direct reach of the OSCE. Here I am thinking of nuclear disarmament and nuclear arms control, or technology for which information exchange or verification are still in their infancy.

So, instead of re-confirming differences on issues that do not enjoy consensus now, I suggest engaging on low-hanging fruits.

There are, I believe, clear opportunities for further mutual engagement emerging from discussions in the Structured Dialogue process and the Expert Level Workshops on Trends in Military Forces and Exercises. We also have other areas where interests converge, which include: joint actions against the threat of terrorism, and confidence-building measures to reduce risks stemming from the use of information and communication technologies, the illicit proliferation of small arms, light weapons, ammunition and explosives, and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

We should also find space for consensus to reduce the risk of conflict in the Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian region due to misperceptions or misunderstandings. We cannot afford to have to face new conflicts resulting from insufficient communication or lack of transparency. Conventional deterrence and competition below the level of armed conflict are two aspects on which military doctrines have kept close tabs.

During this seminar you will also discuss co-operation and responses to crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic. Other questions worth considering include how military doctrines define “détente”, and where we can find common narratives to help bring us back to lower levels of armaments, less confrontation, less stand-off deterrence and competition, and ultimately, more co-operation.

Excellencies,

I would like to conclude with a standing invitation. It is no secret that many participating States hold diverging views on key issues in the politico-military sphere. Sometimes even on core principles. But precisely because of these disagreements, OSCE spaces for co-operative security are more important than ever. In the first dimension, our organization offers several well-established channels, such as the Forum for Security Co-operation, and a number of other military-to-military contacts that are at the core of the Vienna Document. And the State-driven Structured Dialogue process, ably led in Vienna by the Spanish Permanent Representative, seeks to renew our common interest in the 1996 Framework for Arms Control.

So my message to you is simple but heartfelt: make use of these valid tools to promote dialogue and build trust!

Despite challenges old and new, the level of transparency between OSCE participating States on military affairs is still second to none. Though we may need to go back to the drawing board when we discuss additional transparency measures and confidence- and security-building measures, we can and should draw on the creativity, co-operation and willingness to compromise that are the hallmarks of the OSCE.

I wish you a most productive seminar.

Thank you.

**ADDRESS BY
GENERAL TOD D. WOLTERS AT THE OPENING SESSION OF THE
OSCE HIGH-LEVEL MILITARY DOCTRINE SEMINAR**

9 and 10 February 2021, via Zoom

It is an honour to spend time with you today, even if virtually. We would like to begin by thanking Ambassador James Gilmore for the invitation as well as chargé d'affaires, Ms. C. Austrian, and the Forum for Security Co-operation for putting on such a world-class event. We wish we were together in Vienna, but like many things over the past year, COVID-19 pandemic forced a change of plans. We remain grateful for the technology that enables important events like the High-Level Military Doctrine Seminar in the midst of a pandemic. Our condolences to all those impacted by COVID-19. As the battle against COVID-19 continues, we remain vigilant to ensure this health crisis does not transform into a security issue. Because of your efforts, those of your chiefs of defence, and your nations; mitigation measures, our forces are protected, operations and activities continue, and deterrence is a reality. Thank you for the support in this endeavour.

For the last eight decades, Europe has been a key ally and partner for the United States and today serves as an exporter of global peace and security. Maintaining a free and prosperous Euro-Atlantic area, defended by Allied nations a credible NATO Alliance, remains foundational to our security in a competitive geopolitical environment.

We live in an increasingly complex and contested world. Political uncertainty, energy competition, and diffusion of disruptive technology are stressing the established rules-based international order. Threats and challengers seek to take advantage of these conditions through aggressive action using all instruments of national power and are backed by increasingly capable military forces. Adversaries amplify these malign activities and foment instability with disinformation and destructive cybercampaigns, testing national governments and multinational institutions. If left unchecked, these activities could escalate into more aggressive behaviour.

Meeting these threats and challenges require us to take meaningful steps away from a binary model of peace or war, and towards a gradient that includes one of competition with a military dimension below armed conflict. We are in an era of great (global) power competition. Winning in this era is ensuring great (global) power competition does not become great (global) power war, keeping America and Europe safe, and protecting our democratic values.

For the United States, the European theatre remains incredibly important. It houses the cradle of democratic values, built from a rich history and culture. It is home to more than one billion people, and is the number one trading partner for the United States. Building and solidifying our bilateral and multilateral partnerships enhance our collective posture.

Across Europe and increasingly throughout the world, it is our responsibility as military leaders to maintain laser focus on our own comprehensive readiness in all domains, continue to improve transparency and alignment of our operations, activities, and investments, and be able to employ our capabilities faster than our threats and challengers.

We must address disinformation when we see it, so nothing comes between those steadfast commitments and relationships we have worked so hard to preserve.

We must continue, collectively, to let democratic values and fact-based communication lead our actions in order to avoid any misunderstanding or misperceptions. In our vision of this security environment, each day we collectively generate more peace and deter and defend better tomorrow, than we did today. Every day United States European Command and NATO work together to deter attacks against the United States, our allies and partners. We leverage unique capabilities by co-ordinating with the US Government agencies and our multinational partners.

As part of its biggest initiative since the Cold War, NATO published an updated military strategy of comprehensive defence and shared response, and developed the strategic and operational link, what we call the concept for the deterrence and defence of the Euro-Atlantic area or DDA. Together with the United States National Defence Strategy, these documents highlight the agreed security challenges we face, and articulate enduring vigilance activities the alliance must embrace to sustain peace through comprehensive deterrence and defence, in all domains, across the area of responsibility and beyond, 360 degrees, 24/7. It is vital we maintain positive momentum as we operationalize these strategic documents to compete, diligently prepare for crisis or conflict, but most importantly, sustain peace. We continue to enhance our support to NATO's DDA. Our strong bilateral and multilateral ties with European allies and partners enable advancement of our shared interests and our competitive edge. Collectively, we possess great capability across all domains – land, sea, air, space, and cyber – to deter our adversaries and defend our partners and our interests. We must maintain momentum with respect to our efforts to strengthen indications and warnings to see the environment improve command and control, plus feedback, mission command, and logistics. We strengthen these twenty-first century warfare pillars as we develop future capabilities, field new forces and formations, improve transparency, alignment, interoperability, and convergence of what we already have, and by placing speed relative to our potential adversaries as an imperative for everything we do. This increases the likelihood of obtaining favourable outcomes, saves lives, and preserve peace.

We must always focus on deterrence. Should deterrence fail, however, we must be prepared to win, together.

Collectively it is the combined strength of NATO and its partners and the United States' commitment to nations across Europe and Eurasia that enables us to remain postured for threats now and in the future.

Through alliances and security relationships, we help one another to stay focused on the mission, we remain vigilant. We accomplish a great deal together. We are ready, we are steadfast, and we are committed to helping one another face common challenges head on. And like this virtual event today, we find ways to come together – a testament to our adaptability.

COVID-19 reminds us all how historically strong relationships are a force multiplier. Even in crisis there are opportunities to emerge stronger and more unified. Institutions such as the OSCE provide more opportunities for honest and open dialogue, and are vitally important to create the conditions for peace, security, co-operation, and democracy.

Operating higher common standards, we are more prepared, more responsive, and more resilient than ever.

Thank you so much for taking the time to focus on the issues we discussed. Remain steadfast to our shared democratic values, beliefs, and genuine desire to promote peace, freedom, and prosperity.

For our children and our children's children – we are stronger together.

