

**Chairmanship: Armenia****980th PLENARY MEETING OF THE FORUM**

1. Date: Wednesday, 23 June 2021 (via video teleconference)

Opened: 10 a.m.  
Suspended: 11 a.m.  
Resumed: 3.05 p.m.  
Closed: 5.55 p.m.

2. Chairperson: Ambassador A. Papikyan  
Ms. L. Grigoryan

The Chairperson reminded the Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC) of the technical modalities for the conduct of FSC meetings during the COVID-19 pandemic, as outlined in FSC.GAL/31/21 OSCE+.

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

Agenda item 1: GENERAL STATEMENTS

*Situation in and around Ukraine*: Ukraine (FSC.DEL/243/21) (FSC.DEL/243/21/Add.1), Portugal-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, Georgia, Moldova, San Marino and Ukraine, in alignment) (Annex 1), United Kingdom (Annex 2), United States of America (FSC.DEL/242/21), Canada (Annex 3), Russian Federation

Agenda item 2: ANY OTHER BUSINESS

(a) *Contribution of the FSC to the 2021 Annual Security Review Conference*:  
Chairperson

(b) *Announcing and Reminding Mechanism pursuant to FSC Decision No. 10/02 (FSC.DEC/10/02)*: Chairperson

- (c) *Launch of an FSC e-learning course on conventional arms control and confidence- and security-building measures: Representative of the Conflict Prevention Centre*
- (d) *Invitation to an event on the OSCE Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security, to be held in Stockholm from 29 September to 1 October 2021 (CIO.GAL/70/21 OSCE+): Sweden*
- (e) *Briefing on the multinational military exercise “Sea Breeze 2021”, to be held from 28 June to 10 July 2021: Ukraine (Annex 4), United States of America*

Agenda item 3:           **SECURITY DIALOGUE: TRANSPARENCY IN MILITARY EXERCISES AND ACTIVITIES**

- *Presentation by Lieutenant Colonel K. Muradyan, Deputy Head of the Defence Policy Department, Ministry of Defence, Armenia*
- *Presentation by Rear Admiral A. Ristau, Chief of Division II (Security and Defence Policy), Federal Ministry of Defence, Germany*
- *Presentation by Mr. J. J. Castillo, Associate Professor and Co-Director of the Albritton Center for Grand Strategy, The Bush School of Government and Public Service, Texas A&M University*
- *Presentation by Colonel R. Vartok, Head of the Military Policy Division, Federal Ministry of Defence, Austria*

Chairperson, Lieutenant Colonel K. Muradyan (FSC.DEL/248/21), Rear Admiral A. Ristau (FSC.DEL/257/21 OSCE+), Mr. J. J. Castillo (FSC.NGO/3/21 OSCE+), Colonel R. Vartok (FSC.DEL/247/21 OSCE+), Portugal-European Union (with the candidate countries Albania, Montenegro and North Macedonia; 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/259/21/Rev.1), Georgia (FSC.DEL/252/21 OSCE+), Belarus (FSC.DEL/251/21 OSCE+), United Kingdom (FSC.DEL/245/21 OSCE+), Switzerland (Annex 5), United States of America (Annex 6), Canada, Ukraine (FSC.DEL/246/21/Rev.1/Corr.1), Russian Federation (FSC.DEL/249/21) (FSC.DEL/250/21), Turkey (Annex 7) (FSC.DEL/254/21) (FSC.DEL/253/21), Armenia (Annex 8) (Annex 9), Azerbaijan

4. Next meeting:

Wednesday, 7 July 2021, at 10 a.m., via video teleconference



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

FSC.JOUR/986

23 June 2021

Annex 1

Original: ENGLISH

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**980th Plenary Meeting**

FSC Journal No. 986, Agenda item 1

**STATEMENT BY  
THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE EUROPEAN UNION**

Mr. Chairperson,

The Swedish OSCE Chairmanship has put conflict resolution within the OSCE, which is also a top priority for the European Union, at the centre of this month's discussions in our Organization. We look forward to the regular exchanges in the Annual Security Review Conference on the security challenges, including conflicts. We appreciate that Chairperson-in-Office Ann Linde visited Ukraine for the second time this year which underscores the Chairperson's priority of the peaceful resolution of this conflict.

Our position on Russia's acts of aggression and the illegal annexation of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol is well known. We reaffirm our conviction that the OSCE offers participating States an indispensable platform for dialogue on this and other conflicts in the OSCE area. We will therefore continue to draw attention to this blatant breach of international law and of the OSCE principles and commitments which are fundamental to the European security order as long as the situation is not reversed. This chapter is not yet closed, contrary to some sporadic statements by Russia we are hearing here in different OSCE fora.

