
Chairmanship: Czech Republic

927th PLENARY MEETING OF THE FORUM

1. Date: Wednesday, 9 October 2019

Opened: 10.05 a.m.

Closed: 12.55 p.m.

2. Chairperson: Ambassador I. Šrámek

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

Agenda item 1: SECURITY DIALOGUE ON DONOR PERSPECTIVES ON ASSISTANCE PROJECTS IN THE FIELD OF SMALL ARMS AND LIGHT WEAPONS AND STOCKS OF CONVENTIONAL AMMUNITION IN THE OSCE AREA

– *Presentation by Mr. R. Mossinkoff, Senior FSC Support Officer, FSC Support Section, Conflict Prevention Centre, OSCE Secretariat*

– *Presentation by Mr. M. Bleinroth, Director of the Division on Conventional Disarmament, Confidence- and Security-Building Measures and Preventive Arms Control, German Federal Foreign Office*

– *Presentation by Mr. R. Robideau, Programme Manager for South and Central Asia, Office of Weapons Removal and Abatement, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, US Department of State*

Chairperson, Representative of the OSCE Conflict Prevention Centre, Mr. M. Bleinroth, Mr. R. Robideau, Finland-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 country Iceland, member of the European Economic Area; as well as Georgia and Ukraine, in alignment) (FSC.DEL/209/19/Rev.1), United States of America, Slovakia, Albania (Annex 1), Montenegro (Annex 2), North Macedonia (Annex 3), Switzerland, Turkey, Armenia (Annex 4), Netherlands (FSC.DEL/207/19 OSCE+), Liechtenstein (FSC.DEL/205/19 OSCE+),

Tajikistan, Azerbaijan (Annex 5), Ukraine, FSC Co-ordinator on Matters Relating to UNSCR 1325 (United Kingdom), FSC Co-ordinator for Projects on Small Arms and Light Weapons and Stockpiles of Conventional Ammunition (Hungary), Chairperson of the Informal Group of Friends on Small Arms and Light Weapons and Stockpiles of Conventional Ammunition (Latvia) (Annex 6)

Agenda item 2: GENERAL STATEMENTS

Situation in and around Ukraine: Ukraine (FSC.DEL/206/19/Corr.1 OSCE+), Finland-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, San Marino and Ukraine, in alignment) (FSC.DEL/210/19/Rev.1), Russian Federation, United States of America, Canada

Agenda item 3: ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- (a) *Symposium to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the OSCE Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security, to be held in Budapest from 16 to 18 October 2019 (FSC.GAL/96/19 OSCE+):* FSC Co-ordinator for the Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security (Romania), Hungary

- (b) *Refusal by Kyrgyzstan of a request to host an inspection under the Vienna Document:* Germany, United Kingdom, United States of America, Canada, France, Italy

4. Next meeting:

Wednesday, 16 October 2019, at 10 a.m., in the Neuer Saal



927th Plenary Meeting
FSC Journal No. 933, Agenda item 1

STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF ALBANIA

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.

I wish to thank the Czech Chairmanship of the Forum for Security Co-operation for devoting a Security Dialogue to this topic, which is so important for the OSCE area and beyond. May I also join the other delegations in warmly welcoming today's speakers and thanking them for their valuable contributions.

Albania has aligned itself with the European Union's statement, which we fully support. I should now like, though, to make some additional remarks in my national capacity.

Trafficking in small arms and light weapons (SALW) and the illicit use of such weapons pose a risk to public security, not only as far as public order in individual countries is concerned, but also in terms of wider challenges such as organized crime and violent extremism, which threaten our region (the Western Balkans) and indeed the entire European security architecture.

The Government of Albania, in line with its obligations under the process for our country's integration into the European Union, is strongly committed to combating the illicit possession, proliferation and trafficking of firearms (including their ammunition) and explosives.

Accordingly, in 2015, we established an electronic registry of light weapons with the European Union's assistance. Work is ongoing to register all hunting weapons in our country so far we have managed to register around 45 per cent of the total.

Over the past few years, thanks to the international community's support, considerable progress has been made at all levels of our law enforcement structures in enhancing both the capacities of staff and the technical infrastructure and equipment required to tackle the aforementioned threats.

Our country has endorsed and engaged in the donor co-ordination initiative on illicit firearms trafficking in the Western Balkans that was launched by Germany and France in 2017. We have organized a series of national and regional meetings to promote integrated and concerted action against the proliferation of SALW in the region and, in particular, to promote implementation of the "Regional Roadmap for a sustainable solution to the illegal

possession, misuse and trafficking of SALW/firearms and their ammunition in the Western Balkans by 2024”, which was adopted by the Heads of State or Government at the Fifth Western Balkans Summit, held in London in July 2018 as part of the Berlin Process.

