



**75th JOINT MEETING OF THE
FORUM FOR SECURITY CO-OPERATION
AND THE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

1. Date: Wednesday, 16 October 2019

Opened: 10.05 a.m.

Closed: 12.30 p.m.

2. Chairperson: Ambassador I. Šrámek (FSC) (Czech Republic)
Ambassador R. Boháč (PC) (Slovakia)

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

Agenda item 1: SECURITY DIALOGUE ON THE STRUCTURED
DIALOGUE: REPORT BY THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE
INFORMAL WORKING GROUP ON THE STRUCTURED
DIALOGUE

Chairperson (FSC), Chairperson (PC), Chairperson of the Informal Working Group on the Structured Dialogue (CIO.GAL/140/19 OSCE+), Finland-European Union (with the candidate countries Albania, Montenegro and North Macedonia; the European Free Trade Association countries Iceland and Liechtenstein, members of the European Economic Area; as well as Andorra, Moldova, San Marino and Ukraine, in alignment) (FSC-PC.DEL/39/19), Ukraine, Switzerland (FSC-PC.DEL/35/19 OSCE+), Austria (Annex 1), Russian Federation (Annex 2), France, United States of America, Poland, Armenia, Canada, Italy (FSC-PC.DEL/38/19 OSCE+), Georgia, Latvia (FSC-PC.DEL/37/19 OSCE+), Azerbaijan, Germany, United Kingdom, Turkey, Spain (FSC-PC.DEL/34/19 OSCE+), Greece

Agenda item 2: ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None

4. Next meeting:
To be announced



75th Joint Meeting of the FSC and the PC
FSC-PC Journal No. 62, Agenda item 1

STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF AUSTRIA

Let me start by thanking Ambassador Boender for his work as Chairperson of the Informal Working Group in 2019 and for distributing the second interim report (CIO.GAL/137/19 Restr.), which provides a valuable summary of the meetings held in 2019.

In addition to endorsing fully the statement by the European Union, Austria would like to take the floor in its capacity as the initiator of the Informal Working Group on the Structured Dialogue during its Chairmanship of the OSCE in 2017.

The current security situation calls not just for the implementation of existing commitments but also for their adaptation and, indeed, a new approach to conventional arms control. We are concerned about the gradual and continuing erosion of arms control regimes, and are convinced of the urgent need for substantial and comprehensive discussions on establishing a new conventional arms control regime in Europe.

Accordingly, Austria continues to support the Structured Dialogue on the Current and Future Challenges and Risks to Security in the OSCE Area. The Structured Dialogue's ultimate goal is the reinvigoration of arms control and confidence- and security-building measures in Europe. In our view, the work conducted under the Informal Working Group last year has already led to a better understanding of current and future challenges and risks. Moreover, we see added value in focusing our future work on the core of the 2016 Ministerial Council Declaration "From Lisbon to Hamburg" on the twentieth anniversary of the OSCE Framework for Arms Control (MC.DOC/4/16) – namely, on the Framework for Arms Control, which also refers to challenges and risks, and on how the Framework could serve as a common basis for future efforts.

Austria is convinced that arms control, including disarmament and confidence- and security-building, is integral to the OSCE's concept of comprehensive and co-operative security. The OSCE participating States' strong commitment to full implementation and further development of arms control agreements is essential to enhancing military and political stability in the OSCE area. The active engagement of all participating States in the Structured Dialogue is a prerequisite for fostering greater understanding of relevant challenges and risks.

The modernization of the Vienna Document is one important task in our joint endeavours to increase stability. Another key task is the revitalization of arms control, which

should start with a factual and sober assessment of remaining and/or existing arms control regimes and their ongoing contribution to military stability and predictability. Both tasks should be undertaken in a coherent and comprehensive manner in order to create a web of interlocking and mutually reinforcing arms control obligations and commitments in line with the principle of the indivisibility of security of all OSCE participating States.

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



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

FSC-PC.JOUR/62
16 October 2019
Annex 2

ENGLISH
Original: RUSSIAN

75th Joint Meeting of the FSC and the PC
FSC-PC Journal No. 62, Agenda item 1

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

Distinguished Co-Chairs,

First of all, we should like to thank you for organizing today's meeting and, of course, distinguished Ambassador Jeroen Boender for his skilful leadership of the Informal Working Group on the Structured Dialogue and the preparation of the high-quality report summarizing the meetings of the Informal Working Group in capitals format.

At the discussions in September, we addressed the important question of how to use existing instruments and mechanisms to improve transparency, reduce risks and prevent incidents. The meetings held have confirmed the importance of contacts between military representatives within the OSCE, in particular with regard to incidents. We see the value of considering this topic and believe it important to share positive experience in the implementation of bilateral agreements on incident prevention at sea and in the air and also on dangerous military activities.