Consequently, we reject the Russian narrative of portraying itself as a mediator in an "internal Ukrainian conflict", thus obstructing meaningful discussions in the Trilateral Contact Group (TCG) as well as in the Normandy format. Finding a sustainable solution to the conflict requires frank and honest discussion on its nature, as well as political will to implement the respective commitments. We therefore urge Russia, as a party to the conflict, to take responsibility for its actions and to engage in the discussions on the implementation of the Minsk agreements in good faith.

We also underline the importance of military transparency in relations between the participating States. The disregard of commitments under the Vienna Document, as displayed by Russia during and in the wake of its recent military build-up, is not conducive to rebuilding trust and confidence. On this issue, we will speak more in the Security Dialogue later today.

The general security situation in the conflict zone remains volatile (despite the latest decrease in ceasefire violations). We regret the growing number of civilian casualties and casualties reported among the Ukrainian military personnel. Since the beginning of the year, the Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine (SMM) has confirmed 37 civilian casualties, out of which 27 were due to mines. Once again, whilst facilitating operation of the Donetsk filtration station, the SMM has recorded explosions within a five kilometre radius of the station and heavy machine gun fire when a bus with Donetsk filtration station workers was driving by. These specific violent acts threaten the provision of clean water to more than 380,000 civilians and deepen the humanitarian crisis. We repeat that the ceasefire can best be preserved if both sides implement their commitments made in the TCG and adhere to the additional measures agreed in July 2020. We therefore deplore any military provocations and commend Ukraine for its restraint.

The SMM is being denied access on an almost daily basis in the areas under effective control of the Russian-backed armed formations and its unmanned aerial vehicles are constantly subjected to jamming. We echo the clear words by the Chairperson-in-Office Ann Linde during her visit in Ukraine that this continuous erosion of the already limited monitoring ability of the SMM is unacceptable and runs contrary to the SMM mandate which provides for the Mission's safe and unhindered access throughout Ukraine. We urge Russia to use its considerable influence over the armed formations it backs in order to make sure that all restrictions on the SMM's freedom of movement are removed.

In conclusion, we remain firm in our call on all sides to swiftly and fully implement the Minsk agreements and honour their commitments in full in order to achieve a sustainable political solution to the conflict in line with OSCE principles and commitments. Respect for these principles and commitments must be restored. We underline Russia's responsibility in this regard and once again call on Russia to use its considerable influence over the armed formations it backs to meet these commitments in full. We reiterate our deep concern about the presence of military equipment and personnel from Russia in the conflict zone. We call on Russia to immediately stop providing financial and military support to the armed formations. The ceasefire must be respected. All Minsk-regulated weapons must be withdrawn. All foreign armed formations, military equipment and mercenaries must be removed from Ukraine. Re-establishing full Ukrainian control over its State border is essential.

We recall our unwavering support for the sovereignty, territorial integrity, unity and independence of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders and call upon Russia to do likewise. We urge Russia to recognize these fundamental principles that it has itself invoked many times and to contribute, by acts and public pronouncements, to stabilizing the situation and reversing moves that contravene these principles. We strongly condemn the clear violation of Ukrainian sovereignty and territorial integrity by acts of aggression by the Russian armed forces since February 2014 and the illegal annexation of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol to the Russian Federation, which we will not recognize. We continue to call on Russia to ensure unhindered and free passage to and from the Sea of Azov in accordance with international law. We express our deep concern about Russia's actions to block access to parts of the Black Sea, including near illegally annexed Crimea and the Kerch Strait, and about the ongoing large-scale militarization of the Crimean

peninsula by Russia which continues to impact the security situation in the Black Sea region and beyond.

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

The candidate countries the Republic of North Macedonia<sup>1</sup>, Montenegro<sup>1</sup> and Albania<sup>1</sup>, the European Free Trade Association countries Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, members of the European Economic Area, as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, Georgia, Andorra and San Marino align themselves with this statement.

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<sup>1</sup> The Republic of North Macedonia, Montenegro and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.



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

FSC.JOUR/986  
23 June 2021  
Annex 2

Original: ENGLISH

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**980th Plenary Meeting**  
FSC Journal No. 986, Agenda item 1

**STATEMENT BY  
THE DELEGATION OF THE UNITED KINGDOM**

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. This statement is delivered under the topic raised by Ukraine.

The United Kingdom remains concerned at the continued tensions caused by the recent increased Russian military activity on Ukraine's border and in illegally annexed Crimea.

Whilst some of the Russian forces appear to have returned to their permanent base locations, nearly two months following the deadline announced by Russia for the withdrawal we remain concerned by reports which indicate a significant number of forces remain concentrated in proximity to the Ukrainian border and in illegally annexed Crimea.

