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**Chairmanship: Switzerland****910th PLENARY MEETING OF THE FORUM**

1. Date: Wednesday, 13 March 2019

Opened: 10.05 a.m.

Suspended: 12.05 p.m.

Resumed: 2.05 p.m.

Closed: 4 p.m.

2. Chairperson: Ambassador C. Wild

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

Agenda item 1: STATEMENT MARKING INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY ON 8 MARCH 2019 BY THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE MENENGAGE NETWORK, AMBASSADOR ANDREJ BENEDEJČIČ

Chairperson, Chairperson of the MenEngage Network (Annex 1)

Agenda item 2: SECURITY DIALOGUE ON STOCKPILES OF CONVENTIONAL AMMUNITION (SCA): REVIEW OF OSCE INSTRUMENTS AND MECHANISMS IN LINE WITH GLOBAL STANDARDS AND REGIONAL NEEDS

– *Presentation by Ms. N. Allgaier, Conventional Arms Branch, UN Office for Disarmament Affairs*

– *Presentation by Colonel R. Shamil'evich Yaushev, Head of Group, Main Directorate of International Military Co-operation, Ministry of Defence of the Russian Federation*

– *Presentation by Lieutenant Colonel N. Luković, Head of the Logistics Development Section, Ministry of Defence of Montenegro*

Chairperson, Ms. N. Allgaier, Colonel R. Shamil'evich Yaushev, Lieutenant Colonel N. Luković, Romania-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 and Liechtenstein, members of the European Economic Area; as well as Georgia, Moldova, San Marino and Ukraine, in alignment) (FSC.DEL/56/19), Ukraine (FSC.DEL/52/19 OSCE+), Armenia (Annex 2), Azerbaijan (FSC.DEL/54/19 OSCE+), United States of America, United Kingdom, Belarus (FSC.DEL/55/19 OSCE+), Russian Federation, FSC Co-ordinator on Matters Relating to UNSCR 1325 (Italy), 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 3)

Agenda item 3: GENERAL STATEMENTS

- (a) *Study entitled “Strengthening Resilience in the Western Balkans: Mapping Outreach and Assistance for Small Arms and Light Weapons Control”*: Austria, Chairperson
- (b) *Situation in and around Ukraine*: Ukraine (FSC.DEL/53/19 OSCE+) (FSC.DEL/53/19/Add.1 OSCE+), Romania-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) (FSC.DEL/57/19), Russian Federation, Canada, United States of America
- (c) *Large-scale military exercise in Azerbaijan being conducted from 11 to 15 March 2019*: Armenia (Annex 4), Azerbaijan (Annex 5)

Agenda item 4: ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- (a) *Exercise “Joint Warrior 19/1”, to be conducted in the United Kingdom from 30 March to 11 April 2019*: United Kingdom, Chairperson
- (b) *Intersessional OSCE Dialogue on Military Doctrines, to be held on 8 and 9 April 2019*: Austria
- (c) *Draft decision on the reminding mechanism for the OSCE Communications Network (FSC.DD/3/19)*: Representative of the Conflict Prevention Centre, Chairperson, Turkey
- (d) *Regional seminar on the Code of Conduct to be held in Cyprus from 20 to 24 May 2019*: Cyprus, FSC Co-ordinator for the Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security (Romania), Germany
- (e) *Extrabudgetary contributions by Italy*: Italy

(f) *International Women's Day, observed on 8 March 2019*: Chairperson

4. Next meeting:

Wednesday, 20 March 2019, at 10 a.m., in the Neuer Saal



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**910th Plenary Meeting**  
FSC Journal No. 916, Agenda item 1

**STATEMENT BY THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE MENENGAGE  
NETWORK (SLOVENIA)**

Mr. Chairperson,

As Chairperson of the OSCE MenEngage Network, I would like to thank you for giving me the floor. International Women's Day, which we marked last week, represents a welcome opportunity to assess our collective efforts in advancing gender equality. This is especially important in the light of the fact that women's empowerment is inextricably linked with the concept of comprehensive security. In other words, women's rights are not only human rights but also constitute a key driver of economic development and prosperity and an integral element in efficient and effective military missions and peace support operations.

