

FSC.DEL/2/10
20 January 2010

ENGLISH
Original: RUSSIAN

**STATEMENT BY MR. MIKHAIL ULYANOV,
HEAD OF THE DELEGATION OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION TO
THE VIENNA TALKS ON MILITARY SECURITY AND ARMS
CONTROL, AT THE PLENARY MEETING OF THE OSCE
FORUM FOR SECURITY CO-OPERATION**

20 January 2010

Yesterday the Permanent Mission of Russia to the OSCE and the delegation of the Russian Federation on military security and arms control jointly distributed a draft decision on conflict prevention and crisis management in the OSCE area. Many delegations are already familiar with the text. It was first presented on 16 November of last year in the form of a draft ministerial decision for the OSCE Ministerial Council meeting in Athens, but has not yet been discussed in detail. We have now decided to reissue it as a draft joint decision of the Permanent Council and the Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC), since the question of conflicts falls within the competence of both decision-making bodies of our Organization. We expect that discussions on this document will be held in parallel in both the Permanent Council and the Forum. If a consensus can be reached, the draft could finally be adopted at a joint meeting, as provided for under paragraph II(B)9 of the Rules of Procedure of the OSCE.

So far for the procedural aspects. Let us turn now to matters of substance.

We regard the draft as a contribution to the work that has now started on strengthening the potential of the OSCE for dealing with crises, as provided for in the Athens documents on the development of the Corfu Process and in Ministerial Council Decision No. 16/09 on the work of the FSC in 2010. The objective of this draft is the agreement of uniform principles for the prevention and resolution of crisis situations, principles that would be applied – a point that should be especially stressed – equally to all conflicts in our region.

The events of August 2008 once again demonstrated that the state of affairs in this area is anything but satisfactory. The relevant procedures and mechanisms agreed upon within our Organization are far from perfect and do not yet make it possible to guarantee more or less reliably that events can be prevented from developing in a dangerous manner. Very often, subjective factors, the political environment along with political sympathies and antipathies take on critical importance in this connection. All this makes the situation difficult to predict and at times leads to a policy of double standards. The Russian proposal is aimed at establishing clearer, more comprehensible and more effective rules for the conduct of States in the face of crisis situations.

The key issue here, it would appear, is whether it is possible in principle to agree on such uniform rules. For, as some of our partners have rightly noted, each conflict is unique in

its own way. There are no universal or minutely detailed guidelines for their resolution, nor can there be. It is necessary, in each separate case, to take maximum account of specific local factors. All this is unquestionably true. Nevertheless, the experience acquired in recent decades makes it clear that, despite local particularities, there are a number of basic principles that can and should be applied equally to all crisis situations, if in fact we seriously wish to resolve them. The most typical example is the principle calling for the renunciation of the use, or the threat of the use, of force, as already enshrined in many fundamental documents of the United Nations and the OSCE. As the recent tragic events in our region have once again confirmed, any failure to observe this principle is fraught with the risk of disastrous consequences. There is also, however, a whole range of fundamental considerations that apply to any conflict regardless of its geographical location or causes, the nature of the relations between the parties to the conflict, the role of international mediators and other similar factors. We have tried to summarize these principles, if you wish, to codify them and to put them on paper. We are by no means claiming that this is an exhaustive list. We fully accept that our draft does not cover everything and that following discussions some of its provisions could be formulated somewhat differently. We are convinced that the very discussion of this problem will help us all to achieve a better understanding of how to enhance the OSCE's ability to deal with crises, and that the achievement of an understanding regarding uniform principles will provide a more solid and reliable basis for efforts in this area.

In short, we are open to a committed and substantive discussion, which we propose should begin in two weeks' time in Working Group B.

I would ask you, Madam Chairperson, to include the Russian draft in the agenda of the meeting in question.