In accordance with the Roadmap, the Albanian Government adopted a National SALW Strategy and Action Plan by Decision No. 50 of 2 February 2019. The Strategy is based on the same goals and key performance indicators as the Roadmap.

Furthermore, we are establishing a legislative framework for the transfer of arms and ammunition, taking into account the Arms Trade Treaty, the United Nations Programme of Action on SALW, the European Union Code of Conduct on Arms Exports and relevant European Union directives and regulations.

We believe that the proliferation of SALW cannot be tackled by States individually: it is a challenge for all the countries in our region and therefore requires much closer co-operation at the regional level.

It is important that all the countries in the Western Balkans should be committed to stopping the export of light weapons and to harmonizing their legislative frameworks in line with the European Union’s policies in this area.

We wish to take this opportunity to thank all the international donors – namely the European Union, the United Nations Development Programme and the OSCE participating States, particularly Germany and the United States of America – for the valuable technical assistance and expertise that they have provided over the years.

Lastly, I should like to inform the participating States that the Ministry of the Interior of Albania and the State Police are formally requesting the OSCE’s assistance to further enhance our country’s SALW control measures.

The OSCE’s support would, in particular, be welcome in the following priority areas (identified on the basis of needs assessment):

- Establishment of the legislative framework for SALW deactivation and practical implementation of such a framework;
- Strengthening the State Police’s capacities for the use of police dog units (K9) to detect weapons and explosives; and
- Planning, designing and implementing awareness-raising campaigns on the dangers of SALW and on our country’s efforts to improve SALW control.

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

Thank you for your attention.



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STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF MONTENEGRO

Mr. Chairperson,

With reference to the continuous efforts of the Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC) to promote implementation of the OSCE Documents on Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) and Stockpiles of Conventional Ammunition (SCA) – as reflected, *inter alia*, in FSC Decisions No. 11/09 and No. 3/11 – we should like to make the following statement.

After regaining independence in 2006, Montenegro was faced with a series of formidable threats and challenges related to the large quantities of surplus weapons and ammunition on its territory and to inadequate stockpile capacities.

Most of these challenges have now been resolved through the Capacity Development Programme for SALW Demilitarization and Safe Storage for the Republic of Montenegro (MONDEM), jointly implemented by the OSCE, the United Nations Development Programme and the Government of Montenegro, and various complementary projects.

May I use this opportunity to thank the implementing partners and donor States for their significant contributions, which have helped us to bring MONDEM to a successful conclusion.

As SALW- and SCA-related threats and challenges continue to beset Montenegro, the reduction of the risks posed by the destabilizing accumulation of weapon and ammunition surpluses remains one of the highest priorities for Montenegro's defence sector, as does stockpile management.

Bearing in mind the success of MONDEM, I should like to express our strong interest in continuing in the same direction.

In this regard, I wish to inform you that Montenegro is formally requesting the assistance of the OSCE and other partners in connection with the disposal of surplus weapons and explosive ordnance and the development of a sustainable life-cycle management system for weapons and explosives.

Montenegro has completed a standard format questionnaire, based on Annex I to the OSCE Document on SCA, and has distributed it under the document symbol FSC.DEL/212/19. We kindly ask for the information provided therein to be considered carefully, and count on participating States' support for our assistance request.

Mr. Chairperson,

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

Thank you.



927th Plenary Meeting
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STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF NORTH MACEDONIA

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.

First of all, may I join my colleagues in thanking the speakers for their very interesting and comprehensive presentations about donors' perspectives on OSCE assistance projects in the field of small arms and light weapons (SALW) and stockpiles of conventional ammunition (SCA).

Although my country is fully aligned with the statement by the European Union delivered earlier today, I wish to make the following remarks in my national capacity.

Mr. Chairperson,

On behalf of the delegation of North Macedonia I should like to inform you of our official request for OSCE assistance in the field of SALW and SCA, which was submitted to the OSCE Secretariat.

Having in mind today's meeting and deliberations on the topic, I would like to highlight the content of the assistance request as pointed out in the letter of the Minister of Interior of North Macedonia.