We continue to be disappointed that the Russian Federation did not, and still chooses not to, engage constructively in using the OSCE processes and mechanisms available to provide necessary transparency and de-escalate the situation. This includes addressing Ukrainian concerns regarding the military build-up near its borders and in illegally annexed Crimea under Chapter III of the Vienna Document. This is despite repeated calls from fellow participating States on Russia to address these valid concerns and provide transparency.

So, we must ask, why does Russia refuse to engage constructively in line with, and in the spirit of, its obligations as a Vienna Document signatory? Its lack of action in this regard does little to build confidence and trust in the region; and deliberately sows uncertainty.

The United Kingdom again calls on Russia to use the OSCE processes and mechanisms available, including through briefings in this forum, to provide the necessary transparency to address the valid concerns of participating States, including on the withdrawal of its forces, and so de-escalate the situation.

Mr. Chairperson,

Russia's failure to provide transparency and engage constructively in this regard is just the latest example of how their lack of respect for OSCE principles and commitments has undermined security in our region. Since 2014, in violation of OSCE principles and

commitments, the Russian Federation has sent troops to Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, illegally annexed sovereign Ukrainian territory and sought to destabilize Ukraine by instigating and fuelling conflict in Donbas.

In the context of these aggressive Russian actions, the United Kingdom established Operation ORBITAL to improve capabilities of the armed forces of Ukraine, demonstrating our unwavering support to Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity. Through this operation, we are proud to have provided defensive, non-escalatory military training to over 21,000 Ukrainian armed forces personnel. Our intention is to bolster their defensive resilience, help develop long-term sustainable capability and save lives. In 2020, we expanded our training to incorporate broader operational and capability-orientated maritime and air capacity-building. As part of this, the United Kingdom is co-ordinating and leading allied contributions to develop Ukraine's navy in a multinational maritime training initiative (MTI), which commenced in September 2020. HMS Trent conducted maritime training under the initiative during a port visit to Odesa in May 2021.

Crucially, United Kingdom assistance to Ukraine is open, transparent and enjoys the consent of Ukraine as host nation. This is in stark contrast to Russia's destabilizing actions in Donbas.

The Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine (SMM) also regularly observes sophisticated Russian military equipment which has never been in the military arsenal of Ukraine. Two weeks ago, we asked the Russian delegation to explain the presence of the sophisticated Russian electronic warfare system RB-636 Svet-KU which was observed by the SMM on 29 May near non-government-controlled Novoazovsk, close to the Ukraine-Russia border. We note that this system entered service in the Russian Army in 2012 and has never been supplied to Ukraine. How did this system find its way into Ukraine? Who is operating the system which requires specialized training?

In this regard, we also note that Russia has yet to provide an explanation for the presence of UAZ-23632 ESAUL vehicles and associated troops that were clearly observed in Donbas by an SMM unmanned aerial vehicle. These vehicles entered service with the Russian ground forces in 2018.

Russia's vain attempts to conceal their role in this conflict and falsely portray themselves as a mediator convince no one and only hamper efforts to find a peaceful resolution. We call on Russia instead to focus on withdrawing its military personnel and weapons from the territory of Ukraine; ceasing its support for the armed formations it backs; stopping access restrictions and intimidation of the SMM in areas held by those armed formations.

We reiterate our support for the Minsk agreements to deliver a peaceful resolution to the conflict in full respect of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity, and the work of the Trilateral Contact Group and the Normandy Four in this regard. Russia must play its part and fulfil its obligations.

Finally, Mr. Chairperson, the United Kingdom reiterates our condemnation of Russia's ongoing militarization of Crimea, the Sea of Azov and the Black Sea. The recent

deployment of large numbers of Russian forces to illegally annexed Crimea and the subsequent large-scale exercise was provocative, aggressive and wholly unacceptable. We also reiterate our deep concern at the Russian Federation's decision to impose restrictions on some areas of the Black Sea, including the approaches to the Kerch Strait, from April until October. These actions are unjustified and destabilizing.

The United Kingdom strongly supports Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders, including its territorial waters. We do not and will not recognize Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea. The United Kingdom has consistently stood with Ukraine in opposing all instances of Russian aggression towards Ukraine and we will continue to do so, including through sanctions, together with our international partners.



