



Chairmanship: Azerbaijan

1000th PLENARY MEETING OF THE FORUM

1. Date: Wednesday, 9 February 2022 (in the Neuer Saal and via video teleconference)

Opened: 10 a.m.
Suspended: 1.10 p.m.
Resumed: 3.10 p.m.
Closed: 4.20 p.m.

2. Chairperson: Ambassador R. Sadigbayli
Mr. F. Osmanov

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

Agenda item 1: SECURITY DIALOGUE: “SMALL ARMS AND LIGHT WEAPONS AND STOCKPILES OF CONVENTIONAL AMMUNITION – OSCE COMMITMENTS AND LESSONS LEARNED”

- *Presentation by Mr. M. Bleinroth, Deputy Permanent Representative of Germany to the OSCE*
- *Presentation by Ms. A. Gruber, Ministerial Councillor, Ministry of Defence of Austria*
- *Presentation by Mr. M. Nikolić, Director of the Directorate for the OSCE and the Council of Europe, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Montenegro*
- *Presentation by Ambassador J.-C. Brunet, Ambassador-at-large on transnational criminal threats and the fight against the illicit trafficking of small arms and light weapons, Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs of France*

Chairperson, Mr. M. Bleinroth (FSC.DEL/69/22 OSCE+), Ms. A. Gruber (FSC.DEL/71/22 OSCE+), Mr. M. Nikolić, Ambassador J.-C. Brunet (FSC.DEL/72/22 OSCE+), France-European Union (with the candidate

countries Albania, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia; the country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate country Bosnia and Herzegovina; the European Free Trade Association countries Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, members of the European Economic Area; as well as Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine, in alignment) (FSC.DEL/62/22), Germany (Annex 1), Switzerland, United States of America (FSC.DEL/51/22 OSCE+), United Kingdom, Turkey, Ukraine (FSC.DEL/66/22), Bosnia and Herzegovina (Annex 2), Russian Federation (Annex 3), Chairperson of the Informal Group of Friends on Small Arms and Light Weapons and Stockpiles of Conventional Ammunition (Latvia) (Annex 4)

Agenda item 2: GENERAL STATEMENTS

Situation in and around Ukraine: Ukraine (FSC.DEL/67/22), France-European Union (with the candidate countries Albania, Montenegro and North Macedonia; the European Free Trade Association countries Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, members of the European Economic Area; as well as Andorra, Moldova and Ukraine, in alignment) (FSC.DEL/60/22), United States of America (FSC.DEL/52/22 OSCE+), United Kingdom (FSC.DEL/64/22 OSCE+), Canada

Agenda item 3: MILLENNIUM PLENARY MEETING OF THE FORUM FOR SECURITY CO-OPERATION

Chairperson (FSC.GAL/16/22 OSCE+), Chairperson of the Permanent Council (FSC.DEL/74/22 OSCE+), Secretary General (SEC.GAL/22/22 OSCE+), France-European Union (with the candidate countries Albania, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia; the country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate country Bosnia and Herzegovina; the European Free Trade Association countries Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, members of the European Economic Area; as well as Andorra, Georgia, Moldova, San Marino and Ukraine, in alignment) (FSC.DEL/61/22), United States of America (FSC.DEL/53/22 OSCE+), Belarus (FSC.DEL/57/22 OSCE+), United Kingdom, Turkey, Canada, Belgium (FSC.DEL/56/22/Corr.1), Ukraine (FSC.DEL/65/22), Switzerland (Annex 5) (FSC.DEL/59/22), Russian Federation (Annex 6)

Agenda item 4: ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- (a) *Briefing on the joint military exercise "Union Resolve 2022", to be conducted from 10 to 20 February 2022:* Belarus (FSC.DEL/58/22 OSCE+), Lithuania
- (b) *Resumption of verification activities in Turkey as from 1 February 2022:* Turkey

4. Next meeting:

Wednesday, 16 February 2022, at 10 a.m., in the Neuer Saal and via video teleconference



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

FSC.JOUR/1006
9 February 2022
Annex 1

ENGLISH
Original: GERMAN

1000th Plenary Meeting
FSC Journal No. 1006, Agenda item 1

STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF GERMANY

Germany fully supports the statement by the European Union. I should like, however, to make a few additional remarks in my national capacity. First and foremost, my thanks go to the Azerbaijani Chairmanship for having selected this important topic for today's 1000th meeting of the Forum for Security Co-operation.