In accordance with the National SALW Control Strategy and Action Plan 2017–2021, the following areas have been identified for support:

- Analysis on the current state of play of the National Commission on SALW and capacity to implement all actions stipulated in the Action Plan and in the Roadmap on SALW, inclusive of recommendations on how to improve the authority, functioning, and performance of the SALW Commission;
- If so agreed by other Western Balkans (partners), a similar assessment could be carried out at the regional level, that is to say, covering all national SALW commissions in the region;
- Establishment of the legislative and practical framework for effective deactivation of SALW in accordance with the relevant OSCE Best Practice Guides;

- Building the capacities of the police department in strengthening their K-9 capabilities in detecting weapons and explosives; and
- Support in planning, designing and implementing the awareness-raising campaigns on SALW and the improved SALW control.

We are looking forward to a positive response from the OSCE Secretariat to our request for assistance in this important field.

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

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.



927th Plenary Meeting

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STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF ARMENIA

Mr. Chairperson,

We wish to join the other delegations in thanking the speakers for their presentations. We also want to express our appreciation for the efforts of the Czech Chairmanship of the Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC) in organizing this Security Dialogue.

At the Vienna Ministerial Council meeting in December 2017, the participating States committed themselves to holding biennial meetings to review the implementation of OSCE assistance projects in the field of small arms and light weapons (SALW) and stockpiles of conventional ammunition (SCA). In this regard, we deeply lament the fact that, owing to the politicized stance of one participating State, the implementation of that commitment has been unduly delayed.

The Armenian delegation has spoken out on numerous occasions against one participating State's deplorable practice of trying to blackmail – or even paralyse – the whole Organization in order to advance its political narratives. We believe that the OSCE and its participating States should stand firm in resisting such attempts, particularly when they have a bearing on SALW- and SCA-related matters, which have always been high on the FSC's agenda.

Mr. Chairperson,

I must reiterate that, as long ago as 2015, Armenia submitted a request to the OSCE for assistance with the implementation of a project in the field of SALW and SCA, the aim of which is to improve safety standards at two Armenian storage sites for SALW and ammunition in line with OSCE best practices.

We have already held several official and unofficial consultations, provided further clarifications and invited the OSCE to conduct a pre-feasibility study.

On this note, I should like to ask you, Mr. Chairperson, in accordance with the procedure outlined in the OSCE Document on SCA, to inform the FSC about the actions undertaken by the FSC Chairmanship to respond to our country's assistance request and about the Chairmanship's further intentions in that matter.

Over the previous years, the Armenian delegation has always been constructively engaged in joint efforts to draw up new commitments in the field of SALW and SCA. However, our position with regard to new instruments that may be adopted in the future – and indeed our views on the relevance of this topic in the OSCE’s work – will very much depend on progress being made in the implementation of existing commitments that have been adopted for all 57 participating States. Unfortunately, as shown by the obstruction of the decision to hold the aforementioned biennial meeting, we continue to witness disrespect towards our commitments on the part of one participating State, which is, moreover, attempting to water them down.

In conclusion, we call upon the OSCE Secretariat and the FSC Chairmanship to be guided by our agreed commitments in all their work and to refrain from any actions that are contrary to the co-operative spirit of the OSCE.

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

Thank you.



927th Plenary Meeting

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STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF AZERBAIJAN

Mr. Chairperson,

The delegation of Azerbaijan warmly welcomes the speakers at today's meeting of the Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC) and thanks them for their interesting and insightful presentations. We also commend the Czech FSC Chairmanship for attaching importance to the field of small arms and light weapons (SALW) and stockpiles of conventional ammunition (SCA), and for convening a dedicated Security Dialogue on this topic. We view today's meeting as an opportunity to give further impetus to our joint efforts in combating and eradicating threats to security and stability in the OSCE area posed by SALW and SCA.

As a regional security arrangement under Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations, the OSCE is well placed to take effective action in countering threats related to the excessive and destabilizing accumulation of SALW and SCA in its geographical area. This should complement UN-led international efforts in this sphere, including through implementation of the UN Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects.

The Organization has done a lot to streamline norms and best practices in the field of SALW and SCA, and also to expand and consolidate the necessary normative framework. Nevertheless, persistent threats posed by the excessive and destabilizing accumulation of SALW and SCA, and by their uncontrolled and unaccounted spread and proliferation, continue to degrade security in the OSCE area. The full implementation – in letter and spirit – of the commitments contained in relevant OSCE documents and decisions as well as practical steps taken to this end are necessary to tackle these threats and address our regional gaps in line with global standards.