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**980th Plenary Meeting**

FSC Journal No. 986, Agenda item 1

**STATEMENT BY  
THE DELEGATION OF CANADA**

Mr. Chairperson,

We remain deeply disturbed by Russia's continued evasive behaviour, lack of transparency, and failure to address legitimate concerns about their unprecedented build-up of military force on the illegally annexed Crimean peninsula and along the eastern borders of Ukraine. We reiterate our call for the Russian Federation to engage constructively in efforts to de-escalate tensions, and to abandon its tactics of denial and distraction. Russia must direct the armed formations that it supplies, leads, and fights alongside to cease their provocative actions; we were especially concerned by reports of small arms fire in very close proximity to a Special Monitoring Mission (SMM) patrol on 18 June, in non-government-controlled Sentianivka. Our SMM monitors must be provided with reliable security guarantees so that they can go about their mandated duties safely.

We also remain deeply concerned that there has been no reduction in the high number of ceasefire violations. This past week again saw nearly 2,000 ceasefire violations with a large spike of 994 violations occurring on 17 June, of which 867 were assessed as a live-fire exercise outside the security zone in non-government-controlled areas. Approximately 20 per cent of the remaining kinetic activity was observed in the Pervomaisk-Popasna-Zolote area.

Once again, whilst facilitating operation of the Donetsk filtration station, the SMM observed numerous undetermined explosions and bursts of heavy machine gun fire, all assessed as being within a 5-kilometre radius of the Donetsk filtration station. Worryingly, several of these explosions occurred whilst a bus with Donetsk filtration station workers was driving from the station to Yasynuvata. Heavy weapons continue to be sighted in violation of withdrawal lines, with 5 tanks and 3 mortars being observed in non-government-controlled areas of Donetsk region, as well as 123 tanks, 19 howitzers, and 9 anti-tank guns reported as being located outside their designated storage areas. And in addition, the situation in and around the disengagement areas seems to be worsening, with almost daily ceasefire violations in the Petrivske disengagement area.

Sadly, it almost goes without saying that everyday life for civilians in eastern Ukraine remains grim. Checkpoints of the armed formations near Zolote and Shchastia remain closed,

even though the Ukrainian Government opened the corresponding entry-exit checkpoints months ago. And whilst we are relieved that the SMM has not reported any civilian casualties in the past week, we are gravely concerned by reports of new minefields at Naberezhne, Vasylivka, and Dachne, all in non-government-controlled areas. We are particularly disturbed to see that all of these mines have been laid close to residential areas.

We were deeply disturbed to see SMM reporting of posters in several communities in non-government-controlled areas inviting men and women to join the armed formations as an employment opportunity. Not only do these posters promise monetary remuneration, however, more disturbing is the “promise of help obtaining ‘passports’ and citizenship in a neighbouring country”. This practice is not subtle and certainly not helpful in the pursuit of a solution to this conflict. We call on the Russian Federation to ensure that this practice ends immediately.

Mr. Chairperson,

As well as the various dangers that they encounter every day, the SMM continues to face constant restrictions on its freedom of movement, including through the cynical use of “COVID-19 protection measures” as an excuse from the armed formations to deny passage to patrols. The SMM must be given safe and unhindered access throughout Ukraine, in accordance with its mandate. The ongoing restrictions on the Mission’s freedom of movement, almost always in non-government-controlled areas, must stop. Furthermore, interference with the SMM’s equipment is absolutely unacceptable and must stop immediately. A mini unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) was lost on 16 June, apparently downed by small arms fire; shots were fired at another SMM mini UAV the following day in non-government-controlled Horlivka, and again on 20 June. SMM UAVs were unable to launch on 11 occasions due to the intensity of signals jamming they were experiencing, and the UAV experienced GPS signal interference on 54 occasions, assessed as caused by probable jamming. Once again, we call on Russia to explain the presence of its advanced Zhytel EW system in eastern Ukraine. We would also like to reiterate that the Russian Federation has not yet explained the presence of advanced Russian equipment such as Zhitel in eastern Ukraine, despite our clear requests for an explanation and undeniable image-based evidence to the point.

Mr. Chairperson,

Crimea and the City of Sevastopol remain a part of Ukraine in accordance with international law. We denounce Russia’s blatant violation of Ukrainian sovereignty, and deplore the impact that the conflict has had on the populations of eastern Ukraine and Crimea, and on the overall security situation in the broader Black Sea region.

We remain particularly concerned about restrictions to freedom of navigation in some regions of the Black Sea, in particular the approach to the Kerch Strait, which Russia has imposed for a six-month period. These restrictions continue what is effectively a blockade of Ukrainian ports on the Sea of Azov, and in combination with the movement of large numbers of Russian naval vessels from the Caspian to the Black Sea, are deliberately provocative and deeply destabilizing.

Mr. Chairperson,

Canada remains unwavering in its support for Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders, including its navigational rights in its territorial waters. We will continue to exert pressure, including through ongoing sanctions, until the Russian Federation completely fulfils its commitments and obligations undertaken in accordance with the Minsk Agreements, including the withdrawal of all armed units, military equipment, and mercenaries from Ukraine, and the return of full control of the border to the Ukrainian Government.