As we all know, the illegal proliferation of small arms and light weapons (SALW) unfortunately still poses a great danger to peace and security in the OSCE area.

This is all the more reason for us to work together in the OSCE to continuously develop further the regulation of SALW and the security of conventional ammunition storage.

The OSCE best practices that we have developed together in this field are living documents. They are based on the experiences and insights of all participating States, and our experts are working together constructively in order to evaluate them regularly and update them as necessary.

Germany is convinced that this exchange of experiences is enriching for all parties. We will therefore continue to be very involved in the work on best practices and also in joint assessment visits to States requesting assistance.

Germany is the second largest donor to small arms control projects within the OSCE, with around 16 million euros for over 50 different projects in the entire OSCE area.

There are many success stories among these numerous projects. Allow me to single out one of them. The OSCE is one of the main organizations supporting the implementation of the road map for comprehensive small arms control in South Eastern Europe.

Under the auspices of Germany and France, this road map was jointly developed in 2018 by the Western Balkan countries in co-ordination with the European Union and with technical support from the South Eastern and Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SEESAC).

This road map has evolved into a best practice model for an integrated and regionally focused approach to small arms control and has become a model for other regions around the world, for example in the Caribbean and West Africa.

In view of ever more threats and new security developments, we are regularly faced with new challenges. The OSCE assistance mechanism must be flexibly adapted to them. I should like to commend the OSCE – the Conflict Prevention Centre and the field operations in the region – for expanding the project portfolio so as to respond appropriately to such needs.

Last autumn, we were able to see for ourselves the great flexibility of the OSCE assistance mechanism. The OSCE was one of the first multilateral forums to address the rapidly evolving, volatile situation in Afghanistan and its potential impact on Central Asia and Europe. The high risks of a massive proliferation of conventional weapons, especially SALW and the corresponding ammunition and explosives, were the subject of various conferences. Appropriate solutions have been developed. Against this backdrop, Germany significantly increased its annual contribution to the OSCE Trust Fund for SALW and stockpiles of conventional ammunition to 2 million euros at the end of last year.

Let me conclude by addressing the most important prerequisite for exploiting the potential of the OSCE assistance mechanism. It is crucial that our work always remains professional and, above all, non-political. Only by working together can we curb the illegal proliferation of SALW and their ammunition. The aim is to further strengthen small arms control in all conflict phases and in so doing to also take into account the gender perspective. Only together will we succeed in making the best possible use of all the instruments at our disposal at the international, regional, national and local level.

I thank you for your attention and kindly ask you to attach this statement to the journal of the day.



1000th Plenary Meeting
FSC Journal No. 1006, Agenda item 1

**STATEMENT BY
THE DELEGATION OF BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA**

Mr. Chairperson,

The delegation of Bosnia and Herzegovina thanks the panel of speakers for their valuable contributions to today's Security Dialogue. We should also like to thank the Azerbaijani Chairmanship for convening this discussion.

Over the past thirty years, our country has been engaged in the disposal of surplus stocks of small arms and light weapons (SALW) and stockpiles of conventional ammunition (SCA), and in the improvement of storage conditions. For obvious reasons, the focus of these activities has been on supporting our armed forces and Ministry of Defence. We have also made great strides in developing and strengthening our normative frameworks, harmonizing national policies with the global and regional control regimes, and drawing up relevant strategies. Our contributions and reporting under regional and global control mechanisms serve as eloquent testimony of the progress achieved.

Through the OSCE assistance mechanism, which is based on the generous support of the OSCE and its participating States, the Ministry of Defence of Bosnia and Herzegovina has received considerable assistance, in the form of advice and infrastructure, with its efforts to enhance physical security and stockpile management.

Moreover, our interministerial body for SALW co-ordination and all 16 police agencies in the country are benefiting from the OSCE assistance project aimed at building capacity for preventing and combating trafficking in SALW, ammunition and explosives.