**ADDRESS BY
GENERAL CHRIS CAVOLI AT THE OPENING SESSION OF THE
OSCE HIGH-LEVEL MILITARY DOCTRINE SEMINAR**

9 and 10 February 2021, via Zoom

Thank you, thank you very much to Secretary General Schmid for the invitation to speak and participate in the discussion. It is unfortunate we've had to do this virtually, but I look forward to it and to the possibility to sit down with you in person in the future.

General Wolters in his remarks, talked about deterrence, and as his US Army Component Commander here in United States European Command, I thought I'd take a few minutes to tell you what that means for us.

First of all, our ability to deter, is a function of demonstrated readiness. This is why we need to exercise.

These exercises build not only our readiness, but our interoperability with our allies and partners, and ensure that we can respond to any crisis. This explains the outline of our exercise programmes for both NATO, and United States European Command.

A primary example of this, is our often discussed, US Army "Defender Europe" exercise, a defensive exercise designed to build whole-of-Europe readiness and interoperability.

Our last exercise, "Defender Europe 20" included the movement of thousands of soldiers and equipment from the United States of America, integrating and participating with 19 allies and partners.

These exercises are all executed under the guidelines of the OSCE's founding document, the 1975 Helsinki Act and the most recent Vienna Document (2011), reinforcing the United States' commitment to security and peace in Europe.

The common feature in all of our exercises, is the need to move to the point of crisis. This has become more challenging in the past 30 years. The difference between now and the end of the Cold War – where we had a defined limited front of potential confrontation in one country, is no longer the case. Now the threat is 360 degrees, and the crisis could come from anywhere.

My headquarters has undergone a significant change that helps us address this 360 degree threat. This past November, my headquarters, consolidated with US Army Africa, to create US Army Europe-Africa. The consolidation made me responsible for US Army activities in both continents, an area of operations that consist of 104 countries.

The consolidation provides us an opportunity to align US Army operations, activities and interests with our allies, namely those in Southern Europe. For example, France, Italy, Spain and Portugal, are all interested in Africa because many of their security challenges are closely related to the security challenges in Africa.

So, what it does is give us the opportunity to think about security across both continents as one problem, which is useful because in real life there is no boundary. It provides me both the ability and the flexibility, at the army level, to move across what would otherwise be a seam between two commands and allocate resources to support counter-terrorism and security co-operation activities – to name a few in Africa.

One of the countries we are currently working with is Tunisia, where we are helping them build capacity at the institutional level through the use of one of my Security Forces Assistance Brigades.

I am actually visiting Tunisia later this month, a trip that I am looking forward to, as it provides me both an opportunity to see the progress we are making and a chance to strengthen relations with one of my partners south of the Mediterranean.

This effort is certainly an area of interest we share with the OSCE. Since your Permanent Council's decision in 2003, I know that you've built a relationship Tunisia along with other countries in my area operations, Morocco, Algeria and Israel, through the Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation (that also includes Egypt and Jordan which are under the United States Central Command), where you recognize the transnational threats, that affect our security here in Europe.

So, I've discussed only a few of the issues that affect our security. Forums like these provide an opportunity to have discuss our challenges and take the necessary steps to develop solutions.

Again, I'd like to thank you for inviting me to speak here at this forum, and look forward to answering your questions.

**CONCLUDING REMARKS BY
THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE FORUM FOR SECURITY
CO-OPERATION AT THE CLOSING SESSION OF THE OSCE
HIGH-LEVEL MILITARY DOCTRINE SEMINAR**

9 and 10 February 2021, via Zoom

Our opening session began, after the preliminaries, with a keynote address by General T. Wolters, Commander of United States European Command, followed by some related additional remarks by General C. Cavoli, Commander of US Army Europe and Africa. The themes from that session continued to be addressed by a panel devoted to analysis of the security situation in the OSCE area and operational trends that was moderated by Ms. T. Yrjölä, Director of the OSCE Conflict Prevention Centre, with panellists drawn from Joint Force Development (United Kingdom), the Austrian General Staff, the Swiss Armed Forces Staff and the Belarusian Ministry of Defence.

Key takeaway messages from this first working session of the Seminar are as follows:

- The security situation in Europe has degraded as some participating States have reverted to great power-style competition – we must ensure that such competition does not escalate into open conflict between States;
- Reassurance with regard to a country's defence posture can be built through transparency and openness, through the OSCE and through the open exchange of information on force postures and force developments;
- The range of security challenges faced by participating States has expanded to include climate change, rapid technological development (notably of cybertechnology), demographic shifts, pandemics and massive disinformation campaigns;
- Political uncertainty, competition over energy resources and the diffusion of disruptive technologies are putting the established rules-based international order under enormous strain;
- These security issues will require both a whole-of-government approach and an international co-operative approach if they are to be tackled effectively;
- The development of a commonly agreed doctrine to address these security concerns in the years ahead will be difficult but necessary;
- Increased dialogue at forums such as the High-Level Military Doctrine Seminar (held every five years) and intersessional meetings (held in between the Seminars) can ease inter-State tensions and reduce the potential for competition to turn into conflict;
- The process of convening intersessional meetings should be institutionalized to create an additional regular venue for dialogue and co-operation;

- The erosion of the European security architecture raises concerns that should be tackled not only by updating existing instruments but also by adopting new approaches to arms control.

Our second panel, dealing with conventional deterrence, was moderated by Lieutenant General K. Dayton (ret'd) from the George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies and featured panellists from United States European Command and the Defence Staff of the Lithuanian Armed Forces.

Key findings from this working session included the following:

- Deterrence implies the credible ability to use force in times of crisis – something that requires updates to doctrine, manning and force posture. A “total defence” or whole-of-society approach may further augment deterrence, also against unconventional attacks;
- Malign actors may conceivably try to portray updates to deterrence posture as a threat;
- Deterrence is not threatening and relies, to a great extent, on transparency over exercises and military developments. In that respect, the panellists pointed to observation visits and inspections under the Vienna Document and to regional measures among neighbouring States as effective tools for providing transparency and reassurance as to the defensive nature of military activities;
- Many participating States rely on allies for mutual defence and deterrence, using this to enhance their own arrangements for national defence;
- The availability of strong and capable conventional forces can act as a deterrent to prevent some proxy conflicts, but whole-of-society and collective approaches are required in any case. Existing arms control regimes and confidence- and security-building measures can be used to tackle current issues, but they need to be reviewed and updated. In particular, the implications of new forms of conflict (such as hybrid conflicts and cyberwarfare) need to be assessed;
- One participating State raised concerns about the deployment of military forces and incidents and exercises taking place along its border, and also, more generally, about nuclear doctrine.