Thank you.



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**980th Plenary Meeting**

FSC Journal No. 986, Agenda item 2(e)

**STATEMENT BY  
THE DELEGATION OF UKRAINE**

Mr. Chairperson,

In a spirit of transparency and given the increased attention being paid to the Black Sea region and to military activity there, Ukraine considers it appropriate to inform the other OSCE participating States in advance about the planned “Sea Breeze 2021” exercise.

“Sea Breeze 2021” is a multinational maritime exercise involving 32 countries in total: Albania, Australia, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Denmark, Egypt, Estonia, France, Georgia, Greece, Israel, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Morocco, Norway, Pakistan, Poland, Republic of Korea, Romania, Senegal, Spain, Sweden, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom and the United States of America.

An operational- and tactical-level exercise, “Sea Breeze 2021” includes command-and-staff training and live-fire combat training. The aim of the exercise is to train staffs and units of the Ukrainian armed forces in performing assigned tasks during multinational operations, notably the tasks expected of a multinational force responsible for peacekeeping and providing security.

The main objectives are to:

- Train the Ukrainian armed forces in the conduct of joint actions together with military formations from the national armed forces of partner States;
- Train multinational forces in the conduct of naval security operations in a crisis region, with a focus on anti-ship, anti-aircraft, anti-submarine, anti-mine, anti-landing defence and on countering illegal armed formations in certain areas;
- Practise the landing of naval and air assault forces supported by aviation, ground units and special operations forces;
- Improve the co-ordination of planning, training and command functions at the tactical and operational levels.

The exercise proper will be conducted from 28 June to 10 July 2021, but there are four distinct phases overall:

- Phase I (14–27 June) – arrival of military and naval units from the participating countries and establishment of control points;
- Phase II (28 June–4 July) – operational co-ordination of the various units;
- Phase III (5–9 July) – active phase with the participation of a formation made up of surface ships, coastal troops and air assets;
- Phase IV (10–12 July) – wrapping up of the exercise and departure of the military and naval units.

The exercise will take place at the naval base “South”; the seaports of Ochakiv and Odessa; in the north-western part of the Black Sea; the Bilhorod-Dnistrovskyy estuary; the 241st Military Training Range; the islands of Tendrivska Kosa, Kinburnska Kosa, Zmiiny, and Pervomaisky; the Shkilnyy, Kulbakino and Chornobaivka military airfields; the Artsyz airfield; and Odessa International Airport.

The Ukrainian Navy Command is the main planning and control body for the exercise, which will involve units from the Ukrainian naval forces, air forces, land forces, special operations forces, support forces and defence forces (up to 1,375 Ukrainian military personnel in total); and units from the national armed forces of partner countries, including the United States (up to 1,000 troops, including ship crews and up to 300 marines), Canada (up to 20 troops), Georgia (up to 50 troops), Moldova (up to 30 troops), Bulgaria (up to 20 troops), Poland (up to 30 troops), Latvia (up to 15 troops) and Tunisia (up to 24 troops). Overall, the exercise will involve 5,000 troops, including the crews of warships, boats and vessels.

The main weapon and equipment systems involved in the exercise will include:

- Up to seven warships and 12 boats of various types and purposes – from the navies of Ukraine, the United States, the United Kingdom, Romania, Georgia, Bulgaria, Italy, Turkey and France – and other auxiliary vessels, for a total of up to 32 ships;
- Six Su-25 jets, two Su-24 jets, two Su-27 jets and two IL-76 jets (Ukraine); two EF-2000 jets (United Kingdom); one P-8A “Poseidon”, two SV-22 aircraft and one C-130 “Hercules” (United States); and various transport and supply aircraft, for a total of up to 40 aircraft;
- Up to 20 BTR-80 and Kozak armoured personnel carriers;
- Four T-80 tanks;
- Up to six artillery systems with a calibre of over 100 mm.

The holding of the “Sea Breeze 2021” exercise on the territory of Ukraine is provided for by Decree No. 570/2020 of 16 December 2020 of the President of Ukraine, “On the plan for conducting multinational exercises with the participation of units of the Armed Forces of Ukraine on the territory of Ukraine and their participation in multinational exercises outside Ukraine for 2021, and on the admission of units of the armed forces of other States into the territory of Ukraine in 2021 to participate in multinational exercises”; and by Law No. 1131-IX of 26 January 2021, “On approving the decision of the President of Ukraine on the admission of units of the armed forces of other States into the territory of Ukraine in 2021 to participate in multinational exercises”.