We have heard again rather interesting proposals on how to optimize the implementation of existing agreements, in particular regarding the development of a code of conduct on transparency, risk reduction, and incident prevention and resolution. We continue to carefully study this initiative and would be interested in receiving more information on it, including details. As for voluntary transparency measures, we share the view that they should be carried out on the basis of reciprocity. We, for our part, are demonstrating sufficient openness by sending OSCE participating States voluntary notifications on exercises and holding additional briefings in Moscow, Brussels and Vienna on military activities. However, as we said during the September meeting, the idea of developing a "template" for briefings on military exercises is in our opinion not fully in line with the principle of voluntariness.

Almost three years have elapsed since the Structured Dialogue was launched at the OSCE Ministerial Council meeting in Hamburg. In accordance with the mandate set out in the declaration "From Lisbon to Hamburg" (2016), the OSCE participating States committed themselves to working together "towards creating an environment conducive to reinvigorating conventional arms control and confidence- and security-building measures in Europe". On paper, our partners remain committed to this goal – we have an opportunity to see this for ourselves again today. In practice, however, we see a continuation of the policy of

“containment”, sanctions and a rejection of military co-operation, which are incompatible with the policy of restoring trust in the military sphere. In these circumstances, the modernization of the Vienna Document 2011, which is being actively promoted by Western delegations as a kind of “panacea” for improving the European security situation, is unacceptable to Russia.

We regret that overall the atmosphere in the Structured Dialogue meetings is deteriorating rather than improving. Some of today’s statements merely confirm this conclusion. Our meetings within the framework of the Structured Dialogue are increasingly reminiscent of the weekly meetings of the Forum for Security Co-operation and the Permanent Council of the OSCE. We should like to point out that playing along with the sentiments of those participating States that are trying to turn the Structured Dialogue into a verbal battleground calls into question the readiness of our partners for substantive work and dilutes the sense of our meetings. We take the position that dialogue should not be aimed at exercises in confrontational rhetoric but at a serious and responsible search for mutually acceptable solutions to politico-military problems. The Minister for Foreign Affairs of Russia, Sergey Lavrov, spoke about this in particular in light of the outcomes of the OSCE Informal Ministerial Gathering in the High Tatras on 9 July this year.

Most significant in that respect were the discussions on the theme of “hybrid threats”, when almost all the speakers considered it their duty to report on “how successful they are in countering Russia”. We believe that this can hardly be called dialogue. We, at least, see it in a completely different way. I believe that the German OSCE Chairmanship in 2016 also meant something quite different with this initiative.

The idea of involving the OSCE institutions – the Representative on Freedom of the Media and the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights – as well as the field operations in the process of countering “hybrid threats” is cause for concern. Would this not lead to the creation of some kind of attributive mechanism that tends to escape the participating States’ control? We have already had an opportunity to see for ourselves how the political games surrounding the alleged attempts at foreign interference in elections end in practice.

During the September meeting on the Structured Dialogue, it became clear how much more productive – in contrast to the “hybrid” aspects – the discussions among the military experts were during the consideration of possible scenarios for military incidents and ways to prevent them. They shared national experience, simulated potential incidents and discussed the legal aspects. In short, the experts addressed specific and practical aspects of this topic, rather than trying to politicize it.

We once again stress that the “hybrid” theme does not have a single internationally established definition and is not in line with the “Hamburg mandate”. This, incidentally, is also recognized by the Chairperson of the OSCE Informal Working Group established pursuant to Permanent Council Decision No. 1039, distinguished Ambassador Károly Dán. This is a blatantly confrontational topic and, in our view, its potential for discussion within the framework of the Structured Dialogue has been exhausted.

What needs to be done in the context of the complex politico-military situation in the Euro-Atlantic area is well known. First and foremost, it is necessary to concentrate on

practical steps to de-escalate the situation, reduce military confrontation and restore military contacts.

Dialogue is possible solely on the basis of equality and mutual consideration of the parties' interests. Its goal should be to find ways to restore trust and reduce the degree of confrontation in the OSCE area. If the current situation in our Organization's area of responsibility bothers all the participating States, it is logical to focus on diligent work to de-escalate the situation. This should include reducing military activity on the basis of reciprocity along the borders between Russia and NATO countries, and also improving mechanisms to prevent incidents and dangerous military activities. This will help to build trust and gain experience of joint activities, and most importantly will provide tangible results.

Distinguished Co-Chairs,

We remain open to professional dialogue and further joint work. We remember one of the important principles of the Structured Dialogue formulated by the Permanent Representative of Belgium to the OSCE, distinguished Ambassador Paul Huynen, on the leading role of States in our negotiation process. I think that together we will be able to stop going around in circles.

Given the obvious crisis of confidence in the Organization and the artificially heightened politico-military tension in the OSCE area, the Structured Dialogue retains its unique relevance as a platform where experts can discuss specific measures for reducing military risks. We advocate realigning the Structured Dialogue with its established mandate. We are ready to continue efforts to de-escalate the situation in the Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian area and in a broader sense to build a common security space, as called for in the Astana Declaration of 2010, which was signed by the leaders of all the participating States.

Thank you for your attention. I request that the text of this statement be attached to the journal of the day.