Our third panel focused on competition and was again moderated by Lieutenant General K. Dayton (ret'd), with the participation of experts from the École Militaire in Paris, the Norwegian Defence University College, the Canadian Department of National Defence and The Hague Centre for Strategic Studies. This working session produced quite a number of observations and conclusions, so please bear with me for a moment:

- We were presented with two views of hybrid warfare: as a “safety valve” or as a “real” substitute for traditional warfare;

- Competition is normal but can lead to conflict when a competitor challenges core norms and threatens multiple domains. This level of competition is made even more difficult to manage when hybrid strategies are used to circumvent norms;
- Globalization and digitalization have increased the means available to advance security and other national interests. However, while some means are legal and legitimate, others are not: indeed, many of them must count as unacceptable behaviour. Moreover, uncertainty increases in periods of rapid technological change. The conduct of conflicts has become more insidious, with some States resorting to concealed, disguised or ambiguous attacks, sometimes even using proxies as a “firewall” to evade political and legal accountability;
- One panellist referred to “below-threshold conflict” as a process of continuous competition taking place across the diplomatic, informational, military and economic (DIME) dimensions of national power. Four key features make below-threshold conflict such a potent threat: agility across domains; its incremental approach; ambiguity; and the ability to leverage the human element (as in the case of disinformation);
- As a result, below-threshold conflict may effectively paralyse the will to react to hostile action, creating a military advantage for the hostile State that does not shy from using all DIME elements of national power. It is also worth noting that military power serves as a buttress of below-threshold aggression, allowing stronger States to get away with actions that weaker States would never dare to attempt;
- By destabilizing geostrategic balances, hybrid actors are in effect approaching a red line. The sophisticated methods they use may even resemble the initial stages of an armed conflict, since they have the potential to degrade communications networks and military technology, sow distrust and confusion, deter key personnel, and delay decision-making and mobilization efforts;
- Authoritarian States are masters of below-threshold conflict, but democracies are ingenious and resilient and they are better at mobilizing resources;
- The problem for the armed forces is how to deal with an adversary who does not operate openly, uses indirect action and also seeks to undermine the capacity to respond of the targeted country and its allies, all the while staying within the bounds of “acceptability”;
- Many participating States are adjusting their military doctrine accordingly. This includes addressing competition below the threshold of conflict by developing new tasks for their armed forces.
- Military options for tackling below-threshold conflict are difficult to put into practice: binary notions of peace and war no longer apply; military doctrine must adapt to pan-domain operations; and a whole-of-government approach is required, with the military credibly taking a seat at the cabinet table alongside other public officials;
- Militaries must act across all domains, including land, air, sea, outer space, cyberspace, and even information and electromagnetic spaces;

- Our panellists offered a number of suggestions for managing competition, including strengthening attribution, setting standards of proportionality, developing clear signalling strategies, determining shared restraints and identifying irresponsible forms of behaviour;
- Transparency is key to building trust and preventing unintended escalation as we work out new norms and verification techniques. Resilience is vital beyond the military sphere, too: vulnerabilities have to be identified and remedied in all sectors of society. Dialogue and co-operation are essential, as is the development of “rules of the road” – an area in which the OSCE can make a significant contribution;
- One participating State dismissed the topic of below-threshold conflict altogether.

Moving to this morning’s first session, which dealt with the topic of co-operation, was moderated by Brigadier General J. Meyeraan and featured panellists from the defence ministries of Sweden, Ukraine, Finland, Belgium, Tajikistan and Egypt, we may single out the following points:

- Working with regional partners is a key part of doctrine. Multilateral and bilateral partnerships play a critical role in dealing with “grey-zone conflicts”, which requires whole-of-society engagement;
- Subregional co-operation between defence forces, notably in the Nordic region and among Benelux countries, was highlighted. Such co-operation has been deepened to include joint planning and information sharing;
- It was pointed out that doctrinal alignment could set the stage for co-operation, interoperability and even the full integration of military forces from different countries;
- Co-operation with international partners – through training and technical assistance, among other ways – can help to deter aggression and enhance capabilities, command and control structures, and military education. It can also help to promote reforms;
- Joint co-operative measures are important when combating transnational threats, including terrorism and the current pandemic. Moreover, co-operation through the OSCE and other regional platforms is essential for the successful implementation of programmes on small arms and light weapons and on non-proliferation;
- The OSCE was perceived to offer valuable tools that allow any State, regardless of size, to contribute to regional security goals. The Forum for Security Co-operation and the Structured Dialogue were cited as uniquely valuable platforms for addressing arms control and grey-zone challenges that called for co-operation.
- Co-operation extends beyond the OSCE area: our partners also value enhanced bilateral and regional security co-operation, and in some respects are seeking to emulate the OSCE.

Our final panel was devoted to a topic that is uppermost in the thoughts of many of us, namely, crisis response – with a special focus on the armed forces’ contribution to the response to the COVID-19 pandemic. This working session was moderated by Ms. E. Gómez Castro from the Spanish Ministry of Defence, and featured panellists from Germany, Ireland and Spain.

The moderator opened the session by highlighting the role of the armed forces in the pandemic response, specifically how they had supported the civilian authorities in the delivery of public health services while continuing to fulfil their responsibility for national defence. The panellists and other speakers who took the floor offered national perspectives on the pandemic response. Some general conclusions are as follows:

- The COVID-19 crisis has changed the paradigm of crisis response, notably with regard to the military’s role in assisting the civilian authorities;
- The military provides resilience and strategic depth to civilian first responders, who may often lack the logistical and technical capacity to respond adequately to a major crisis. The importance of solidarity and partnerships in crisis response was also emphasized.

And here are some additional takeaway messages:

- It is necessary to intensify civil-military co-operation, and to promote integrated command and control structures on the one hand, and decentralization on the other. Reservists have an important role to play. It is essential to remain open to innovation and new technology. The need for a comprehensive approach in combating disinformation was also discussed;
- The panellists agreed on the need for robust, long-term national security strategies that include adequate measures for crisis response. The COVID-19 crisis was a strategic shock to which armed forces around the world have had to adapt;
- That being said, the military’s role in the response to this crisis has not been fundamentally different from its role in past emergencies. Still, the scope and scale of the assistance it is now providing are much larger;
- Doctrine and legal frameworks need to be developed further to facilitate crisis management and response. This must be done at the international as well as the national level, and, what is more, in a manner that is consistent with the OSCE Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security, especially with regard to the implications for democratic control of the military;
- It is important that we work together in the OSCE – notably within the framework of the Structured Dialogue – to address pandemics and other existing and emerging challenges, including climate change and irregular migration. These efforts must be incorporated into national military strategies. Relevant initiatives have already been launched by the European Union and NATO.

In closing, I should like to convey my personal gratitude to all our moderators and panellists, who gave us so much to think about over the past two days, and also to all those

participants who shared their perspectives during the working sessions. I also wish to thank everyone from the OSCE structures who was involved in the organization and servicing of this seminar, including the OSCE's Conflict Prevention Centre (notably Mr. R. Mossinkoff and his team) and the entire Conference and Language Services team, who provided such wonderful support. Finally, I should like to thank the members of my own team, whose hard work and expertise made the past two days possible in the first place. I very much hope that everyone has found this seminar to be productive and thought-provoking. I am sorry that we were unable to meet in person, but am relieved that, between us all, we managed to make this virtual format work as well as it did. On that note, I bring the 2021 High-Level Military Doctrine Seminar to a close.

REPORTS OF THE SESSION RAPPORTEURS

SESSION 1

Tuesday, 9 February 2021

Report of the Session Rapporteur

Security situation in the OSCE area and operational trends

- **Review of intersessional process**
 - **Overview of strategic and operational trends**
-

The moderator set the stage by calling on participants to use the seminar as an opportunity to advance the Vienna Document. The pandemic, she said, had impacted on verification activities and so far there was no consensus on modernizing the Vienna Document. The first session, she said, provided an opportunity to discuss participating States' perceptions of the current European security situation and recent operational trends and to review the intersessional process.

The first speaker outlined major challenges of our times such as pandemics, climate change and humanitarian crises. He particularly mentioned the role of technological developments, which had many positive effects but could also be exploited for spreading disinformation, conducting cyberattacks, and other malign activities. The speaker also observed the changing character of conflict and in particular the return of grand strategy, in which misperceptions about activities below the threshold of armed conflict increased the likelihood of escalation. The speaker called for multilateral co-operation, which was necessary to manage these challenges. He then talked about the ways to tackle these challenges from a national perspective, particularly highlighting the importance of NATO and its doctrine. He further elaborated on national defence doctrine, the integration of emerging technologies into the armed forces and, anticipating the topic of session 3, competition below the threshold of armed conflict.