In this connection, I think it is relevant to recall in this Forum that the history of the OSCE MenEngage Network is actually connected with the Organization's politico-military dimension. The idea of establishing the Network was advanced by the OSCE Senior Adviser on Gender Issues in 2012 precisely with the aim of highlighting the importance of including women in peace and security processes. That is why the Network's first Chairperson was a military adviser. So was his successor, until it was decided in 2015 that the Network should be led by an ambassador, on account of gender equality being a cross-cutting issue.

Still, the fact remains that the politico-military dimension remains one of the major areas where we continue to face gender equality gaps. While we are currently witnessing a rise in awareness of the importance of empowering women, the proportion of women holding positions in peace and security processes continues to remain very low. Far too often, gender equality remains an "add-on issue", rather than being mainstreamed into all phases of the conflict cycle. Needless to say, the responsibility for addressing this situation lies both with the participating States and with the Organization as a whole.

As we remember International Women's Day, it is therefore especially important to underline the changing nature of contemporary conflicts and security challenges. This phenomenon has not only blurred the line between combatants and civilians but has also created demands for new skills and flexible approaches. The result is that the engagement of women is now recognized as a necessity in fields as diverse as mine action and nuclear security. In other words, gender mainstreaming in what we call the politico-military dimension at the OSCE is both the right thing and the smart thing to do.

With this, I would like to ask you to attach this statement to the journal of the day.

Thank you.



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**910th Plenary Meeting**  
FSC Journal No. 916, Agenda item 2

## **STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF ARMENIA**

Mr. Chairperson,

We would like to join others in thanking our speakers for their thought-provoking presentations and in extending our appreciation to the Swiss Chairmanship for paying so much attention to the issue of small arms and light weapons (SALW) and stockpiles of conventional ammunition (SCA). This provides a good opportunity to exchange ideas and views on the current implementation of our commitments.

Armenia has always advocated deeper co-operation with the OSCE participating States in the field of SALW and SCA. Such co-operation can contribute to indivisible and comprehensive security in the OSCE area.

In the OSCE we have elaborated a large number of documents for tackling issues related to SALW and SCA and have accumulated a great deal of relevant expertise in providing assistance to participating States. In view of this, effective and full implementation of our commitments is an important goal.

Mr. Chairperson,

As is commonly recognized, the SALW problem is not merely an arms control and disarmament issue. It is a multidimensional threat. The proliferation and misuse of SALW affect all levels of society and cause a great measure of human suffering. Therefore, the safe and secure storage of SALW and SCA stockpiles has an important preventive role to play.

As early as 2015, taking into account the above-mentioned fact as well as the general principles of the OSCE Document on Stockpiles of Conventional Ammunition, Armenia submitted a request to the OSCE for assistance in the implementation of a project in the field of SALW and SCA, the aim of the project being to improve the safety standards of Armenia's two storage sites in line with the OSCE best practices.

To our deep regret, the process has been unduly put on hold, although the request is in line with OSCE commitments and has the overwhelming support of the majority of participating States.

As stated in the Vienna Ministerial Council Decision No. 10/17 on small arms and light weapons and stockpiles of conventional ammunition, assistance to participating States in the implementation of projects should be in accordance with the OSCE Documents on SALW and SCA.

In this connection, we would like to quote relevant paragraphs of the OSCE Document on SCA, which states that the participating States decide to establish a practical procedure, requiring minimal administrative burden, to address the risks by providing assistance for upgrading stockpile management and security practices. Such a procedure, it continues, will contribute to reinforcing confidence, security and transparency in the OSCE area. Furthermore, any participating State that has identified a security risk may request the assistance of the international community through the OSCE.

Describing the procedure for dealing with a request for assistance, the OSCE Document on SCA also states that in initiating the OSCE response to the request, the Chairperson of the FSC, in close co-operation with the FSC Troika and the Chairmanship-in-Office, will begin consultations, informing the FSC as appropriate, and may seek additional information and/or clarification from the participating State making the request. This may include organizing an initial visit, which may include a pre-feasibility study.

I would like to remind the Forum that since 2015 we have held numerous official and unofficial consultations, have provided further clarifications, and have extended an invitation for a pre-feasibility study to be made.

Mr. Chairperson,

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate that Armenia stands ready for the practical implementation of our SALW/SCA commitments.

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

Thank you.



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**910th Plenary Meeting**  
FSC Journal No. 916, Agenda item 2

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

Distinguished Chairperson,  
Excellences,  
Distinguished delegates,  
Dear colleagues,

I would like to take this opportunity to warmly welcome the speakers to the Forum for Security Co-operation.

