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PC.DEL/1313/21  
1 September 2021

ENGLISH only



**United States Mission to the OSCE**  
**U.S Statement for the**  
**2021 Annual Security Review Conference**  
**Special Session – The Structured Dialogue**  
**AVC Senior Bureau Official Bruce I. Turner**  
August 31, 2021

Thank you, Mr. Moderator, and welcome to this forum. Best wishes also to Ambassador Questa. I am grateful for the opportunity to participate in this special session of the Informal Working Group of the Structured Dialogue. We regret the unnecessary delay to this important event and emphasize that this delay is not precedential, but we are pleased that all obstacles could be removed.

At the June 17-18 Structured Dialogue meeting, participating States recalled that the 1996 Lisbon Framework envisaged a common effort to create a “web of mutually reinforcing arms control obligations and commitments” at the OSCE. We acknowledged in the Lisbon Document that the “positive trends of co-operation, transparency and predictability” achieved through the Treaties on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe and Open Skies, as well as political arrangements such as the Vienna Document, “need to be strengthened.”

Unfortunately, as many participating States have highlighted in the SD, we now face a situation in which the failure of some participating States to abide by their international commitments has yielded a significant deterioration of the security environment since the heady days when the Lisbon Document was adopted. We must now contend with the pressing task of building back trust in

an environment defined by lost confidence, instability, and heightened threat perceptions. The Lisbon Document assumed future negotiations would build on the successful implementation of measures already in place. In reality, we now face gaping deficits in implementation.

Familiar pol-mil threats are only part of the picture. Participating States have themselves identified urgent security concerns that arise from persistent hybrid, cyber, and other activities, the longer-term risks posed by climate change, and the potential emerging threats associated with new technologies, which, on their own or together with conventional military activities, further chip away at confidence and security. The Lisbon Framework could not have anticipated these contemporary challenges, and many of them are not susceptible to arms control solutions.

The Informal Working Group on the Structured Dialogue was established at Hamburg precisely to enable participating States to discuss “the current and future challenges and risks to security in the OSCE area to foster a greater understanding on these issues” and help identify a common way forward.

Like other participating States, the United States agrees that we should use the Structured Dialogue to better understand the real-world risks and challenges undermining European security. In this way, the Structured Dialogue can serve as an incubator for ideas for helping to restore confidence and security among participating States.

To be effective, though, we believe our discussions at Informal Working Group meetings should be predicated on the following:

First, that participating States must respect the robust and architecture of core precepts and commitments that we as a community have developed over many years, including notably the Helsinki Final Act itself. Unfortunately, a main impediment to our collaboration as a community is the failure of some participating States to abide by those common commitments and others they have undertaken.

This leads to our second, related point, that to begin the process of restoring trust among participating States, we must start by fully implementing our existing Treaty and political commitments, and confidence- and security-building measures.

Third, given the current security environment, restoring confidence and security should begin by building back to a positive atmosphere of cooperation. One practical, modest step would be for participating States to use the Joint Proposal co-sponsored by 34 pS as a basis for negotiations on Vienna Document modernization, which could address many of the concerns raised by Russia, if only Russia would agree to engage. Like our dialogue in this forum, those negotiations can themselves build confidence. Such focused and thoughtful discussion can help ignite the “renaissance” in European confidence- and security-building measures that one delegation called for at the June 17-18 meeting.

The United States supports discussion of today's ongoing and emerging challenges to Euro-Atlantic security at the Informal Working Group on the Structured Dialogue. The entire agenda of this ASRC – literally each session – can help provide insight for our future discussions in the SD. There are no security challenges more acute for the people of Ukraine, or the Caucasus, or Moldova than the conflicts on their territory. But beyond those immediate and in some cases very urgent concerns, I would note that underpinning many of the tensions we face today as a community are transnational and hybrid threats, the sources of violent extremism and terrorism, and other challenges that are explicitly multi-dimensional, such as climate insecurity and the problems it breeds. At the ASRC as in the Structured Dialogue earlier this summer, the richness of this exchange is an important measure of OSCE's relevance as a forum for dialogue among participating States on today's real security threats and a CSBM in and of itself.