The second speaker addressed the importance of confidence- and security-building measures and more frequent military-to-military contacts in the current volatile security environment. On account of the High-Level Military Doctrine Seminar only taking place every five years, his country had decided to convene two Intersessional OSCE Dialogues on Military Doctrines in 2017 and 2019 to discuss topics such as common versus diverging threat assessments, strategic frameworks of modern defence policies, and the impact of modern warfighting capabilities. He outlined the major findings regarding the security situation and operational trends made during these intersessionals – among them the rise of inter-State tensions on a large scale reinforced by new risks such as terrorism, certain technological developments, and the erosion of the conventional arms control regime. He also briefly commented on his country's national security assessment in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic, which had shown the importance of "expecting the unexpected". The speaker concluded by proposing taking further steps towards institutionalizing the intersessional meetings in order to ensure more frequent military-to-military exchanges in the future.

The third speaker identified four general trends – population growth, an ageing population in Europe, climate change, and new technologies – contributing to the current

security situation, which was characterized by the return of geopolitics, migration and failed integration as one key driver of terrorism, and a growing amount of natural as well as man-made disasters. He argued that the interconnectedness of these challenges necessitated a holistic approach to conflict. Further, he outlined that while in the past armed forces had focused on activities in the ground, air and sea domains, with rapid technological developments, space as well as the cross-section of information, cyber and electromagnetic domains had become increasingly important, driving armed forces to adopt an integrated capability-based approach to achieve defined effects. As a result, there was a need for another approach to assessing military capabilities and adopting new confidence-building measures. He suggested that this new approach should shift away from the current system-based thinking and quantitative information exchange and focus on a more qualitative exchange of information with verifiable transparency in order to allow for a better understanding of foreign armies' often complex integrated systems. The speaker recommended that the need for such an approach and a way forward for additional transparency measures should be outlined in participating States' military doctrines.

The fourth speaker highlighted the necessity to listen to each other and to identify concrete steps for concrete problems, seminars such as the present one being an efficient way to do so. The European security situation had worsened, the main concerns from his national perspective being frozen conflicts, the rising capacities of a military alliance, increasing defence spending, and hybrid threats. The speaker also highlighted the erosion of arms control treaties, which would have an impact on all States. He further noted that a block-based system had reappeared in the OSCE area and suggested that in this system even neutral States would gravitate towards one side or the other. The speaker called for a dialogue on equal terms in order to strengthen military security and co-operation. He regretted that many States' armed forces had reduced their co-operation programmes and expressed hope that, after the COVID-19 pandemic, international military co-operation would be fully resumed or even strengthened. Against this backdrop, the speaker also expressed support for institutionalizing the intersessional dialogues. Furthermore, as the great powers were no longer guarantors of stability, he suggested that all States take small but concrete steps towards dialogue and problem-solving, noting that such steps could play an important role in the process of finding a balance of interests among different parties.

A participating State asked the panellists whether it would be possible to create common doctrines if participating States could agree on a common understanding of the security environment. In response, the first speaker observed that there was indeed a common understanding of current challenges, at least within NATO. However, owing to differences in strategic culture, there might be different perspectives on the role of the military regarding these challenges and it was sometimes important to acknowledge a sincere non-understanding. He suggested that one way to move towards common doctrines would be to review and identify where current doctrines were failing or succeeding in responding to contemporary challenges. Further, rapid developments in the information domain were making it difficult to anticipate how the domain would evolve in the next five to ten years, so that one possibility might be a common discussion on the topic. The speaker further suggested co-operating on reviewing the laws on armed conflicts to which all States had committed themselves, and adapting their rules in order to reflect warfare in the information age. A second speaker maintained that doctrine development largely depended on geopolitical situation and national threat perceptions. Doctrines and interoperability were the core of armed forces' ability to co-operate.

Another participating State underscored that facing the current transnational challenges required international co-operation. While COVID-19 had made the latter more difficult, the present seminar proved that it was still possible to come together. Further, national efforts had been made to implement an improved education system for the armed forces and revisit strategic documents and defence plans in line with current threats and operational trends.

A third participating State expressed hope that the seminar would contribute to military transparency and foster mutual confidence among participating States. The delegation further expressed appreciation for the two Intersessional OSCE Dialogues on Military Doctrines in 2017 and 2019 and seconded the proposal to take further steps towards institutionalization of these intersessionals in order to facilitate more frequent doctrinal military-to-military contacts. Another participating State expressed its full support, adding that the intersessional meetings increased military-to-military exchange and thereby enhanced the ability of participating States to realize their common interest in strengthening security co-operation. Co-operation was the only reasonable response to crises and conflicts. The moderator, referring to multiple delegations' support for future intersessional dialogues, asked whether past intersessionals had led to more initiatives, also in connection with the conventional arms control regime. The speaker suggested that further information on the intersessional dialogues should be provided in the Forum for Security Co-operation later in the year. He added that under the current circumstances, intersessional dialogues should focus on military, i.e. non-political, information exchange.

Another participating State briefly presented a recently published white paper of its foreign intelligence service, which assessed external threats to the country's national security by another participating State. It also outlined the main trends in the current complex security environment, including but not restricted to the limited effectiveness of established collective security systems, the increasing disregard for international law, and that participating State's strategic objective of preventing the Euro-Atlantic integration of his country. The delegation further stated that despite arms control documents, confidence-building measures and peaceful doctrines, military aggression – and below-threshold conflict – were a reality in the OSCE area. It concluded by asking the panellists how to best change the behaviour of an aggressor that continued to violate fundamental principles. The first speaker noted that co-operation was key and expressed willingness to support democratic freedoms. Referring to earlier comments from another delegation, he further underlined that collaboration was necessary on many issues such as the rise of another great power, the COVID-19 pandemic and climate change, adding that if States did not stand together, they would perish separately.

Another participating State observed that the security environment had further deteriorated since 2016 and referred to the recent conflict in the Caucasus region as a case in point. It further said that the unrestricted transfer and use of cutting-edge technologies – despite the existing arms control regime and confidence- and security-building measures – and the organized recruitment and deployment of terrorists from outside the OSCE area by one participating State would inevitably influence future military doctrines of many participating States. The delegation added that it was already in the process of updating its own doctrine.

A participating State observed that the security situation in the OSCE area was also characterized by non-traditional threat scenarios. Europe was influenced by external geostrategic risks, including risks emanating from its vicinity. The delegation named

non-State actors such as terrorists and illegal migration as challenges that the military could not solve alone. Confidence- and security-building measures and military doctrines focusing on comprehensive security could contribute to greater transparency if they were adapted to current realities.

The moderator then asked the speakers to further elaborate on how real dialogue could be resumed through a holistic approach. One speaker suggested that such an approach would evaluate modern systems, such as drones, comprehensively and in terms broader than just military ones, including factors such as artificial intelligence and all intervention options resulting from it. Another speaker added that a holistic approach was also needed to respond to hybrid threats and that different parts of national governments needed to co-operate not only with each other but also with the private sector.

A third speaker noted the need to co-operate in the face of less stable finances and rapid technological developments and emphasized that democratic States had to close ranks. He further noted that more commonalities in doctrines were a good precondition for co-operation. Another speaker highlighted the importance of building trust, starting at the regional level, where confidence-building measures were working well. He suggested that it was possible to rebuild trust on a broader level by starting with small steps, expressing his conviction that participating States were united in their wish for a safer and more predictable Europe and that with the appropriate will this could be achieved, though he only wished this would happen faster.

