

Forum for Security Co-operation

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The Forum for Security Co-operation represents the military dimension of the OSCE. The Chairmanship of the Forum rotates every four months in accordance with the alphabetical order of the OSCE participating States. In 2007, the Forum was chaired successively by the Republic of Cyprus, the Republic of Croatia and the Kingdom of Denmark.

The weekly Security Dialogue served as a valuable mechanism for the continuing debate on regional and sub-regional security issues and facilitated co-operation and an exchange of views with other international organizations. Participating States discussed topics such as the construction of a U.S. ballistic missile defence system in Europe and a missile incident in Georgia on 6 August.

In the course of the year, the Forum convened a number of special meetings to examine issues of particular interest to participating States, including:

Combating the Illicit Trafficking of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) by Air, 21 March;

Civil Military Emergency Preparedness, 26 September;

Existing and Future Arms Control and Confidence- and Security-building Measures in the OSCE Area, 24 October.

The special meetings afforded an opportunity to exchange views and comments in a structured and specialized manner. They also contributed to awareness raising, information sharing and networking among national experts.

The 17th Annual Implementation Assessment Meeting to discuss the present and future implementation of agreed confidence- and security-building measures as established in Chapter XI of the *Vienna Document 1999* was held in Vienna on 6 and 7 March. In addition to the standard agenda, the Forum introduced a meeting of the heads of national verification centres as well as a working session on improving the implementation of existing measures. Both features enriched the debate.

In May, the Forum contributed to the *Annual Security Review Conference* by suggesting a list of possible politico-military topics for discussion. Similarly, the Forum Chairperson delivered an address setting out the work accomplished since the previous year's *Conference*.

The implementation of the *Document on Small Arms and Light Weapons* and the *Document on Stockpiles of Conventional Ammunition* continued throughout the year, during which the assistance projects in Armenia

to dispose of the highly toxic and volatile rocket fuel *Melange* and in Ukraine to clean up the Novobohdanivka ammunition explosion site were successfully concluded. The Forum received formal requests for assistance from the Republic of Georgia, Montenegro and Ukraine related to stockpiles management and demilitarization of conventional ammunition.

Similarly, the OSCE, in co-operation with the UN Development Programme, initiated activities in the Republic of Belarus and Montenegro.

The tragic loss of two military officers seconded by the Kingdom of Norway to the OSCE field operation in Tajikistan was received with shock and great sadness in the Forum, which expressed its condolences to the families of the deceased.

On 23 May, the Forum convened an informal meeting on the *OSCE Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security* as a follow-up to the Special Forum held on the *Code* on 27 September 2006. The discussion centred on the implementation, public awareness and outreach of the *Code*, as well as on suggestions for qualitative improvement of the related questionnaire. In July, a Co-ordinator for the *Code* was appointed to collate ideas, views and proposals by participating States, and to assist the Forum's Chairperson and the Chairmanship Troika in matters related to the subject.

The implementation of the 2004 *UN Security Council Resolution 1540* on non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction continued to be an area of particular interest to participating States. Efforts to formulate a best practice guide were launched by the United States, later joined by Canada. To raise awareness and reach out geographically, the Forum made presentations at 1540 seminars in Jordan on 4 and 5 September and in Kyrgyzstan on 16 and 17 October.

In order to facilitate and strengthen co-operation among the three dimensions within the OSCE, the Spanish Chairmanship institutionalized regular meetings with the Permanent Council. The fall joint meeting proved to be an excellent opportunity for the two decision-making bodies to co-ordinate efforts towards the OSCE Ministerial Council. Participating States agreed this practice should be continued, as it allowed for integrated handling of issues that cut across dimensions.

The Madrid Ministerial Council meeting adopted *Decision No. 3 on Issues Relevant to the Forum for Security Co-operation*, the first such global *Decision* on the Forum. It will serve as a basis for the Forum's activities during 2008.

Delegations of the 56 OSCE participating States discuss a U.S. missile defence initiative at a meeting of the Forum for Security Co-operation, in Vienna on 31 October. (OSCE/Mikhail Evstafiev)