Since we are receiving considerable support through the OSCE assistance mechanism, we are very interested in the topic of today's Security Dialogue and in all the ongoing processes that could further advance the normative framework and practical work on the ground.

We can contribute to these discussions by showcasing the experience of our public authorities in interacting with the OSCE assistance mechanism. We should like, in particular, to highlight the practical consequences of assistance projects, the policy and administrative challenges that have sometimes arisen, and various good practices that we have identified.

SALW- and SCA-related assistance projects are complex and multifaceted; they are implemented under challenging conditions, with a variety of interlocutors who need to provide their input. In this regard, our experience indicates that the successful implementation of such projects depends not so much on technical solutions as on comprehensive approaches involving systematic and co-ordinated action.

Mr. Chairperson,

Allow me to stress two points. First, we have to recognize that if physical security and stockpile management projects are to be truly successful, they need to be designed to bring about significant and lasting change affecting the existing processes and organizational structures, including their staff and the technology used. Such change requires the commitment of resources, guidance, perseverance and time.

Secondly, all the efforts and resources invested in the design of a project will have no effect unless there is a requirement for national ownership of the project by the beneficiary.

We acknowledge the important relationship that we have with the OSCE, and emphasize that the current situation as regards the implementation of our OSCE commitments related to SALW and SCA is excellent. We also gratefully acknowledge the support that we are receiving in numerous fields. We hope to explore further options for putting into practice and enhancing our commitments on SALW and SCA.

We believe that we will be able to demonstrate the concrete and quantifiable results of our work in the field of SALW and SCA by sharing the lessons we have learned, together with our experiences and ideas for improvements.

In closing, I should like to take this opportunity to express our gratitude to Switzerland for its continued assistance with projects in Bosnia and Herzegovina and its recent announcement of a financial contribution of 70,000 Swiss francs towards the capacity-building programme on small arms deactivation.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.



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

FSC.JOUR/1006
9 February 2022
Annex 3

ENGLISH
Original: RUSSIAN

1000th Plenary Meeting
FSC Journal No. 1006, Agenda item 1

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

Mr. Chairperson,

We should like to join in thanking the Azerbaijani Chairmanship for having organized this discussion on the issue of small arms and light weapons (SALW) and stockpiles of conventional ammunition (SCA). We believe it is symbolic that today's 1000th meeting of the Forum is devoted to this unifying theme. We are grateful to the distinguished keynote speakers for their insightful presentations.

It should be recalled that the foundations for extensive activities to develop and facilitate the implementation of measures to regulate the storage, circulation and destruction of SALW and SCA, including rocket fuel components, were already laid in the 1996 OSCE Framework for Arms Control. Over the years, this set of issues related to the implementation and improvement of OSCE norms on SALW and SCA, along with practical assistance in stockpile management, has remained one of the most effective and relevant areas of work of our Organization. This is confirmed not only by the numerous successful OSCE projects, some twenty thematic OSCE Ministerial Council decisions and declarations, but most importantly by the lives that have been saved.

Today, the prevention of illicit trafficking in SALW is at the forefront of our joint work. The United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects is the only dedicated global instrument in this field. The OSCE's support for the implementation of the Programme of Action is important, not least from the point of view of bolstering the Programme's authority. On a positive note, we take heed of the Austrian initiatives aimed at strengthening the OSCE assistance mechanism and combating illicit trafficking of SALW and conventional ammunition. We support the updating of the OSCE Best Practice Guides and confirm our readiness to make a constructive contribution to that process.

We note the continuation of the Franco-German initiative on donor co-ordination in combating illicit trafficking of SALW in the Western Balkans. The corresponding road map has yet to be fully implemented – it runs until 2024. At the same time, we should not forget that the problem of illicit trafficking in SALW is especially acute in those areas where control over the situation by law enforcement agencies has been slackened and where there are high

levels of corruption, unemployment and organized crime. We would be grateful to the distinguished delegations of France and Germany if they could inform the Forum about the progress of their major project at a later stage.

The Russian Federation shares the concerns of the international community regarding the uncontrolled spread of SALW and advocates further consolidation of global efforts to counter this threat. Good work in this area requires improving the effectiveness of national legislation, strengthening regional co-operation and seeking concrete and practical measures to prevent illicit trafficking, not least through the Programme of Action. We are ready, upon request, to consider providing expert assistance on all aspects of SALW control throughout the life cycle of such weapons, and to share our experience in establishing an effective regulatory and legal framework in this area.