SESSION 2

Tuesday, 9 February 2021

Report of the Session Rapporteur

Conventional deterrence panel

- **Assess participating States' views on the role combat-credible military has in deterring armed conflict**
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The second working session focused on conventional deterrence doctrine and practices in the OSCE area. States discussed the baseline for conventional deterrence, updates to deterrence doctrine, and ways in which to moderate deterrence measures in order to minimize the potential for escalation.

The first speaker began by defining conventional deterrence as “the prevention of action by the existence of a credible threat of unacceptable counteraction and/or belief that the cost of action outweighs the perceived benefit”, adding that these forces must possess the ability to respond in a timely manner to a crisis situation. He outlined three key concepts to ensure the ability of a military force to meet both of these objectives: doctrine, manning, and force posture. The speaker also discussed the importance of leveraging alliances in order to support domestic deterrence efforts, highlighting NATO's Concept for Deterrence and Defence of the Euro-Atlantic Area, SACEUR's AOR-wide Strategic Plan, NATO's Enhanced Forward Presence (eFP), and the United States' State Partnership Program as examples of doctrine and force posture measures designed to provide credible deterrence. He cautioned that while malign actors were likely to denounce deterrence efforts as a threat, this should not stop efforts to update doctrine and operations to deter modern threats.

The second speaker emphasized the deteriorating security situation within Europe, pointing to some participating States' non-compliance and selective compliance with international rules and norms as a primary factor eroding trust within the OSCE community. He then outlined how his nation had established three pillars as the basis for its deterrence strategy, namely, 1) improving national defence posture through changes in doctrine, training, manning, and deployment of forces, 2) reliance on NATO mutual defence and deterrence through participation in eFP rotations, joint training, and multilateral exercises, and 3) adopting a whole-of-society approach which ensures that the government has the political will to defend the nation and that citizens and institutions are aware of their roles and responsibilities in securing the nation. The speaker concluded by asserting that deterrence was not a threat, and added that transparency and communication were important parts of the process of ensuring that changes in deterrence posture should not be perceived as threats by other nations.

The initial discussion focused on whether there was any inherent threat in the suggested doctrinal and force posture changes, shifting focus from small wars and terrorism operations back to great power competition. Both speakers agreed that these changes were a reflection of the changing reality of global security threats and that the public manner in which these changes were being implemented was meant to de-escalate tensions. Both speakers also highlighted efforts to improve transparency around training exercises, including

extending invitations, at the national and multilateral levels, to observe and/or participate in training exercises. Additionally, the speakers highlighted the importance of Vienna Document observation and inspection protocols as further measures to increase transparency, reduce tensions and ensure regional stability.

One delegation questioned whether conventional deterrence was capable of addressing the threat posed by proxy forces, given their widespread use in recent conflicts. Both speakers agreed that while conventional deterrence capacity did respond to proxy forces, the best assurance against the use of proxies was through collective efforts. This required both a whole-of-government approach to identifying and attributing proxy forces as belonging to a particular nation, and a regional collective effort to combat the employment of these forces in local and regional conflicts.

Another delegation agreed that changes in doctrine should not be viewed as threatening and that most OSCE nations possessed defensively oriented doctrine. However, it expressed concern about the proximity of training exercises to borders and the fact that proximity could be misperceived. The delegation concurred that transparency was the best option.

The last delegation to speak raised the question of whether arms control measures should be updated to include modern military threats such as proxy forces, cyberweapons, and other hybrid threats. The consensus was that many of these threats were too new to be fully understood and that additional time and study were required to better appreciate the threats these new capabilities presented and how best to mitigate those threats.

The moderator concluded the session by recapping the focus on conventional deterrence relying on the credible threat of military response, the importance of updating doctrine and posture to meet new threats, the importance of alliances for creating strong deterrence, and the need for transparency in reducing potential for escalation.

SESSION 3

Tuesday, 9 February 2021

Report of the Session Rapporteur

Competition panel

- **Discuss the re-emergence of long-term strategic competition among States and its impact on military doctrines to include competition below the threshold of armed conflict**
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The third working session was dedicated to a discussion on the development by participating States of doctrines to enable their military forces to compete and defend below the threshold of armed conflict, and to discussing the line between appropriate and inappropriate forms of competition.

The first speaker, from the doctrine centre of one of the participating States, noted the return of conflict that was both more marked but also more insidious in its modes of action. Some States were tempted to resort to concealed, disguised or ambiguous attacks, sometimes using proxies as a firewall to avoid political and legal accountability. The problem for armed forces was how to deal with an adversary (1) not operating openly, (2) acting against the interests of another country by using indirect action to control territories and resources, including digital resources or strategic industrial activities, and (3) also taking measures to weaken the response of the targeted nation and its alliances – by acting against morale, decision-making processes and public opinion – and attempting the denial of services.

The actions of such an adversary aimed to stay below the detectability threshold and below the threshold of the estimated acceptability level of the target nation. This notion of a threshold was important, the speaker argued, because the clear attribution of malicious actions brought the ambiguity sought by the adversary to an end and made it possible to apply legitimate countermeasures. There was indeed a great risk of situations getting out of control and leading to unfettered escalation, possibly even degenerating into armed conflict.

Only comprehensive strategy using all resources of a State, the speaker argued, made appropriate responses possible. Information must be shared across the entire inter-ministerial spectrum: the economy, foreign affairs, finance, internal security, social affairs, etc. Countermeasures would require resilience, anticipation, and the integration of a wide and diversified panoply of sensors and effectors across the operational environments of land, air, sea, outer space, cyberspace, and informational and electromagnetic spaces.

The second speaker said that globalization and digitalization had increased the range of ways and means available to protect and advance security interests of States and groups of States. Some were legal and legitimate, others not, and many represented unacceptable behaviour among neighbours. Competition could be seen and understood as an ongoing, low-level form of strategic intimidation on its own terms, aiming to achieve objectives below the threshold of open, armed conflict. The danger was that these same methods had the potential to resemble an initial stage of armed conflict; and the technology had the potential

to degrade networks and military technology, create distrust and confusion, deter key personnel, and delay decision-making and mobilization efforts.

In order to demonstrate the complexity of the issue, the speaker outlined the four most common tools of influence. (1) Large-scale military exercises and force demonstrations without prior notice; posturing with nuclear and other high-end and long-range weapons, and direct action by intelligence agencies, special forces and proxies. (2) Influence through strategic use of information, for example, interference in other States' politics, encouragement of polarization and extremism, or undermining of alliances. (3) Employment of cyber capabilities for intelligence purposes, influencing operations, and attacking critical infrastructure. (4) Instrumentalization of parts of the population in other countries to exert political influence and advance other political purposes.

Transparency was the key to building trust and avoiding unintended escalation. In the notification of military activities, all parties should adhere to both the letter and the spirit of the Vienna Document. Finally, dialogue and co-operation were essential – and co-operation on essential security activities was critical. Areas where co-operation, even between adversaries, was necessary included border guard and coast guard operations, maritime security, including search and rescue and Incidents at Sea Agreements, and political and commander-to-commander dialogue.

The third speaker posited that aggressive authoritarian States were masters of “below-threshold conflict” calculated to change the balance of power, “below-threshold conflict” being used to mean continuous competition across the “DIME” elements of national power: diplomatic, informational, military, and economic. This competition, she said, could involve arbitrary detention, disinformation campaigns, economic coercion, territorial expansion, Internet protocol (IP) theft, and cyberattacks.

