
Chairmanship: Kazakhstan

**LETTER FROM THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE FORUM FOR
SECURITY CO-OPERATION TO THE MINISTER FOR FOREIGN
AFFAIRS OF LITHUANIA, CHAIRPERSON OF THE EIGHTEENTHS
MEETING OF THE MINISTERIAL COUNCIL**

Your Excellency,

As the Chairperson of the Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC), it is a pleasure for me to inform you about the activities of the FSC in 2011.

In preparing this letter, I have consulted this year's FSC Chairmanships, which in addition to Kazakhstan include Iceland and Italy. During 2011, the Chairmanships have continued working in close co-operation with each other to ensure continuity, balance and efficiency in the implementation of the Forum's annual work programme.

The focus of the FSC's work in 2011 has continued to be on the core politico-military issues, such as arms control and confidence- and security-building measures (CSBMs), small arms and light weapons (SALW), stockpiles of conventional ammunition (SCA), the Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security (CoC) and the implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1540 (2004). Separate progress reports on further implementation of the commitments on these issues have been forwarded to the Ministerial Council and contain more detailed information about developments in the FSC during 2010-2011 regarding these aspects of its work.

Overall, 2011 was a challenging and active year for the FSC. Initiatives put forward by delegations had by November led to the adoption of thirteen new decisions, some of which were to support the implementation of existing commitments, while others introduced new areas of work for the Forum. The FSC also contributed within its mandate to the Annual Security Review Conference (ASRC) as well as preparations of Vilnius Ministerial Council's documents.

In line with the priorities identified in the Astana Commemorative Declaration (2010), in 2011, the Forum engaged in intensive discussions to update, revitalize and modernize confidence- and security-building measures. Particularly, following the establishment of a procedure for a regular update of the Vienna Document every five years, and thus ending a decade of stagnation in the Vienna Document discussions, the Forum has intensified its work to update it to reflect the current politico-military realities. By 30 November 2011, the FSC adopted nine Vienna Document Plus decisions, which were integrated in the Vienna Document 2011 issued in November 2011. A number of other Vienna Document Plus proposals continue to be under consideration in the FSC.

The strategic discussion during the Security Dialogue emphasized the FSC's importance as a platform to address and discuss security issues. Specifically, active dialogue was held on matters related to topical European security issues, including arms control and CSBMs.

One of the most important events of 2011, the High-Level Military Doctrine Seminar, was held on 24-25 May 2011. Stipulated by the Vienna Document provisions, the seminar brought together a number of senior military officials from the participating States and Partners for Co-operation to examine the developments in military technology and military doctrines and their implications for the security in the OSCE area. The event itself served as a useful CSBM.

As envisaged by Chapter XI of the Vienna Document 1999, the FSC held the Twenty First Annual Implementation Assessment Meeting (AIAM) on 1-2 March 2011. For the first time, the Meeting focussed solely on the Vienna Document 1999 and provided an opportunity for participating States to discuss present and future implementation of agreed CSBMs, and allowed experts to exchange experiences, make suggestions and assess the implementation of the OSCE commitments in the field of CSBMs. The Heads of Verification Centres (HoV) Meetings, held in the margins of the Annual Exchange of Military Information in 2010, proved to be a useful initiative that brings together the expert knowledge of participating States in the practical implementation of CSBM measures, and that allows for an exchange of experiences and recommendations on their improvement. The fourth HoV Meeting will be organized on 14 December 2011.

The FSC also contributed to the OSCE Annual Security Review Conference, held on 29 June - 1 July 2011. Discussions on the revitalizing, updating and modernizing conventional arms control and CSBMs continued at the ASRC providing an opportunity to address outstanding challenges and opportunities at a strategic level. Particularly, the ASRC re-confirmed that conventional arms control and CSBMs continue playing a vital role in providing a foundation for stability.