Mr. Chairperson,

The Russian delegation could have ended on that positive note, but a key principle of diplomacy is the principle of reciprocity, so we should like to exercise our right of reply to the Ukrainian delegation. It is necessary to highlight the following points.

First of all, Russia pays due attention to the tasks involved in ensuring effective State control over the circulation of SALW at the national level and pursues a responsible policy in the sphere of military and technical co-operation with foreign countries, guided by the strict requirements of its well-developed export control system.

Secondly, the unfounded statements we have heard today are primarily intended to divert the attention of the OSCE participating States from the fact that local law enforcement authorities in Ukraine are failing to achieve tangible results in countering arms trafficking crimes owing to chronic corruption. The black market for weapons in Ukraine remains arguably the largest in Europe. According to information from the Prosecutor General's Office of Ukraine, this market involves up to 5 million units of weaponry. Moreover, the illegal trade is sustained to a large extent by some of the arsenal used by the Ukrainian military in the zone of the armed conflict in Donbas.

Thirdly, let me say a few words about the implementation of commitments by the OSCE participating States in the field of SALW and SCA. Every year, in accordance with Section III, paragraph (F)1, of the OSCE Document on Small Arms and Light Weapons (FSC.DOC/1/00/Rev.1 of 20 June 2012), the participating States transmit data on exports and imports of SALW to the Conflict Prevent Centre and post it on the OSCE information platform DelWeb. We have noted significant discrepancies in the reporting by OSCE participating States.

A vivid case in point is the information distributed last year on transfers of SALW from the United States of America to Georgia and Ukraine. In particular, in 2019–2020 the competent authorities in Ukraine “forgot” to reflect approximately 68 per cent of imports of these types of weapons (they indicated 4,436 imported weapons out of the 13,945 items declared by our US colleagues in their national report), and the authorities in Georgia – about 88 per cent (indicating just 773 out of almost 6,353 items). Almost all the “discrepancies” concern the following categories of weapons: pistols and revolvers, rifles and carbines,

assault rifles and light machine guns. Overall, almost 95 per cent of all imports not indicated by Ukraine and Georgia in their national reports originate from the United States.

We understand that compiling statistics is laborious and complicated work, and we do not expect a 100 per cent match in the information. That said, we think there could be two explanations for the case we have described, and both of them could be true. The first is that our Ukrainian and Georgian colleagues have deliberately underestimated the figures in an attempt to step up arms deliveries. The second is that they have lost control of arms imports and are becoming sources of illicit proliferation of SALW in the OSCE area and beyond.

Finally, this particular example once again demonstrates the gross disregard by the participating States concerned for the provisions of the Document on SALW and the Principles Governing Conventional Arms Transfers, which clearly state that, when supplying arms, each participating State will take into account the regional and internal situation in the recipient country, in the light of existing tensions or armed conflicts.

We emphasize that participating States that provide any form of military and technical assistance to the Ukrainian Government are condoning the fuelling of the internal Ukrainian conflict (all the more so if we are talking about deliveries of weapons, equipment and ammunition prohibited by the Minsk agreements) and share responsibility with the Ukrainian security forces for the suffering of civilians and the destruction of towns and settlements in Donbas.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. I request that this statement be attached to the journal of the day.



1000th Plenary Meeting
FSC Journal No. 1006, Agenda item 1

**STATEMENT BY
THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE INFORMAL GROUP OF FRIENDS ON
SMALL ARMS AND LIGHT WEAPONS AND STOCKPILES OF
CONVENTIONAL AMMUNITION (LATVIA)**

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.
Dear colleagues,
Distinguished speakers,

In my capacity as Chairperson of the Informal Group of Friends on Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) and Stockpiles of Conventional Ammunition (SCA), I should like to start by thanking the speakers for their valuable contributions and thoughts on the topic of today's Security Dialogue.

More than 20 years ago at the Istanbul Summit, the Heads of State or Government of the OSCE participating States acknowledged that the excessive and destabilizing accumulation and uncontrolled spread of SALW posed "a threat and a challenge to peace and security, in particular as an element in terrorist activity and armed conflicts", and expressed their determination to co-operate more actively and closely with one another to meet all those challenges.