There were four key features that made below-threshold conflict so effective. (1) Agility: Below-threshold measures are pan-domain and can unfold in diplomatic and economic space at same time; an attack in one domain may be designed to affect another domain. (2) Incrementalism: No step rises to a threshold that causes an immediate response. (3) Ambiguity: The State can argue that its activity is legitimate, for example, a State actor buys a small dual-use company at 500 times its market value as “an economic investment”, although it is clearly intended for military use. (4) Ability to leverage human element: Citizens of targeted States who are susceptible to disinformation unwittingly assist the hostile State.

Below-threshold conflict effectively paralysed will at both the beginning and the end of hostile action: at the beginning, incremental steps and ambiguity made States unlikely to react immediately for fear of escalating, and at the end States did not react because of the activity having already gone on for too long. This type of conflict was a campaign tied to higher strategic objectives that was impossible to treat in isolation. Credible military power corroborated below-threshold aggression, she added, allowing stronger States to get away with below-threshold activities not practicable for weaker States. This type of competition was motivated by a desire to create a military advantage using all the DIME elements of national power. (1) Diplomacy: seeking to influence international bodies discussing rules and norms of warfare through financing and obtaining key leadership positions, because skewing of deliberation in those bodies prevents other States from acting and “target States debate, adversaries deploy.” (2) Information: owning the narrative and interfering with target State

unity. (3) Military: changing facts on the ground. (4) Economic: exploiting gaps in economic regimes by compromising target State ability to have secure supply, infrastructure, and secure locations for military and government.

Finally, the speaker commented on military options for addressing below-threshold conflict, making the following four points. (1) Binary notions of peace and war are no longer accurate. (2) It is possible for adversaries to co-operate in one arena, compete in a second arena, and contest in a third; co-operation in one arena may be intended to set conditions for competition in another. (3) Military forces must not only adapt doctrine to consistent pan-domain operations but also design doctrine to defend the home country and adapt themselves to assist States on the front line with adversaries. (4) Military leaders need to sit at the whole-of-government table and be able to explain to health colleagues, social colleagues, and economic colleagues why the military has an interest in their activities.

The third speaker ended by stating that the unipolar world was now a thing of the past. Unipolarism had permitted the luxury of believing there was no need for the military to be at the forefront. Now, this needed to change.

The fourth and final speaker observed that in a world with different interests, cultures and perspectives, there were different assumptions of reality and there was a return to strategic inter-State competition with the intent to gain advantage. Competition occurred throughout the world and there were many zones of conflict but war between great powers was now uncommon. Because the cost of armed inter-State conflict was too high, many States had turned to full-spectrum conflict consisting of multi-domain coercion short of war. One view was that competition provided a “safety valve” and States were more likely to tolerate activities beneath the threshold of violence; another view was that competition was “real” and could act as a substitute for traditional warfare. Competition, the speaker noted, normally led to conflict only when a competitor challenged core norms and threatened multiple domains, which added to the uncertainty. Further challenges were difficulty of attribution, lack of proportionality, and inability to engage in signalling. The speaker offered several solutions for managing competition, including strengthening attribution, setting standards of proportionality, developing clear signalling strategies, determining shared restraints, and identifying irresponsible forms of behaviour.

A military representative from a participating State addressed the question of how military doctrine was adapting to competition. While competition had been normal historically, now it was back with a different flavour. The information environment was now very different from in the past because States and actors had access to an incredible amount of information with the potential to move influence quickly. Speed of information flow could now be combined with mis- and disinformation to incite and destabilize. The speed at which competition could move from crisis to conflict had become much quicker. A localized minor incident could now be inflamed into a very destabilized situation and lead to crisis quickly; misunderstanding and miscalculation could incite conflict. While he agreed with the speakers that there was a need for a whole-of-government approach, co-ordination across agencies was very difficult. The military must take a campaign approach including all instruments of power and acknowledging the constant, pervasive nature of competition.

Another delegate noted that his country had seven years’ experience of facing competition below the threshold of conflict, which required both medium- and long-term approaches in legislative and national security doctrine. In response this participating State

has developed a military security strategy with a new approach, including a cybersecurity strategy, which is in its final stages of development. The Euro-Atlantic community must continue to develop doctrine and strategy.

A third participating State noted that competition affected more than just the military domain. The disinformation issue was coming to a head and might be the defining question of the coming year or even the coming decade. What, the delegation asked rhetorically, should the OSCE's top goal be in order to make a difference in this field?

To summarize the session, the moderator asked the panellists what could be done to improve the situation and whether democracies were at a disadvantage as compared with autocracies.

The first speaker said that a holistic strategy should make it possible for democracies to co-ordinate a response. The attribution of actions was critical to identifying who was responsible, so that they could be deterred, because of the existence of actors trying to get around confidence and security measures and act illegally without being seen. The real challenge was to bring those using these strategies back to the table and rebuild trust.

According to a second panellist, two matters were of key importance: understanding what is going on and attribution of undesired activity. Democracies were vulnerable but in the long run better suited to mobilizing resources and dealing with such issues.

A third speaker agreed that democracies allowed creativity, independent thinking, and ingenuity. If we weren't having frank conversations now, it would soon be too late. It was good that the OSCE had set in motion a frank conversation that needed to be had. She closed her remarks by recommending that militaries should sit at the whole-of-government table and, once there, be credible by developing specialities they didn't know they needed.

The final speaker proposed that, paradoxically, the world was accelerating but the impacts of below-threshold attacks were incremental, though those impacts may also accelerate because cyber-arsenals were improving. Competition might be incremental, but it was also punctual and direct. Through more dialogue, there was potential to change from an environment dominated by the offensive to a situation marked by the collective development of new norms. It was important to look at technical means of verification and the OSCE might need to discuss an Open Skies-type version of confidence-building in the competition domain.

SESSION 4

Wednesday, 10 February 2021

Report of the Session Rapporteur

Co-operation panel

- **Within the context of increasing security challenges, how can doctrine address the need for co-operation among States?**
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The first speaker stated that there was an urgent need for the development of doctrine in the face of a deteriorating security situation. The new threats in the grey-zone environment were especially challenging. Internally, one important objective was to strengthen co-operation across the whole of society, not only between government agencies but also with the private sector. Organizations and command structures had to be developed from the governmental level downwards in order to ensure proper preparedness for crisis response. The purpose was to create a modern total defence, which was necessary in order to counter emerging threats and strengthen resilience on all conflict levels.

Another important focal area was to deepen co-operation with neighbouring countries in general and with one close neighbour in particular. Being part of a group of like-minded countries – sharing the same values and facing a common security situation and similar threats – encouraged and facilitated close and fruitful co-operation, including, for example, comprehensive information-sharing and operational planning. Establishing a web of multi- and bilateral co-operation generated common, shared security in a variety of different situations and fields, including environmental crises, counter-terrorism, peace-shaping, and security-building. Working closely with both the European Union and NATO was an essential doctrinal aspect.

The second speaker underlined that in order to prevent the emergence of armed conflicts and threats to national security, it was crucial to pursue bilateral relations and co-operation with the European Union and other multilateral actors. The security situations in northern Europe, the Baltic Sea region, the Arctic and the North Atlantic were closely intertwined. As the speaker's own country was located in such a strategically important area, it reflected changes in the security situation directly. The country's aim was to strengthen its international position, secure its independence and territorial integrity, enhance its general security and prosperity, and ensure the efficient functioning of society. Close international defence co-operation, and the option of providing and receiving international support, would remain an important part of its defence doctrine. It also had to maintain a credible national defence capability in order to uphold readiness and to repel any attack. Its international foreign, security and defence policy co-operation thus strengthened its defence capacity.