The OSCE Documents on Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) and on Stockpiles of Conventional Ammunition (SCA) remained key topics on the FSC's agenda. The FSC has adopted an important decision on destruction of surplus, expired and obsolete ammunition as the preferred method of disposal. Following the adoption of the OSCE Plan of Action on SALW in 2010, the Forum's work focussed on the implementation of the Plan. Particularly, in order to alleviate the reporting burden on States and improve the quality of reports, the CPC and the UN Office for Disarmament Affairs aligned their reporting templates on the OSCE Document on SALW and the UN Programme of Action on SALW. Further, in accordance with MC Decision 15/09 and subsequent FSC Decision 17/10, participating States conducted an information exchange on national controls over brokering activities in SALW, then summarized in a CPC Summary Report. The CPC, together with the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, has developed an electronic template for an End User Certificate on SALW that should facilitate the implementation of relevant commitments. These initiatives were presented and discussed at the Special FSC Meeting organized on 28 September 2011. Furthermore, a representative of the FSC Chairmanship delivered an OSCE statement at the UN Meeting of Governmental Experts on Marking, Tracing and Record-Keeping on SALW held in May 2011 in New York. Recently, the FSC decided to hold a meeting to review the implementation of the OSCE Plan of Action on SALW in May 2012.

In 2011, the OSCE continued the implementation of projects in response to requests for assistance on SALW and SCA. Dealing with these requests from participating States with regard to destruction and stockpile management and security of SALW and SCA remains one of the most dynamic areas of implementation of the Documents on SALW and SCA. The year marked the completion of projects in Albania, Moldova and Ukraine. During the year, the OSCE continued the implementation of two joint assistance programmes with the UNDP, one in Montenegro and the other one in Belarus, and launched another joint project in Georgia. This year, the Forum also received four new requests for assistance on SALW and SCA from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Cyprus and Moldova. In the field of practical assistance on SALW and SCA special attention should be paid to resolving issues regarding the financing of the projects in Albania, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Montenegro and Ukraine. The FSC continued to manage a comprehensive SALW and SCA programme. In addition to regular donations to established projects, this programme facilitates contributions to SALW and SCA projects under development.

The Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security retained its importance in the work of the FSC in 2011. During the year, FSC continued the discussion on the implementation of this landmark document in the field of security sector governance. Building upon the work done in the previous years, the Forum took note of the Reference Guide on the Questionnaire on the Code of Conduct and offered it for use by interested participating States as an important element to facilitate the implementation of the Code. Furthermore, the Forum organized a discussion on the Code of Conduct in the framework of a Security Dialogue. Last but not least, in order to further raise awareness of the Code as well as to promote its implementation the FSC decided to hold an annual implementation discussion on the Code of Conduct, starting in 2012.

The general level of implementation of information exchanges in 2011 was stable and high, although less compliant in timing, than in previous years. FSC Chairs made extensive use of the Announcing and Reminding Mechanism in order to improve the availability of information among participating States. These efforts have resulted in some greater compliance with obligations, although not all participating States have yet provided the information required.

Work also continued on supporting the implementation of UNSCR 1540 on non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery. In January 2011, the OSCE held a Workshop to Identify the Proper Role of the OSCE in Facilitation of UNSCR 1540, which identified a broad range of possibilities in the context of which the OSCE can be instrumental. These recommendations, such as assisting interested participating States with drafting of their National Action Plans and fine-tuning relevant legislation, further awareness-raising activities, as well as offering tailored training courses, have all been already put into practice. In addition, a joint FSC-PC meeting on non-proliferation was held in 2011 show-casing the national progress on implementation of UNSCR 1540 and establishing further role of the OSCE in implementation of the Resolution as well as support for the initiative to update the OSCE Principles Governing Non-Proliferation of 1994. Furthermore, in order to enhance co-ordination of non-proliferation efforts, a Memorandum of Understanding between the OSCE and the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs has been signed in October 2011.

Finally, all three FSC Chairmanships in 2011 continued working on strengthening co-operation between the FSC and the Permanent Council (PC) as part of the OSCE's concept of comprehensive and indivisible security. Three joint FSC-PC meetings were held

by December 2011 to address cross-dimensional issues relevant to the work of both the FSC and the PC.