Ukraine notified participating States in advance about the “Sea Breeze 2021” exercise via the OSCE Communications Network on 6 April 2021, through notification NCBM/UA/21/0001/F07/O (format: CSBM NF BS F07).

Mr. Chairperson,  
Esteemed colleagues,

We should like to point out that although “Sea Breeze 2021” as a maritime exercise is not formally covered by the confidence- and security-building measures laid down in the Vienna Document 2011, Ukraine has nevertheless provided this voluntary information briefing, since the exercise could have an impact on the evolution of the politico-military situation in the region.

We also stress that in giving this voluntary briefing, Ukraine has demonstrated its adherence to the principles of predictability, transparency, and openness in relation to its military activities in the interests of ensuring regional security and stability.

Thank you for your attention, dear colleagues, and thank you, Mr. Chairperson, for giving me the floor.



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

FSC.JOUR/986

23 June 2021

Annex 5

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**980th Plenary Meeting**

FSC Journal No. 986, Agenda item 3

**STATEMENT BY  
THE DELEGATION OF SWITZERLAND**

Madam Chairperson,  
Excellencies,  
Dear colleagues,

Switzerland appreciates all the efforts invested into continuing the discussion of transparency in military exercises and activities, and we should like to start by thanking today's keynote speakers for their informative presentations.

Regarding the recently held Seventh Expert Level Workshop on Trends in Military Forces and Exercises, we extend our gratitude to the Spanish Chairperson of the Informal Working Group on the Structured Dialogue for the scenario-based discussion organized as part of the workshop. This event proved useful in terms of assessing the participants' perceptions and identifying some areas where greater transparency would be beneficial for the participating States. Discussions such as those that took place during the workshop help to foster a common understanding and generate ideas on how to update the Vienna Document and other confidence- and security-building measures.

Madam Chairperson,

As for transparency, Switzerland would like to highlight the following three points:

First, on the current situation: the ongoing erosion of trust and confidence and the restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic have had a negative impact on transparency in the OSCE area. In such times of uncertainty, transparency in military exercises and activities becomes even more crucial in order to prevent misunderstandings and an accidental escalation of tensions that could lead to armed conflict.

Second, on our existing instruments and tools: it is essential that we uphold the OSCE's *acquis* of confidence- and security-building measures and adhere to these in their entirety. We need to make use of the existing instruments and focus on the full implementation of their provisions. In the long run, however, these instruments – among others, the Vienna Document – need to be modernized and adapted to the military and

technological realities of the twenty-first century in order to maintain, if not increase, the level of openness and transparency among participating States.

Third, on voluntary transparency measures: while these cannot replace the binding instruments adopted under the OSCE's aegis, they are an additional tool for enhancing transparency and fostering mutual trust. We thus welcome any voluntary measures that participating States may undertake.

Madam Chairperson,

Having carefully followed, during today's meeting of Working Group A, the presentation by the Conflict Prevention Centre (CPC) on trends in the implementation of our commitments, this delegation notes once again with regret that some participating States do not exchange information and that their representatives do not attend the relevant forums. Switzerland would encourage those participating States to reach out to the CPC for support and assistance, thus taking up the offer that was made this morning. Switzerland stands ready, as in the past, to support the CPC in its provision of assistance with a view to enabling all the participating States to achieve full and timely implementation of their commitments.

In closing, allow me to stress that enhancing transparency by providing information is key to strengthening confidence. If we fail to exchange accurate and timely information that is based on factual evidence, we undermine the very foundations upon which the OSCE and our common security are built. The second keynote speaker of today mentioned how "political will" was a prerequisite for a sound co-operation based on openness and transparency. Accordingly, Switzerland calls for the demonstration of our common political will as OSCE participating States so as to address, in a constructive atmosphere, those issues that are relevant to the future of our indivisible security and to stability in the OSCE area.

Thank you, Excellencies and dear colleagues, for your kind attention.

Thank you, Madam Chairperson.



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**980th Plenary Meeting**

FSC Journal No. 986, Agenda item 3

**STATEMENT BY  
THE DELEGATION OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.

Military transparency is an essential building block of security and stability. Transparency and information exchanges on exercises and other military activities build confidence among participating States, avoid misunderstandings, and reduce the risk of miscalculation. These goals can be fully achieved only through full implementation of existing commitments and Vienna Document modernization.

Vienna Document notifications provide useful information on, among other things, a participating State's capabilities, the number of troops, and the quantities and types of major equipment and weapons systems involved in a military activity. The commitment to 42-day prior notice for certain exercises helps alleviate potential concerns by providing transparency and allowing co-ordination of confidence-building activities such as inspections and observations of military activities. Lowering the thresholds for notification and observation of military activities would further enhance this transparency.