As a result, the topics of SALW and SCA became an integral part of the agenda of the Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC), and the OSCE participating States began to develop norm- and standard-setting measures that considered all aspects of SALW. The two cornerstones of the OSCE's normative *acquis* were adopted, namely the OSCE Document on SALW (FSC.DOC/1/00/Rev.1) in 2000 and the OSCE Document on SCA (FSC.DOC/1/03/Rev.1) in 2003. Since their adoption, both documents have been supplemented with several annexes in an effort to further enhance the safeguards that they provide for and operationalize their practical application. Additionally, both documents are complemented by several FSC decisions on SALW and SCA, and by the set of Best Practice Guides on SALW and SCA. Together, these texts make up the OSCE normative framework, which lays down SALW- and SCA-related commitments, norms, principles and measures.

The commitments in the field of SALW and SCA, whilst political, belong to the few core commitments of OSCE participating States that continue to be actively discussed and are unanimously acknowledged to this day.

Mr. Chairperson,

Allow me to focus on the OSCE Best Practice Guides (BPGs) on SALW and SCA, which operationalize the OSCE Documents on SALW and SCA and serve as a reference for certain aspects of SALW and SCA control. The BPGs can be used as a source of guidance for national policymaking by the participating States and to encourage higher common standards of practice. A significant asset of the BPGs is that ownership lies not so much with the OSCE as with the participating States themselves, which helps to foster a common understanding of ways to combat illicit trafficking in SALW and SCA. The BPGs and their updates are endorsed by all 57 participating States.

In 2017, the OSCE Ministerial Council, in its Decision No. 10/17 on SALW and SCA (MC.DEC/10/17), instructed the FSC, in accordance with its mandate, to “continue to explore ways to review and, where appropriate, supplement the OSCE Document on SALW, the OSCE Document on SCA and the OSCE Handbooks of Best Practices on SALW and on Conventional Ammunition”. Moreover, the 2018 Ministerial Council Declaration on OSCE Efforts in the Field of Norms and Best Practices on SALW and SCA (MC.DOC/5/18) encouraged participating States “on a voluntary basis, to continue providing expertise, extrabudgetary contributions and resources to support the work within the FSC on upgrading and further developing norms and best practices on SALW and SCA”.

Since 2019, work on reviewing and updating the BPGs on SALW and SCA has been undertaken with the aim of increasing the OSCE’s contribution to efforts to strengthen SALW control, and also of enhancing the capability of participating States to combat illicit trafficking comprehensively and efficiently. The Informal Group of Friends on SALW and SCA plays an important role in complementing FSC activities in the field of SALW and SCA. In particular, it provides a platform for the participating States to facilitate the review and update of the BPGs on SALW and SCA.

Nine out of 17 BPGs have so far undergone the review and update process, and five updated guides have been adopted by the FSC. I am pleased to note that, at the last meeting of the Informal Group of Friends on 9 December 2021, the original-author participating States behind other BPGs expressed their readiness to actively contribute to efforts aimed at updating the remaining guides. The review and update process is being conducted in an inclusive manner and follows a step-by-step approach. It presents an opportunity for all participating States – especially those drawing on the BPGs in national policymaking and in the implementation of SALW and SCA assistance projects – to ensure that the guides achieve the widest possible uptake. Alongside the participating States that are either leading or actively supporting the review and update process, several OSCE executive structures have contributed to this very important work by sharing their lessons learned and recommendations on the application of BPGs.

The BPG review and update process is continually evaluated, and it has been found to be functioning well. I believe that now is the right moment to take up a further proposal from my food-for-thought paper entitled “OSCE Best Practice Guides on SALW and Conventional Ammunition: Their Purpose, Effective Use and Systematic Review” (FSC.DEL/243/19/Rev.1, 6 October 2020). At the next meeting of the Informal Group of Friends, I shall invite participating States to consider developing separate guidelines on a

standardized and optimized approach for regular updating of the BPGs every five years, or for the introduction of new BPGs.

