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**STATEMENT BY MR. ANDREY VOROBIEV,
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THE VIENNA NEGOTIATIONS ON MILITARY SECURITY AND
ARMS CONTROL, AT THE 923rd MEETING OF THE
OSCE FORUM FOR SECURITY CO-OPERATION**

11 September 2019

Mr. Chairperson,
Ambassador Šrámek,

We should like to offer our heartfelt congratulations to the delegation of the Czech Republic on the beginning of its Chairmanship of the OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC). We extend a warm and sincere welcome to His Excellency Mr. Martin Povejšil, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic for Security and Multilateral Issues, and thank him for his highly instructive statement setting out the Chairmanship's priorities for the current session.

We are delighted to subscribe to the positive assessments of the Tajik FSC Chairmanship's performance. We should like once again to stress the great professionalism and balanced approach of the delegation of Tajikistan in tackling complicated negotiation-related challenges, and also to express our appreciation for its having packed the FSC agenda with highly relevant and interesting topics concerning the Central Asian region.

We sincerely welcome the delegation of Turkey as the incoming member of the FSC Troika, and would also like to convey our genuine appreciation to Switzerland as the outgoing member.

Mr. Chairperson,

We listened very carefully to the statement by the distinguished Deputy Minister about the main areas of the Forum's work on which the Czech delegation proposes to concentrate during its Chairmanship, which coincides with the most intensive session of the current year. We should like to emphasize the multifaceted nature and wide scope of the programme presented to us and also the way in which it combines pan-European themes with highly important regional aspects of these. We trust that the forthcoming discussions will be in line with the FSC's existing mandate and that they will help strengthen its role as a platform for constructive dialogue and the exchange of positive national experiences.

We look forward to having regional aspects of security examined at the Forum, with a focus on the specific features of politico-military co-operation between States in the framework of the Visegrad Group. We also note that, when drawing up the programme for our joint work, our distinguished Czech colleagues

devoted considerable attention to traditional FSC topics – including the issue of small arms and light weapons (SALW) and stockpiles of conventional ammunition (SCA), and also global and regional trends in the implementation of United Nations Security Council resolutions 1540 and 1325 – though, naturally, taking into account the OSCE’s specific circumstances and capabilities. The Structured Dialogue is a topic that warrants our close attention.

Turning to the forthcoming discussion on the Vienna Document 2011 on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures, we should like to point out that our position regarding the feasibility of its modernization in the current security environment is well known to the distinguished delegations, since it has been set forth in detail on numerous occasions in this room. In this connection, we think it would be advisable to concentrate on current matters related to its implementation, of which there are indeed plenty.

Mr. Chairperson,

The current autumn/winter session is a crucial period in terms of the preparations for the OSCE Ministerial Council meeting in Bratislava. We appreciate how challenging a task lies ahead of our esteemed Czech colleagues in that regard, and would like to express our certitude that they will cope with it successfully and effectively.

We, for our part, are ready to spare no effort in facilitating a substantial, open and inclusive dialogue on current security issues in the OSCE area. We shall try to share our country’s experience in those areas where we can make a specific positive contribution.

Finally, allow me to express my sincere thanks again to His Excellency the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs for his detailed outline of the Czech Chairmanship’s priorities, and to wish the distinguished delegation of the Czech Republic every possible success for its Chairmanship of the FSC – a very important and worthy role. We stand ready to provide all the assistance that may be required from us. We look forward to working closely and productively with you and the distinguished members of the Troika.

Mr. Chairperson,

Today, on the 18th anniversary of one of the most monstrous acts of terrorism in world history – the attacks of 11 September 2011 – we wish to express our sympathy to the distinguished delegation of the United States of America, and our sincere condolences to the families and friends of those who were killed and injured.

Terrorism continues to be one of the global threats to security. Despite the different approaches all of us may have to other matters on the agenda, combating terrorism calls for joint efforts aimed at securing peace and preventing awful tragedies that lead to the death of completely innocent people.

Mr. Chairperson,

We should like to take this opportunity to single out some encouraging developments relating to the situation in and around Ukraine. First, the “bread truce” that entered into force on 21 July has indeed helped to bring about a de-escalation of the situation in Donbas: military tensions have diminished appreciably, though, unfortunately, a complete ceasefire between the Ukrainian Government and the authorities in Donetsk and Luhansk has yet to be established.

Second, we view the reciprocal release of detained persons as a positive event that was made possible thanks to the implementation of the agreements reached by the Presidents of Russia and Ukraine.

We are confident that this exchange of prisoners will be followed by other important steps towards the restoration of good-neighbourliness between Russia and Ukraine. On the whole, though, we are aware that this is a most delicate matter and that specific negotiations in relation to it are under way. We, therefore, propose to refrain from further comments.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.