Its comprehensive defence co-operation with a neighbouring country was conducted without restrictions and covered all aspects. The countries concerned had a common operational environment, were responsible for stability in their respective region, and shared the same values. This type of co-operation therefore brought a small but vital contribution to security in a strategic region.

The third speaker drew attention to the fact that hybrid threats were more apparent than ever before. A neighbouring State's aggression had made doctrinal development important in order to ensure strong deterrence. Military co-operation with international partners was considered indispensable for the advancement of reforms and the strengthening of national security. The country was developing conceptual and doctrinal documents for its forces that would regulate military education and the individual and collective training of forces, with NATO methodology and the newest approaches being employed. A major doctrinal change was helping to transform and modernize the armed forces, thereby enhancing interoperability with partners.

Comprehensive advisory support and mentorship on all levels was helping to implement and accelerate further development in, for example, drafting guiding documents on different topics or taking part in various military activities, courses, seminars, joint training and exercises. One important objective of the defence reform was to improve military personnel's knowledge and skills for successfully accomplishing defence missions and carrying out tasks within multinational formations. All in all, this was substantially improving the management and the command and control system of the armed forces.

Furthermore, extensive international technical assistance with weapons, vehicles and other equipment was rapidly helping to improve operational capabilities, facilitate transformation, and accelerate reform.

A fourth speaker stressed that doctrinal adjustment to present times was crucial. An increasing amount was required in the training of soldiers, among other things a deeper knowledge of various technologies and of rules of engagement and international law. For small States, co-operation was particularly important for improved national security. Notably, in order to be as effective as possible, co-operation should be striven for at a level where the participating nations' military units were fully integrated with each other and could thus conduct operations together smoothly.

The doctrine of the speaker's country supported comprehensive military co-operation at sea, in the air and on the ground. The ability to organize combined military formations and, with national resources and without cross-border restrictions, to share responsibility for each other's territory was vital and very useful.

The next step was to further develop common doctrines and TTPs (techniques, tactics and procedures), to deepen procurement projects, to send more exchange officers to doctrine centres, study departments and units, and to conduct joint training. This would be economically advantageous, but would also enhance interoperability, flexibility and robustness. Within a few years, it should be possible to integrate military formations into a neighbouring country's military chain-of-command without any need for preparation.

The fifth speaker underlined that terrorism, climate change and migration also contributed to the challenges of the day. Co-operation and teamwork were of central importance to handling such a great variety of multidimensional threats to common security. His country had conducted training exercises together with the United States and many European, Arab and African partners with the aim of enhancing co-operation and interoperability in order to mitigate threats. Considering current developments, he suggested that the OSCE and its participating States should extend their interest and activities more into the African continent. His country was increasingly conducting training courses in fields such

as counter-terrorism and countering improvised explosive devices (IEDs), often in dialogue with NATO.

The sixth speaker stated that co-operation was necessary to counter a variety of threats ranging from pandemics to terrorism, extremism and transnational threats such as drug trafficking. His country was heavily affected by a deteriorating situation in a neighbouring country, especially in connection with terrorism and drug smuggling. Sometimes, effective co-operation on counter-terrorism was challenged by States' differing interpretations and definitions of terrorism. The response to the growing threat of terrorism must be holistic and the OSCE was playing a key role as a co-ordinator. In this connection he noted his country's close co-operation with the OSCE on SALW/SCA programmes that featured work with specialists in the field. The country had developed a strategic plan for mine-clearing and since 2014 had been conducting training with neighbouring partners on deactivating explosives. The country was ready to co-operate with any country on urgent matters and non-military measures were prioritized. A number of established regional partnerships were considered to be functioning well.

During the discussion an extensive intervention was made by a delegate from one participating State.

The delegate stressed that his country was set on a course aimed at establishing constructive dialogue with an alliance and other countries in the interests of promoting global and regional security. It stood ready to develop military co-operation with its neighbours and partners, including the conduct of joint operational and combat training exercises, so as to tackle common challenges in countering terrorist threats. The country was continuing to pay particular attention to expanding mutual ties within current co-operation and also looked forward to constructive interaction with the military bodies of the OSCE participating States and to the resumption of military-to-military dialogue, though the current situation unfortunately made this impossible. The delegate highlighted several examples of an imbalance in the field of nuclear deterrence which made dialogue very challenging. A good start on resuming military-to-military dialogue with a view to discussing issues of mutual interest and concern would be consultations among military experts on the following points, he suggested:

- Taking steps to reduce the intensity of military activities along the “contact line”, particularly during the pandemic, and doing so on the basis of reciprocity and maximum transparency;
- Moving large exercises back into the interior of countries;
- Enhancing the mechanism for preventing dangerous military activities in airspace and at sea – above all in the Baltic and Black Sea regions.

Following the delegation's intervention, several challenges related to nuclear weapons were elaborated upon.

The panel viewed it as a major challenge to assess exactly how a modernized arms control regime could reinforce military co-operation between participating States and what kind of arms control measures could provide a sound basis for facilitating such co-operation.

Trust and confidence were key and everything that could enhance trust was crucial. There were suitable tools at hand, but they had to be updated and used appropriately.

Similarly, the panel found it challenging to answer the question how the use of the OSCE as a whole could be improved. Adapting the Vienna Document to the current situation would evidently make an important contribution. In certain forms of co-operation, it would be beneficial if there were greater involvement on the part of small countries capable of playing a more extensive role on account of their geographic location.

The panel unanimously expressed apprehension at the thought of what topics the High-Level Military Doctrine Seminar would be discussing in five years' time. Panellists considered it not unlikely that the current tensions would have deteriorated even more; by then it would be desirable for arms control mechanisms to have been changed, as was urgently needed; and a discussion on grey-zone matters could be expected, with regard to legal challenges among others. Developments in Africa might well be having a bigger impact on the OSCE area and there might possibly be dialogues with the continent's regional organizations.

SESSION 5

Wednesday, 10 February 2021

Report of the Session Rapporteur

Crisis response panel

- **Highlight the need for military forces to support civilian authorities during crisis response and how the lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic is shaping doctrine development**
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The moderator opened the session by highlighting the role of the armed forces in the pandemic response, specifically how they had supported the civilian authorities in the delivery of public health services while continuing to fulfil their responsibility for national defence. Noting that the COVID-19 crisis had significantly altered people's perception of risks, threats and challenges, she pointed to the importance of being proactive. It was necessary to monitor the pandemic's evolution, just as in every other crisis, in order to be able to mitigate its effects. The readiness, flexibility and expertise of the armed forces enabled them to provide effective support to the civilian authorities, whose capabilities were often overstretched. The solidarity that had manifested itself between the armed forces and individual agencies in several countries was an important positive aspect. The moderator suggested lastly that it was appropriate, given that one full year had passed since the outbreak of the pandemic, to review what had been done so far and to begin sharing some of the lessons learned.

