

**Chairmanship: Canada**

**491st PLENARY MEETING OF THE FORUM**

1. Date: Wednesday, 13 September 2006

Opened: 10.05 a.m.

Closed: 11.10 a.m.

2. Chairperson: Ms. B. Gibson

Prior to taking up the agenda, the Chairperson, on behalf of the Forum for Security Co-operation, welcomed the new Permanent Representative of the Netherlands to the OSCE, Ms. I. van Veldhuizen-Rothenbücher, the new Permanent Representative of Bulgaria to the OSCE, Mr. C. Zhechev, and the new Head of the Delegation of the Russian Federation to the Vienna Talks on Military Security and Arms Control, Mr. M. Ulianov.

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

Agenda item 1: GENERAL STATEMENTS

*Opening statement by the Canadian FSC Chairmanship:* Chairperson (FSC.DEL/403/06 OSCE+), Finland-European Union (with the acceding countries Bulgaria and Romania; the candidate countries Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; the countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate countries Albania, Montenegro and Serbia; the European Free Trade Association countries Iceland and Norway, members of the European Economic Area; as well as Moldova and Ukraine, in alignment) (FSC.DEL/406/06), Chairperson of the Working Group on Non-Military Aspects of Security (Slovakia) (FSC.DEL/410/06 OSCE+), Turkey, United States of America, Cyprus, Bulgaria (FSC.DEL/407/06 OSCE+), Belgium, Netherlands, Belarus, Russian Federation (Annex)

Agenda item 2: ANY OTHER BUSINESS

(a) *Contribution to the small arms and light weapons and conventional ammunition stockpiles programme in Tajikistan:* Finland, Co-ordinator for Small Arms and Light Weapons (Sweden), Tajikistan, Chairperson

- (b) *Publication of Finland's Ministry of Defence Strategy 2025: Finland*  
(FSC.DEL/402/06 Restr.)
- (c) *Matters of protocol: United States of America, France, Sweden, Canada, Cyprus, Conflict Prevention Centre, Czech Republic, Chairperson*
- (d) *Organizational matters: Chairperson*

4. Next meeting:

Wednesday, 20 September 2006, at 10 a.m., in the Neuer Saal



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

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Annex

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**491st Plenary Meeting**  
FSC Journal No. 497, Agenda item 1

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

Madam Chairperson,

First of all, we too should like to congratulate the delegation of Canada, which has assumed the difficult but honourable duty of chairing the Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC). We are confident that the experienced Canadian diplomats will be able to deal successfully with this responsible mission that has been entrusted to them. This has already been demonstrated by today's opening statement by our Chairperson, which provides a balanced summary of the main areas of the Forum's work for the coming months.

This session will be marked by preparations for the OSCE Ministerial Council meeting in Brussels. Our main practical task will be to elaborate the FSC's contribution to the Ministerial meeting. During the first years of its existence the Forum handled this task in an altogether fitting manner. Recently, however, marked distortions have appeared in our work. Less relevant issues from the point of view of European security frequently take priority while the problems that should be at the heart of the Forum's mandate are relegated to second place. As a result, the "politico-military tools" of the OSCE devised in the 1990s are becoming increasingly outdated, and the Forum's current work has lost much of its direction.

Needless to say, this is Russia's assessment, and other delegations may not be in agreement with it. We respect their point of view and are prepared to play a constructive role in discussions on those subjects that our colleagues regard as the most important, but we are also counting on a reciprocal willingness on the part of our partners to listen carefully to Russia's concerns and proposals.

For the Russian Federation, an unquestionable priority in the Forum's work is the problem of improving the arms control regime and confidence- and security-building measures in Europe. It is for that very reason that we submitted two "food-for-thought" papers last session on large-scale military transit and measures for risk reduction in the deployment of foreign troops on the territory of other countries. We are grateful to the delegations that have expressed initial comments and raised specific questions regarding these proposals. We intend to provide detailed answers at the next meeting on 20 September.

We trust that we will be able to agree on appropriate measures by the end of November as the Forum's contribution to the OSCE Ministerial Council meeting in Brussels.

Another relevant issue is the exchange of information on multinational rapid reaction forces. Russia and Belarus submitted proposals on this matter a few years ago. Unfortunately, we have not as yet had a response. This problem is becoming increasingly relevant, however, because the establishment of such forces within the European Union (EU) and NATO is nearing completion and multinational rapid reaction forces have already been established for the Central Asian region within the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO). In that connection, the Russian delegation intends to raise this question again at one of the first meetings in October. We should like to hope that by that time our partners will be ready for a substantive discussion.

We need fresh and energetic input in order to overcome the existing stagnation in the Forum's work. There is a clear need to increase the effectiveness of the "Security Dialogue" conducted at our plenary meetings. This agenda item should cover relevant politico-military problems that are directly related to the work of the OSCE in general and the Forum in particular. Much depends on the choice of invited speakers. We firmly believe that the subject of their statements should be in keeping with the mandate, profile and tasks of the Forum.

We would be grateful if the Chairperson of the Forum were in future to inform us whenever possible beforehand, let us say no less than one week in advance, of the subject matter of the reports to be presented. These statements must have a pragmatic goal, namely to provide us with specific "food for thought", which could be used in the future work of the Forum.

In this context, we welcome the plan to hold a presentation in the Forum in the near future on the EU Battle Group Concept. It would be a good idea if a similar briefing were held in mid-October on the NATO rapid reaction forces. Thought could then be given to a briefing on the CSTO rapid deployment forces.

We should also like to urge the FSC Chairmanship to make wide use of its competences and to introduce greater flexibility and rationality into the work of the Forum. For example, if need be it might be useful to move important meetings of working groups A and B to the morning.

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