Notifying the general purpose of an exercise, with a description of the phases and an explanation of the tactical purpose of each phase, can also help communicate intent. An activity not notified, or notified in terms inconsistent with open-source reporting and/or assessment by national technical means, can be especially troubling.

Vienna Document notifications are the essential foundation of military transparency in Europe. In the lead up to exercise Defender Europe 2021, the United States initially notified Defender 2021 under the Vienna Document in November 2020 and then provided more details in a March 2021 notification. We briefed the Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC) in April 2021 and provided an additional brief directly to the Russian Ministry of Defence. We were completely transparent in detailing the capabilities of the exercise force and the defensive and deterrent intent of the exercise.

As gestures of additional transparency, in 2019, five NATO Allies provided either a FSC briefing or voluntary observation of their exercises. In 2020 this increased to seven NATO Allies providing FSC briefings, along with one Ally which also offered a voluntary observation. We have sustained this transparency in 2021, with eight NATO exercises having

been briefed in the FSC, including one open to voluntary observation. Note that this increase in transparency measures came despite reduced exercise activities in 2020 and 2021.

In this connection, the United States heartily endorses the emerging practice in this body of providing voluntary briefings and would welcome more reciprocity from others, in addition to Vienna Document-required notifications of such activities.

Voluntary briefings, however, cannot substitute for notifications. In that regard, the United States remains particularly concerned about no-notice snap exercises, arguably the most disturbing type of exercise, given the frequent massed capability involved, the opportunity for surprise, and the lack of transparency measures to evaluate possible offensive intent. While we recognize the value of no-notice training, we regret the most recent failure of the Russian Federation to provide any transparency during its large-scale, no-notice massing of forces in and near Ukraine earlier this spring. Russia decided not to issue notifications, provide voluntary briefs, and in the case of the Vienna Document paragraph 16 risk reduction process, not to provide required explanations when requested. Behaviour that raises threat perceptions and threatens general stability – such as large-scale, no-notice military exercises near borders, coupled with a deliberate refusal to provide any transparency – destroys confidence, raises unnecessary tensions, and undermines efforts to promote military transparency, risk reduction, and incident prevention.

The joint proposal for modernizing the Vienna Document, co-sponsored by 34 participating States, provides a concrete framework to rebuild military transparency in Europe based on our existing commitments. It also includes steps to enhance the Chapter III risk reduction provisions to address gaps and better dispel concerns about unusual military activities and hazardous incidents of a military nature. During these times of heightened military tension, we have a chance to improve transparency and reduce risk by committing to promptly begin negotiations on updating the Vienna Document.

The United States was pleased that 45 participating States at the Tirana Ministerial affirmed their readiness to modernize the Vienna Document, and that many participating States expressed support for key elements of the joint proposal, including:

- Lowering thresholds for notification and observation of military activities;
- Modestly increasing the number of inspection and evaluation opportunities;
- Modestly increasing team sizes – which, notably, was originally an idea of the Russian Federation;
- Adding measures to facilitate real-time, impartial information-gathering in situations where questions have arisen about unusual military activities; and
- Providing greater transparency regarding military activities conducted without prior notice to the troops involved.

Full adherence to existing commitments is absolutely necessary to maintain an acceptable level of military transparency and stability in Europe. The joint Vienna Document

modernization proposal would help address concerns about military activities and exercises and close loopholes that currently inhibit such transparency.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. Please 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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**980th Plenary Meeting**  
FSC Journal No. 986, Agenda item 3

**STATEMENT BY  
THE DELEGATION OF TURKEY**

Mr. Chairperson,

Since the delegation of Armenia mentioned our country, we should like to exercise our right of reply.

The journals of many previous meetings of the Forum for Security Co-operation and the Permanent Council are in fact full of our statements on this matter. I shall therefore be very brief.

We wish to reiterate that Turkey, acting in good faith, provided information about these military activities through the official sources.

It is known that Turkey and Azerbaijan have been conducting joint military exercises in a transparent manner for several years.

These exercises are conducted in line with the thresholds and provisions of the Vienna Document.

If the Armenian delegation has a problem with these thresholds and provisions, we urge them to join in the efforts aimed at modernizing the Vienna Document and to come forward with their suggestions.

Last but not least, Armenia, as is well known, unilaterally suspended its commitments and obligations vis-à-vis Turkey under the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe and the Vienna Document in July 2020. As a country that violates legally and politically binding documents, Armenia is in no position to lecture others.

I kindly ask you to attach this statement to the journal of the day.

Thank you.



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**980th Plenary Meeting**

FSC Journal No. 986, Agenda item 3

**STATEMENT BY  
THE DELEGATION OF ARMENIA**

Mr. Chairperson,

At the outset let me thank today's keynote speakers for their interesting presentations.