In addition to the BPG review and update process, new initiatives are also being launched. Austria has taken up the issue of addressing combatting illicit trafficking of SALW and CA, national ownership and strengthening of national capacities, and the initiative to evaluate the assistance mechanism in a targeted and mandated way to encourage more efficient implementation.

I was very pleased to hear today about the “perception paper on the state of affairs of the OSCE norms, principles and measures in the field of SCA” which is to be issued jointly by the Austrian and Swiss delegations. I believe that it provides an overall and balanced overview of the OSCE’s role in the field of SCA as exercised through dialogue, the normative framework, the assistance mechanism and assistance projects. Moreover, the paper outlines specific SCA-related challenges and concerns in the OSCE area, calls for efforts to be strengthened in this field, and identifies synergies with the United Nations processes related to ammunition, such as the work of the Group of Governmental Experts on problems arising from the accumulation of conventional ammunition stockpiles in surplus. The last-named aspect was, incidentally, also mentioned at today’s Security Dialogue by the distinguished keynote speaker from the delegation of Germany, Mr. Marcus Bleinroth. I should further like to note that the perception paper offers tangible proposals for the dialogue process on SCA in 2022 and 2023, one of them being the announced Swiss-led initiative for the development of a Plan of Action on SCA. I encourage participating States to become actively involved in informal and formal discussions about the Plan of Action on SCA in the coming months.

It cannot be pointed out too often that the BPG review and update process and the successful development of new initiatives rely entirely on the engagement of the participating States. Once again, I wish to commend those participating States that are actively involved in these efforts, and invite others to join in.

Dear colleagues,

In closing, allow me to emphasize how SALW- and SCA-related norms, the implementation of OSCE assistance projects and lessons learned from these are all interrelated when it comes to the participating States’ endeavour to manage the life cycle of SALW and SCA more efficiently and effectively, including the prevention of illicit trafficking. I believe that strengthening these interlinkages would help to enhance the FSC’s ability to tackle existing and emerging challenges in the field of SALW and SCA.

Thank you for your attention.

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



1000th Plenary Meeting
FSC Journal No. 1006, Agenda item 3

**STATEMENT BY
THE DELEGATION OF SWITZERLAND**

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.
Excellencies,
Dear colleagues,

Switzerland would like to join the other delegations in celebrating the millennium plenary meeting of the Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC), which is indeed a remarkable milestone. Congratulations to all of us. It is even more remarkable, considering that this is also the year of the 30th anniversary of our Forum, as His Excellency the Ambassador of Belgium has already noted.

We thank the Chairpersons of the FSC and the Permanent Council and the OSCE Secretary General for their retrospective remarks, their words of support for the work done so far and their proposals for the future of our Forum.

As mentioned previously, the third CSCE Summit of Heads of State or Government held in Helsinki in 1992 established the FSC as a decision-making body for the purposes of consultation on arms control, disarmament, confidence- and security-building, security co-operation and conflict prevention in the OSCE area.

Over the years, the original mandate has broadened, but the principal objective has remained the same, namely the discussion of current security issues in the politico-military dimension with a view to increasing military stability, transparency and predictability for all participating States, and thereby creating mutual confidence among the participating States. We are looking forward to the 30th anniversary of the FSC, which will be commemorated in the autumn under the Belgian Chairmanship. We should use that as an opportunity to reflect on ways of further enhancing the Forum and supporting the rotating Chairmanships. In this regard, at the end of our FSC Chairmanship in 2019, Switzerland circulated a paper setting out a number of lessons learned and recommendations for future Chairmanships (FSC.DEL/83/19). We would like to share that paper again with the other delegations on the occasion of this millennium plenary meeting.

The FSC, one of the OSCE's two regular decision-making bodies, continues to be the main formal platform for discussion on politico-military affairs in the OSCE area. Switzerland's position has not changed: Dialogue was, is and remains key.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. We kindly ask you to attach this statement to the journal of the day.



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

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9 February 2022
Annex 6

ENGLISH
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1000th Plenary Meeting
FSC Journal No. 1006, Agenda item 3

STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION

Mr. Chairperson,

The current year is a significant one for the OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC) in a number of ways. Today we are marking the 1000th meeting of our autonomous decision-making body, and in September, under the Belgian Chairmanship, we will celebrate the Forum's 30th anniversary. These round-number anniversaries provide us with an opportunity to share assessments of the current state of affairs in the Forum and its future prospects.

