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**FSC Chairmanship: Czech Republic**

**LETTER FROM THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE FORUM FOR SECURITY CO-OPERATION TO THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AND EUROPEAN AFFAIRS OF THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC, CHAIRPERSON OF THE TWENTY-SIXTH MEETING OF THE MINISTERIAL COUNCIL OF THE OSCE**

As the Chairperson of the Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC), it is my pleasure to inform you about the activities of the Forum in 2019.

In preparing this letter, I have consulted with the previous 2019 FSC Chairmanships, namely, Switzerland and Tajikistan. During 2019, the FSC Chairmanships worked in close co-operation with each other to ensure continuity and efficiency in the implementation of the Forum's annual work programme.

Several initiatives undertaken by participating States led to the adoption of **five** decisions, all designed to support the implementation of existing commitments.

The strategic discussions during the **Security Dialogues** indicated the FSC's importance as a platform for dialogue, addressing security issues of common interest and concern. Even though the situation in and around Ukraine remained the dominant topic of the discussions in the FSC, active discussions also took place on matters related to the following: subregional military and defence co-operation; normative and project-related aspects in the field of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) and Stockpiles of Conventional Ammunition (SCA); implementation of the Women, Peace and Security agenda; the OSCE Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security and the implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1540; the Vienna Document 2011 and confidence and security-building measures (CSBMs); Private Military and Security Companies (PMSCs); and aspects of modern warfare. The three 2019 FSC Chairmanships actively stimulated discussions by organizing a total of 21 Security Dialogues.

With a view to promoting **regional stability** and comprehensive and co-operative security, the three 2019 FSC Chairmanships dedicated a total of five Security Dialogues to subregional military defence co-operation, which in geographical terms spanned the Visegrad Group, regional organizations in Central Asia, and the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO). In particular, under the FSC Chairmanship of Switzerland, the Security Dialogues focused on regional co-operation aimed at promoting the "transparency and confidence" approach. Tajikistan's FSC Chairmanship saw discussion of politico-military aspects of border management and the challenges

and opportunities of the regional approach in Central Asia, the role of the CSBMs in Central Asia, and synergies between regional organizations and the OSCE. The Security Dialogue on military co-operation of the Visegrad Group was organized by the FSC Chairmanship of the Czech Republic.

In accordance with the tasking stemming from OSCE documents as well as various FSC and Ministerial Council decisions on **Small Arms and Light Weapons and Stockpiles of Conventional Ammunition (SALW/SCA)**, all three FSC Chairmanships conducted a range of related activities. Given the impressive implementation results of many project activities, the topic of SALW and SCA remained one of the most enduring and promising items on the FSC agenda, with five Security Dialogues and many informal meetings being dedicated to the subject during the year. The OSCE's efforts were in particular focused on the review and updating of the OSCE Best Practice Guides on SALW and on Conventional Ammunition, with a clear roadmap for this process being agreed before the end of 2019. Regrettably, the OSCE meeting to review the implementation of the OSCE assistance projects in the field of SALW and SCA – a firm commitment of all OSCE participating States, as decided at the 2017 Ministerial Council – was not implemented in 2019 on account of a lack of consensus on the agenda.

Another topic highlighted during the year was the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and, on its 15th anniversary, **United Nations Security Council Resolution 1540**, to which one Security Dialogue was devoted under the FSC Chairmanship of Tajikistan and one under the FSC Chairmanship of the Czech Republic.

All three FSC Chairmanships co-operated closely with the Slovak OSCE Chairmanship-in-Office and the OSCE Permanent Council on cross-dimensional issues of relevance to both bodies in line with the OSCE's concept of comprehensive and indivisible security. To this end, **four joint meetings of the Forum for Security Co-operation and Permanent Council** were held: two on the Structured Dialogue, one on Security Sector Governance and Reform (SSG/R), and one on lessons learned in the field of conflict resolution.

The **29th Annual Implementation Assessment Meeting (AIAM)** took place in March 2019 during the FSC Chairmanship of Switzerland. Led by Lithuania and Liechtenstein, it provided an opportunity to raise and discuss various issues related to the present and future implementation of agreed confidence and security-building measures (CSBMs). The discussions at the AIAM resulted in a number of suggestions on how the current CSBMs could be implemented more effectively and improved in the future. Special attention was devoted to further revitalizing discussions on CSBMs in Working Group A. To this end, several suggestions were put forward to enhance the implementation of existing commitments, including ones related to points of contact in case of hazardous incidents of a military nature and to major weapons and equipment systems. Furthermore, in May 2019 the FSC Chair's Co-ordinator on the Vienna Document organized the Expert Level Workshop on the Exchange of the Major Weapon and Equipment Systems (MWES) Data. Additionally, in an effort to keep the Vienna Document adjusted to the current politico-military realities and technological developments, a Vienna Document Plus proposal, building on suggestions tabled earlier, was put forward by a group of 32 participating States.

The **8th Annual Discussion on the Implementation of the Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security** was held in June 2019 under the Tajik FSC Chairmanship. The meeting provided a valuable opportunity for participating States to review the enforcement of the

Code and to exchange views on ways of further improving its implementation. In May 2019, the Tajik FSC Chair participated in a seminar on the OSCE Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security held in Cyprus and organized by the Conflict Prevention Centre (CPC) and Cyprus in accordance with FSC Decision No. 1/08, which saw the participating States engage in dialogue on the Code's most important principles and commitments. In October, the Czech FSC Chair participated in the commemorative symposium "From Budapest to Budapest (1994-2019)", which was organized jointly by the CPC and Hungary to exchange lessons learned from the past 25 years' work on the Code of Conduct.

The FSC also contributed to the 2019 **Annual Security Review Conference** within its mandate, providing inputs to relevant sessions and focusing on politico-military elements, including conventional arms control and CSBMs.

The year 2019 saw three Security Dialogues devoted to **gender** equality, on the following subjects: integrating gender perspectives in the politico-military dimension; the role of the military in implementing UNSCR 1325; and enhancing the role of women in both conflict-related and peacetime operations, paving the way to the 20th anniversary of UNSCR 1325, which will be commemorated in 2020.

To conclude, the Forum for Security and Co-operation has continued to serve as an important platform for dialogue and decisions in 2019, while at the same time providing participating States with a forum to discuss matters related to arms control and CSBMs, in the particular the Vienna Document 2011. A joint Vienna Document Plus proposal indicates that many participating States recognize the need for the modernization of the Vienna Document, indicating the importance of continuing the valuable efforts being made in Working Group A.