The three panellists invited by the Chairperson offered national perspectives on the COVID-19 response and presented some of the measures that their countries had taken so far. All three speakers underscored the fact that the pandemic had changed the paradigm of crisis response and the military's role in assisting civilian authorities. The military had resilience as a "strategic reserve" to offer to civilian first responders, who might sometimes lack the logistical and technical capacities to respond adequately to a major crisis. The panellists emphasized the need for excellent civil-military co-operation. In that respect, well-functioning command and control structures were particularly relevant. They agreed that two distinguishing features of the COVID-19 crisis were its unpredictability and volatility. Military participation in civil emergency operations was not a new phenomenon, but it had so far been limited to humanitarian assistance and disaster relief at the national and international level. The pandemic had highlighted the need for military forces to support civilian authorities as part of the sustained response to a health crisis, even to the extent of performing non-traditional tasks. In the panellists' view, the lessons learned from the COVID-19 crisis were likely to shape the development of military doctrine with regard to responding to future crises. Indeed, the pandemic had served as a "reality check" in the sense that societies across the OSCE area had been confronted with a very real threat and had had to reconsider their preparedness to deal with such a situation.

The first panellist observed that one of the biggest challenges for the armed forces during the pandemic had been to provide effective crisis response support to the civilian authorities while at the same time maintaining ongoing operations within and beyond the national borders, including routine training events and preparations. The work of his own

country's armed forces during the pandemic had covered three areas: (1) protecting soldiers and civilians; (2) providing support to the general public by assisting specialized agencies; and (3) carrying out their core duties, such as field missions, permanent deployments abroad and training events. Providing an overview of his country's use of armed forces in crisis management, his presentation covered essential lessons learned, possible effects to bear in mind in the future, and doctrinal developments. Among the lessons identified by his country's armed forces were the importance of "mission command", the consistent application of hygiene and infection protection concepts, the strengthening of digital infrastructures, the streamlining of training content, the applicability of the doctrine of homeland protection, and the need for civil-military co-operation and military advisory expertise when managing a national crisis. It was important for the military to co-ordinate properly the support they provided to the civilian authorities while keeping all other structures functional. The speaker also argued that existing military doctrine on organizing support for civilian authorities needed to be adapted to take into account the possibility of novel and unpredictable large-scale crises. That might, *inter alia*, require the armed forces to take on non-conventional tasks.

The second panellist pointed out that the armed forces were an integral element of his country's security architecture and played a key function in dealing with national emergencies like the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition to fulfilling their core defence mission, the armed forces were supporting first response agencies such as health services, the police and regional and local authorities. The military's role in the pandemic response was not fundamentally different from its role in responding to traditional emergencies, save for the scope and scale involved. It was necessary to examine the evolution of similar public health threats that might also escalate into pandemics and their potential interlinkages with other challenges, such as climate change, biodiversity loss and population growth. Increased awareness of opportunistic threats, such as hybrid or asymmetric threats, during global and regional crises was also required. In order to tackle a pandemic as effectively and efficiently as possible, a more unified global response was called for, which might also include military co-operation – for example, in the provision of military expertise, the delivery of medical supplies, and the transport and protection of vaccine shipments. In that regard, developing further a European Union military co-ordination platform to facilitate an effective joint military response by all of the Member States to any pan-European crisis would be highly relevant. According to the speaker, the armed forces' interaction with other national support agencies in the pandemic response had paved the way for enhancing institutional resilience through the continued involvement of military personnel. Military skills and "mission command" had clearly proven their worth during the highly dynamic COVID-19 crisis. Military doctrine on the provision of support to civilian authorities needed to be reviewed carefully in the light of that large-scale non-military crisis. In particular, it had become even more important to adopt and implement a whole-of-government approach.

The third panellist gave an overview of the measures undertaken in his country during the COVID-19 crisis and how the armed forces there had supported the civilian authorities and governmental agencies. In order to be better prepared for future crises, he advocated an exchange of experiences and lessons learned from the pandemic response, especially regarding military co-operation with civilian authorities. Armed forces could adapt their capabilities rapidly and effectively so as to provide effective support in any kind of crisis. Significantly, the COVID-19 crisis had required swift changes to national legislation to ensure the legality of deploying the armed forces as part of the public health response. All those lessons should feed into a shared knowledge base and serve as the starting point for the

development of future strategies and doctrines. The speaker highlighted the role of the Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Centre as the main mechanism for civil defence response in NATO. He also noted the important contribution made by reservists. The defence ministry of his country had drawn up some proposals for developing military capabilities at the European level in order to mitigate the impact of future public health crises – in particular, a proposal to organize and host a European Union “Military Medicine Congress” aimed at sharing experiences and building links between the military medical personnel of Member States. His defence ministry had also drafted a “Protocol for the preparation, deployment and redeployment of military forces under COVID-19 conditions”, which could be of relevance to both the European Union and NATO. The speaker called for the effective co-operation with the private sector to be continued, and stressed that prevention, early warning, preparedness and a multisectoral approach were key to handling crises like the COVID-19 pandemic. Solidarity and collective efforts had always to be prioritized. It was important to learn as much as possible from the crisis and to be willing to share with one’s partners and allies the experience gained in responding to it.

The keynote presentations were followed by an interactive question-and-answer session. On the whole, delegations welcomed the panellists’ contributions and agreed with the views expressed in these. Some delegations described their own national experiences. The participating States generally emphasized the importance of civil-military co-operation and likewise the need for genuine solidarity and partnership. It was pointed out that in a situation such as the pandemic, the civilian authorities had to remain in charge at all times. Some participating States underlined the need for strong international co-operation in order to overcome other looming crises such as climate change. Several participating States mentioned new threats that had still not been fully reflected in military doctrine, but which might well affect many countries and their citizens in the near future. There was general consensus on the need for an international collaborative approach, the aim being to develop sufficient resilience before a crisis actually erupted. Several speakers recalled the problems their countries had faced in terms of dependence on other countries and global supply chains. Some participating States brought up issues related to disinformation and, more broadly, “hybrid threats” of various kinds, which not only had posed an additional challenge during the pandemic but would also continue to be a cause of concern in the years to come. A comprehensive approach was key to tackling those issues, which called for careful analysis and would undoubtedly necessitate changes in doctrine. The merits of integrated command and control structures on the one hand, and decentralization on the other were also discussed.

One participating State highlighted the relevance of the OSCE Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security to the deployment of military forces in support of civilian authorities during crisis response. The doctrinal bases of OSCE participating States and the way in which they evolved in response to the changing security environment had to be consistent with the norms and principles enshrined in the Code. According to another participating State, a robust long-term strategy for crisis response was required, the COVID-19 pandemic having served as a “strategic shock” that had forced the military to adapt their modus operandi. It was noted, though, that the armed forces’ role in helping to respond to the pandemic was not fundamentally different from that they had played in earlier crises: only the scope and scale of the assistance provided were much larger. It was also emphasized that the participating States needed to work together within the OSCE to address the pandemic and future challenges, including climate change and irregular migration. All such efforts had to be reflected in the future development of military strategies and doctrines.

In her summary, the moderator recapitulated the main takeaway messages from the session, emphasizing the need for early warning systems, good preparation and a whole-of-government approach. The session had, in particular, highlighted the importance of drawing up, adjusting and updating contingency plans. Military planning skills and “mission command and control” had helped in coping with the unpredictability and volatility that marked the COVID-19 crisis. She stressed that the armed forces’ co-operation with civilian authorities on crisis prevention and response needed to continue after the pandemic; the improvement process did not by any means end with the current seminar. Various initiatives based on different approaches had already been launched by other international organizations, such as the European Union and NATO. In the OSCE, a direct connection had been made between the response to the COVID-19 crisis and the Structured Dialogue, with the official report on the Structured Dialogue in 2020 noting: “It is important that the implications of COVID-19 for security stay on the Structured Dialogue agenda, also in relation to other potential global crises.” In conclusion, she observed that it would be up to the participating States to decide where they wanted to go, what they wanted to undertake and how they wanted to co-operate in the future, but that in any case they should strive to build on what had been learned and shared.