The FSC was initially conceived by its founders as the main and, indeed, only pan-European structure responsible for politico-military stability in Europe. The assumption was that this stability would be safeguarded through negotiations on arms control and on confidence- and security-building measures. The Forum has been doing an excellent job. In the 1990s, a whole array of fundamental documents comprising what is referred to as the "OSCE politico-military toolbox" were developed.

Nevertheless, in recent years, we have seen deliberate attempts by a number of Western countries to chip away at the Forum's politico-military foundations. Today, they are insistently pushing the "gender" issue on to its agenda, tomorrow it will be the climate, and what will it be the day after tomorrow? Will our platform even make it to that point if the Polish OSCE Chairmanship is already proposing that key FSC issues should be considered by the general political body – the Permanent Council? Such a prospect is not to our liking at all, and we are puzzled by these destructive "creative impulses" by a number of participating States and the Chairmanship-in-Office.

Special mention should be made of the Structured Dialogue on the current and future challenges and risks to security in the OSCE area, launched at the 2016 Ministerial Council meeting in Hamburg, which is developing independently but is thematically linked to the Forum's activities. For five years, the participating States have painstakingly engaged in dialogue, trying to find common ground on transparency, military risk reduction and incident prevention. And now, overnight, it is being simply proposed that all the work, initiatives and ideas – everything we have accumulated over half a decade – be given to another negotiating track. How do the current Finnish Chairmanship of the Structured Dialogue and for that

matter its predecessors – Germany, Belgium, the Netherlands and Spain – feel about the intention, in effect, to assign this platform the role of a “shared interest club” with an empty agenda, a vague timetable and unclear results? The Structured Dialogue with a mandate of its own cannot “complement” the Polish initiative, which has no legal or political framework.

Of course, we could endlessly “relaunch” the dialogue on the future of European security in the OSCE and “generate” new negotiating platforms. But it is important to understand that the greater the number of formats and participants, the greater the danger of descending into endless procrastination and obfuscation of the substance of the dialogue. Apparently, some people would like that very much. In our view, it is far more important to make use of the existing resources provided by the Forum and the Structured Dialogue, which have been set up for professional discussions and the reaching of specific agreements at the level of military experts. It is important to restore their proper role in European affairs. This is what we all need to focus on.

Mr. Chairperson,

Over the past few weeks, the Russian Federation has demonstrated in practice its willingness to address key European security issues. Our country will not allow the United States of America and NATO to decide for us what is a threat to Russia and what is not. For years we have been observing alarming trends connected with the expansion of the Alliance, the deployment of the anti-missile defence system, the setting up of new foreign facilities and the stationing of multinational troops on the territories of other countries near our borders. We admit that many people are quite happy with this and feel quite comfortable in such an environment. But this does not apply to Russia. And if we really believe that security in Europe is indivisible, these concerns need to be duly taken into account, and we need to think about steps that could address them.

Our priority lies in negotiations, primarily with the United States but also with NATO, in which we are seeking long-term legally binding security guarantees. We do not rule out the possibility that, with some progress and if a consensus decision is adopted, the FSC could contribute to de-escalating tensions and strengthening the politico-military foundations of European security at a later stage. However, this requires dealing carefully with the Forum’s legacy, consistently strengthening its foundations, returning the agenda to its politico-military “roots” and thinking about which initiatives within the Structured Dialogue could be developed productively on the agenda of FSC Working Group A or B. Let me repeat: what is needed today is practical action, not theoretical reflection. At the same time, let me remind you that possible changes to the Forum’s mandate, as has been suggested here, can be made, if necessary, only by a consensus decision of the participating States.

Mr. Chairperson,

These are, in very general terms, our views regarding the restoration of an appropriate role for the OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation in European affairs. The Russian delegation is ready to engage in diligent work on these matters, and we invite all our colleagues interested in overcoming the negative trends of recent years to join us.

If we continue to pretend that everything is fine, the FSC risks facing a crisis situation in the course of the next thousand meetings. This must not be allowed to happen.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. I request that this statement be attached to the journal of the day.