The topic of small arms and light weapons (SALW) and stockpiles of conventional ammunition (SCA) has always been of high importance for the OSCE. This is the second Security Dialogue under the Swiss FSC Chairmanship on this important topic, providing participating States with an overview on technical aspects that could be taken into consideration when reviewing the OSCE Handbooks of Best Practice Guides for the SALW and SCA Documents.

On the basis of the mandate given to the FSC at the Vienna Ministerial Council of 2017, and following the outcomes of the Biennial Meeting to Assess the Implementation of the OSCE Documents on SALW and SCA of October 2018, the Informal Group of Friends on SALW and SCA convened on 26 February 2019. The meeting was the first step towards looking more closely at the OSCE's best-practice guides in the field of SALW and SCA, with the aim of seeking ways to align them with current developments and lessons learned and to undertake upgrades, where and if necessary.

I am pleased to report that the meeting was attended by 40 participants from 28 participating States.

At the meeting the following issues were presented and discussed:

1. The Conflict Prevention Centre (CPC) consultant Mr. P. Holtom of the Small Arms Survey gave a presentation devoted to the Comparative Study on OSCE Handbooks of Best Practice Guides on SALW and SCA, which was followed by discussions on the OSCE best



practices in these areas and how they should be reviewed to best facilitate the implementation of SALW/SCA commitments. As a possible way forward, we discussed the necessity for prioritization of the updates to, expansion of and adaptation of the best-practice guides, whilst taking particular note of existing assistance requests or needs on the part of the participating States. In order to avoid duplications, the participating States might seek to combine or synchronize national efforts, taking into consideration parallel ongoing processes in other international regimes and organizations. In conclusion, I invited the participating States or a group of participating States to take the lead in reviewing and further developing the best-practice guides. At this point, we also identified some missing elements in the best-practice guides, such as gender aspects and review cycles, which could be incorporated into the guides when they are reviewed.

2. Spain presented the proposal for a draft decision on the prevention of illicit trafficking of SALW and/or ammunition by sea and inland waterways.

3. The FSC Support Section of the CPC presented a number of technical updates for the OSCE Best Practice Guide on Deactivation of SALW to align the guide with the most recent international updates. A food-for-thought paper on this issue was distributed.

Mr. Chairperson, I would like to thank the FSC Support Section for their support in preparing the meeting and for providing necessary assistance.

The next meeting of the Informal Group of Friends on SALW and SCA will be held on 2 April at 3 p.m., in the Bibliotheksaal of the Hofburg.

I encourage the widest possible participation.

Thank you for your attention.



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**910th Plenary Meeting**

FSC Journal No. 916, Agenda item 3(c)

**STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF ARMENIA**

Mr. Chairperson,

Just one week after one of the most important events in the politico-military dimension, namely, the Annual Implementation Assessment Meeting, at which the participating States underlined the importance of the prior notification of certain military activities, the Armenian delegation takes the floor to draw the attention of the Forum for Security Co-operation to an open and intentional violation of the Vienna Document by Azerbaijan.

On 8 March, the Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Azerbaijan published, on its official website, information on the conduct of large-scale military exercises in accordance with a plan approved by the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the exercises being scheduled to take place from 11 to 15 March.

According to the same source, the exercises involve up to 10,000 military personnel, up to 500 tanks, up to 300 missiles and artillery systems of various calibres, multiple-launch rocket systems and mortars, and up to 20 items of army and front-line aviation for various purposes.

In accordance with Chapter V (“Prior notification of certain military activities”), paragraph 40.1.1, of the Vienna Document 2011, notification of these exercises should have been given at least 42 days before the start date, since the numbers of troops, battle tanks and artillery systems involved in the exercise exceed the thresholds.

Mr. Chairperson,

We would also like to stress that the exercises have an offensive nature and are aimed, as stated in the press release, at “launching missile and artillery strikes against military and strategic targets located in the enemy’s defensive depth”. Thus, the exercise is a clear attempt at military posturing that goes hand in hand with the war threats voiced on a number of occasions by the authorities of Azerbaijan.

As our delegation has repeatedly stressed, this kind of flagrant violation of the Vienna Document’s provisions is a major threat to regional security and stability. The continued hesitancy about condemning such actions displayed by those who advocate adherence to and

even modernization of the Vienna Document is not helpful and, moreover, sends encouraging signals.