One of the essential areas in which the OSCE has yet to realize its full potential and make a tangible contribution to international efforts is action against the illicit transfer and diversion of SALW and SCA. This is a particularly pressing issue for the participating States suffering from unresolved armed conflicts that arose as a result of egregious violations of the norms and principles of international law and of the principles of the Helsinki Final Act. The excessive and destabilizing accumulation of SALW and SCA through illicit transfers and diversion in the territories of Azerbaijan occupied by one participating State continues to be a serious security concern for our country. This helps sustain the conflict, undermines efforts

for its peaceful resolution, exacerbates violence, threatens the lives of people and contributes to their displacement.

The OSCE must take all appropriate measures to prevent and combat the illicit transfer and diversion of SALW and SCA. Before authorizing transfers of weapons and ammunition, participating States should consider appropriate measures in response to the risk that these transfers pose in conflict settings. The fact that SALW and conventional ammunition manufactured in OSCE participating States are finding their way into the territory of another participating State without the consent of the latter should alarm producing and transit countries alike.

It is deeply regrettable that the resolve of our organization to tackle the illicit transfer and diversion of SALW and SCA is being thwarted by one participating State. Azerbaijan strongly believes that dealing with these threats is of fundamental importance for the entire OSCE area. This task should, therefore, remain high on the OSCE's agenda and result-oriented efforts to integrate it into the normative body of the OSCE and its programmatic activities in line with global standards should be continued. Only in this way can the OSCE meet the needs of its region and make a significant contribution to global efforts on SALW and SCA.

All assistance projects in the field of SALW and SCA must fully comply with the procedures laid down in relevant OSCE documents and FSC decisions. In particular, precise details of the needs and of the assistance being requested should be provided to safeguard the process of transparency and accountability. The continuous manipulations of one participating State that refuses to follow the established procedures in connection with its assistance request must be firmly resisted. In that respect, we call upon the Czech FSC Chairmanship and the FSC Support Section of the Conflict Prevention Centre to adhere strictly to the OSCE's normative framework and resolutely reject any attempts to undermine the decisions and procedures that we have all collectively agreed on.

In closing, we once again thank our guest speakers for their valuable contributions to today's Security Dialogue and wish them every success in their future endeavours.

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

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.



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**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.

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 take this opportunity to reiterate the importance of the OSCE best practices on SALW and SCA. These best practices have been endorsed by all OSCE participating States as providing a common understanding on approaches, procedures, terminology and, in some cases, even technical specifications in the field of SALW and SCA.

Fulfilling the mandate given by Ministerial Council Decision No. 10/17 on SALW and SCA, adopted in Vienna in December 2017; guided by the outcomes of the Biennial Meeting to Assess the Implementation of the OSCE Documents on SALW and SCA held in October 2018; and encouraged by the 2018 Milan Ministerial Council Declaration on OSCE Efforts in the Field of Norms and Best Practices on SALW and SCA, the Informal Group of Friends on SALW and SCA is currently working on the review and update of the relevant OSCE Best Practice Guides (BPGs).

The most recent meeting on reviewing and updating the BPGs on SALW and SCA took place on 7 October 2019. It was organized by the Informal Group of Friends on SALW and SCA and benefited from technical support provided by the Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC) Support Section.

Attended by 48 participants from 21 OSCE participating States, the meeting provided subject matter experts from the various capitals, as well as delegates based in Vienna working on politico-military issues, with an opportunity to help refine the process of reviewing and updating the BPGs. The meeting also raised awareness of the guides among stakeholders, improved communication and co-ordination processes, and facilitated technical discussions.

The discussions focused on:

- Reviewing the participating States’ responses to the “Questionnaire on the OSCE SALW and SCA Best Practice Guides” circulated by the FSC Chairmanship on 25 June 2019, especially taking into account relevant developments in the OSCE area in the past 15 years;
- Sharing experiences and lessons learned on key issues and processes pertaining to national norms and regulations in the field of SALW and SCA, and exchanging information on participating States’ proposals for updating the BPGs;
- Identifying additional steps to support the review and update of the BPGs (e.g., the introduction of a periodic review mechanism, co-ordination, technical assistance, etc.).

The proceedings, presentations and outcomes from the meeting will be synthesized into a summary document to be shared with the OSCE participating States.

As mentioned at the meeting, a food-for-thought paper reflecting the discussions and suggesting the next steps will also be drafted and circulated.

I should like to thank all the participants and all the distinguished delegations of OSCE participating States that supported this meeting and contributed to its success.

I also wish to extend my gratitude to the FSC Support Section for providing invaluable technical support.

Thank you very much for your attention.