Ensuring military transparency and predictability is indeed the key objective of OSCE confidence- and security-building measures aimed at preventing the use of force, and Armenia remains committed to the aims and objectives of the OSCE confidence- and security-building measures.

Mr. Chairperson,

The aggressions launched by Azerbaijan against Artsakh and its people in 2016 and 2020 clearly illustrate the direct link between the lack of military transparency and the use of force. My delegation has consistently brought to the attention of participating States the issue of large-scale military exercises conducted by Azerbaijan on its own or jointly with Turkey without prior notification. The two wars, which resulted in atrocities, mass killings, the displacement of large numbers of people, deliberate attacks on civilian settlements and other crimes – confirmed the validity of our concerns that all those large-scale military exercises, accompanied by systematic violations of the provisions of the Vienna Document, the uncontrolled accumulation of heavy weapons and threats to use force, were nothing more than preparations for open war.

Azerbaijan has not abandoned its policy of provocation even after the trilateral statement of 9 November 2020, which put an end to the hostilities. Since the end of the war, Azerbaijan has already conducted five large-scale military exercises, including jointly with Turkey. Moreover, all the exercises have been of an offensive nature and were accompanied by highly provocative statements. The most recent large-scale military exercise was conducted by Azerbaijan from 16 to 20 May and involved up to 15,000 military personnel; up to 300 tanks and other armoured vehicles; up to 400 missiles and artillery systems of various calibres, multiple-launch rocket systems, mortars and anti-tank weapons; and up to 50 military aircraft, including unmanned aerial vehicles. Our request for detailed information on the parameters of the exercise went unanswered yet again, while Azerbaijan's violation of the provisions of the Vienna Document concerning prior notification of certain military

activities was covered up through repetitive and clichéd references to the composition of the troops involved in the exercise. The constant refusal by Azerbaijan to provide clarifications on the parameters of exercises in response to our requests attests to its total disregard for its own commitments, for the norms of responsible State behaviour, and for regional peace and security. In view of this, any statements from Azerbaijan about seeking to promote regional security and stability are hypocritical and misleading.

Mr. Chairperson,

Given the recent use of force by Azerbaijan against Artsakh, the constant threats and territorial claims against Armenia made by the President of Azerbaijan, and the incursion of the Azerbaijani military into the sovereign territory of Armenia, we consider such unnotified military exercises to be a real threat to Armenia and Artsakh and to regional peace and stability. The wars against Artsakh should serve as a constant reminder to the OSCE of the threats and human suffering that the lack of military transparency can easily lead to. We reiterate our call to the OSCE participating States to stand up for our shared commitments and to speak out unequivocally against their violations.



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**980th Plenary Meeting**

FSC Journal No. 986, Agenda item 3

**STATEMENT BY  
THE DELEGATION OF ARMENIA**

We have on many occasions communicated our position regarding Armenia's decision to suspend military inspections by Turkey and the participation of Turkish guest inspectors in multinational inspections conducted on the territory of the Republic of Armenia. As this issue keeps coming up for discussion, I shall elaborate on it in more detail.

Turkey's aggressive policy and military posturing vis-à-vis Armenia are well known. A country that for more than a century now has been justifying the Armenian Genocide and insisting on impunity for that crime, has openly expressed its full support for Azerbaijan in the latter's attempts to commit new crimes against Armenians. Turkey was the only OSCE participating State that expressed unconditional support for the Azerbaijani aggression against Artsakh in April 2016. Since 12 July 2020, when the Azerbaijani armed forces launched an attack on the north-eastern part of the State border between Armenia and Azerbaijan, Turkey has been making unprecedented threats against Armenia and unilaterally supporting Azerbaijan's military provocations against Armenia. From the very beginning of the 44-day war of aggression in September 2020, Turkey provided unreserved political and military support to Azerbaijan. All of Azerbaijan's military operations were carried out under the co-ordination of the Turkish military and using military equipment and weapons provided by Turkey. Furthermore, Turkey recruited and transferred to Azerbaijan over 4,000 foreign terrorist fighters and jihadists to fight against Armenia and Artsakh.

Despite the anti-Armenian policies pursued by Turkey over many decades, every year until last year Armenia had hosted military inspections from Turkey under the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe and the Vienna Document. In view of legitimate security concerns, the Government of Armenia decided, in 2020, to suspend military inspections by Turkey and the participation of Turkish guest inspectors in multinational inspections on the territory of the Republic of Armenia. Any military activity carried out on Armenian territory by Turkey would further affect adversely the security interests of Armenia and undermine the security of its population.