Azerbaijan has once again made it clear that it has no respect for its own commitments. In the light of this fact, we call on participating States to approach the issue purely from the de-politicized perspective of safeguarding OSCE commitments and to express their commitment to strong adherence to the letter and spirit of the Vienna Document.

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

Thank you.



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**910th Plenary Meeting**

FSC Journal No. 916, Agenda item 3(c)

**STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF AZERBAIJAN**

Mr. Chairperson,

I would like to exercise my right of reply to the statement just made by the delegation of Armenia. Once again, Armenia has not shied away from overtly attempting to cover up its aggression against Azerbaijan by resorting to speculations, which are groundless and devoid of any sense, on the subject of commitments under the Vienna Document. Our delegation has already responded to these repetitive remarks on the part of the delegation of Armenia, but since this delegation chose to entertain itself once again, I will offer the Forum the following comments.

First, with regard to the military exercises, we would like to stress that these exercises are being held in Azerbaijan from 11 to 15 March and involve up to 10,000 military personnel representing different components, branches, formations and units of the armed forces and including the land and air defence forces as well as reserve forces, internal troops, civil defence units and border troops. The exercises will assess the interoperability of different components and their readiness to conduct joint operations for the de-occupation of the internationally recognized territories of Azerbaijan.

Given the above-mentioned force posture and specificity, the exercises are not subject to prior notification under Chapter V, paragraph 40.1.1. Nevertheless, it should be emphasized that the Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Azerbaijan did announce the holding of exercises three days in advance and issues updates on a regular basis related to different stages of the exercises.

Second, and more importantly, the comments just made by the delegation of Armenia are illustrative of the consistent attempts by this country to mislead the international community with the obvious purpose of distracting attention from its continued military occupation of territories of Azerbaijan, which was achieved by the unlawful use of force, mass atrocities, ethnic cleansing and other flagrant violations of international law.

We take no criticism from a participating State which itself is in gross violation of all foundational OSCE principles and commitments, including those underpinning the basis and essence of the Vienna Document, and continues to illegally occupy internationally recognized territories of Azerbaijan and engage in illegal military activities therein.

The comments from the delegation of Armenia should be assessed against the background of ongoing provocative steps taken by its own government. I refer to the provocative statements made by high-level officials of this country and, most recently, to the session of the Security Council of Armenia held in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan with the participation of the Armenian prime minister. Clearly, Armenia is not genuinely interested in seeking a political settlement of the armed conflict but, rather, is pursuing the path of escalation by undertaking consistent measures to consolidate the results of its occupation policy and annexationist aspirations, with the ultimate goal of imposing a *fait accompli* situation. We regard the stance of Armenia as an open challenge to the conflict settlement process and a serious threat to international and regional peace and security.

Furthermore, we would like to underline that Azerbaijan, unlike Armenia, is holding military exercises on its sovereign territory. The Armenian representative fails to mention the fact that it is Armenia whose armed forces are illegally present in the territory of Azerbaijan without the latter's consent and it is Armenia that has a solid track record of holding military exercises in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan, engaging in military build-up on no account and evading any verification mechanism. This represents a gross violation of foundational OSCE principles and should be condemned by all participating States.

Against the background of continuing occupation of its internationally recognized territories by Armenia, Azerbaijan has every right to take all necessary measures to defend its territory and population. Undeniably, the armed attack carried out by Armenia against the territory of Azerbaijan and the subsequent military occupation of its territories triggered Azerbaijan's right of self-defence in accordance with Article 51 of the UN Charter and customary international law. The ongoing military exercises and their general scenario reflect the dire security situation that Azerbaijan faces and must be viewed in the light of ongoing military aggression by Armenia.

If Armenia is genuinely concerned with the military activities of Azerbaijan, it should in the first place reconsider its occupational policy in the region and engage constructively in finding sustainable solutions to the serious security problems it has caused, starting with the complete, unconditional withdrawal of its armed forces from the occupied territories of Azerbaijan, as demanded by the UN Security Council resolutions.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate that the responsibility for the consequences of any action which the Republic of Azerbaijan may be obliged to take in connection with the continued illegal presence and unlawful activities of the Armenian armed forces in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan in order to protect its sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders will lie entirely with the Republic of Armenia.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.