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STATEMENT ON
The closing of the Austrian FSC Chairpersonship.

Delivered by Ambassador Anne-Kirsti Karlsen at the 996th meeting of the Forum for Security Cooperation, Vienna, 15 December 2021

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Secretary Generals, Mr. Chairperson, Dear Colleagues,

Norway warmly thanks Austria for the conduct of the Chairpersonship of the Forum for Security Cooperation (FSC) this autumn. We also thank H.E. Dieter Kandlhofer, Secretary General, Federal Ministry of Defence of Austria and Secretary General Helga Schmid, OSCE, for their remarks at this occasion.

Mr. Chairperson,

Thank you for recapitulating the highlights of your chairpersonship. Your program and work fully met our expectations.

We appreciate your well-balanced FSC program conducted this trimester and the attention given to several important matters within the FSC's scope of work.

The focus you put on conventional arms control this autumn was timely, as it is a topic we regard as the core business of the FSC.

The Vienna Document (VD) is our main tool for practicing transparency and openness. Norway values the opportunities grounded in this document, allowing the States to discuss matters of their concern. It is important that we all contribute to openness and transparency by fulfilling its paragraphs and

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intentions - in letter and spirit. We were there for one of the 45 participating States joining the statement on modernizing the VD at the MC. Norway will continue to support a substantial update of the Vienna Document.

The discussion on mil-to-mil contacts on doctrine and the Code of Conduct with the focus of integration of women in armed forces, were timely and interesting topics as Security dialogues. Sadly, we couldn't reach consensus on decisions on these topics, but the discussions in the FSC gave great value and should be continued.

Mr. Chairperson,

The Security dialogues provide opportunities to discuss issues of common interest and of relevance to European security. The Forum for Security Cooperation is an important place for dialogue, for exchange of information and opinions

We appreciate that this year's ASRC could finally be conducted in September. As always, we welcome this opportunity to discuss European security, in what we believe is an important OSCE-arena for frank, open and inclusive dialogue. Next year we should make efforts to reach consensus on the agenda in due time. The Structured Dialogue (SD) to which you dedicated a joint FSC/PC meeting, also serves the purpose of dialogue, involving capitals as well as Vienna-based delegations. The topics covered here are highly relevant to the FSC.

Considering this, Norway regrets that the FSC was not able to reach consensus on any Ministerial Council decisions this year in Stockholm. The current political situation made such a consensus impossible, despite the FSC chairs' tireless efforts to work around our differences. Norway was ready to join consensus on all four draft decisions.

Mr Chairperson,

Although a dedicated meeting on UNSCR 1325 was not scheduled for this trimester, you held your promise to include Women, Peace and Security (WPS) into the other topics where relevant, thus mainstreaming it into the work of the FSC. This was also visible in all the proposed texts for the MC. Norway found this approach successful and is a strong supporter of it.

We should remain being ambitious to further advancing of the WPS agenda within the FSC. The Joint Statement by 53 pS on WPS delivered at the Stockholm Ministerial shows the great support for this.

Mr Chairperson,

You and your team have chaired the FSC in an excellent way, we have admired you for the way you have coped with demanding tasks you have faced and the parallel work also chairing the 2nd dimension committee on EEF. We thank you for this.

We wish the Azerbaijan Chairpersonship all the best for the coming period and ensure that Norway will contribute constructively in your FSC meetings. Knowing very well that in 2022 the FSC, will mark its 30th anniversary.

We would also like to use this opportunity to thank the previous Chairpersonship, Armenia, for a job well done when leaving the troika, and welcome Belarus – the new member of the Troika.

Excellencies, colleagues,

The FSC was never meant to be a likeminded forum. Even so, we do hope to continue dialogue next year in good faith and with the ambition to reach mutual understanding, if not agreement. There is great need for confidence-building measures, arms control and security dialogue, and it is our job to move this agenda forward.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.