

Delegation of Switzerland

**STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF SWITZERLAND
AT THE 2011 ANNUAL SECURITY REVIEW CONFERENCE**

Vienna, 1 July 2011

**Working session III: Revitalizing, updating and modernizing conventional
arms control and confidence- and security-building measures:
challenges and opportunities**

Mr. Chairperson,

Arms control and confidence- and security-building measures (CSBMs) have long been part of the core business of the OSCE and are of great significance as important pillars of the Euro-Atlantic security architecture. They supplement and help to strengthen the international collective security treaties and global arms control regimes.

Confidence- and security-building measures have made an extremely important contribution in the past to increasing mutual trust among participating States and hence to strengthening stability and security in the OSCE area. To permit advantage to be taken of this positive influence in the future, the mechanisms must be adapted to the changed European security environment.

The Heads of State or Government gave an important stimulus to this process at the OSCE Summit in Astana last year when they recognized the conventional arms control and confidence- and security-building regimes as major instruments for ensuring military stability, predictability and transparency that needed to be revitalized, updated and modernized. We firmly believe that the successful conclusion of this process is crucial for the future reputation of the OSCE as a relevant and effective regional security organization.

Switzerland therefore fully supports the Lithuanian Chairmanship and the Icelandic, Italian and Kazakh chairs of the Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC) in their follow-up to the Astana Summit. In our view, the following key principles, which were already reaffirmed in the Corfu Process, should serve as guidelines for all modernization.

1. The strategic accomplishments of CSBMs should be preserved for the purpose of credibility and effectiveness.
2. The existing CSBMs should be implemented in full.

3. The arms control and confidence- and security building regimes should be suitably improved and optimized.
4. Non-military CSBMs should be developed in future on the basis of existing CSBMs in the politico-military dimension.

Above all, Switzerland is greatly committed to the ongoing development of the Vienna Document 1999, which the Forum for Security Co-operation was mandated to pursue by the Heads of State or Government at the OSCE Summit in Astana.

The Vienna Document offers participating States and the OSCE itself a valuable instrument for preventing conflicts and reducing risks in the event of unforeseen military activities, which could also be used more for early warning and crisis management. To ensure the success of its development, however, there is a need for honest dialogue and a culture of openness and co-operation among the participating States. In view in particular of the uncertain future of the other arms control regimes, we therefore consider it important to keep all doors open for further negotiation.

In this context, we should also like to emphasize that the Vienna Document is no substitute for the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE Treaty), nor can the current negotiations resolve the problem of protracted conflicts. We therefore believe that a substantial development of the Vienna Document is possible in spite of the current gridlock in conventional arms control. We are thinking here in particular of lowering the thresholds for prior notification of military activities.

The process involved is a progressive one that might not be completed by the end of the year. Switzerland is nevertheless confident that an updated version can be adopted in 2011 and presented to the Ministerial Council in Vilnius. Until then, however, a more concerted effort by all participating States is required, and our joint endeavours must be aimed at achieving substantial added value.

Apart from the development of the Vienna Document, Switzerland is also attentively following the evolution of informal consultations by the parties to the CFE Treaty on a possible new framework agreement to strengthen and modernize conventional arms control in Europe. At the OSCE Summit in Astana Switzerland already reaffirmed its willingness to make an active contribution to negotiations on a new arms control instrument. In the spirit of transparency, we would therefore appreciate being informed regularly on the status of consultations within the Group of 36, not least because every evolution in arms control could also have an influence on the corresponding OSCE instruments.

We are also of the opinion that the efforts should be continued to combat the destabilizing effect of accumulated and insufficiently secured small arms and ammunition. They supplement and strengthen the existing CSBMs in the OSCE area. Switzerland is willing to continue to contribute its expertise in this field.

Switzerland also attaches great importance to the OSCE Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security as an instrument for confidence- and security-building. Together with Austria, we organize regular regional seminars with a view to continuously increasing awareness of the Code of Conduct and promoting its implementation in the relevant region.

The next seminar will be taking place in a few days (5 to 7 July 2011) in Odessa and is open to the countries of the Black Sea region and South Caucasus. We are determined to continue to encourage implementation of the Code of Conduct and to speak up within the OSCE family for democratic and parliamentary control of armed forces and strengthening of the international law of war. The proposal by Switzerland and others to hold a one-day annual implementation meeting within the FSC is also designed to serve this purpose.

Switzerland also welcomes all efforts to make the norms and principles of the Code of Conduct known outside the OSCE area – not only with our Mediterranean and Asian Partners for Co-operation but elsewhere besides.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.