

OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation
Security Dialogue on Arms Control and CSBMs

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Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Excellences, ladies and gentlemen,

I would like to start by extending my gratitude to the Armenian FSC Chairmanship for the opportunity to participate in these pertinent discussions. As a lecturer I will speak on the topic from an academic perspective.

Against the backdrop of one of the worst security and confidence crisis in the world since the end of the Cold War today's topic of Security Dialogue is extremely important and timely.

Diverse and often diametrically opposite interests of international actors, as well as growing geopolitical competition among them inevitably lead to complexity in international relations and make achieving consensus on issues related to international security even more difficult. The prioritization of purely national interests to the detriment of security of all, negatively impacts international security, peace and stability. Today, we also see how the interrelated and interdependent international system, which was designed initially to promote peace, security and stability continues to erode due to repercussions of growing competition and lack of genuine cooperation. Based on the current security challenges that international community faces, we can presume that the world is closer to a "geopolitical depression" rather than stability.

Current security threats, due to their multifaceted and complex nature, require cooperative approaches in the framework of international, including regional organizations. However, we do not have good news in this respect. States and particularly the leading powers which bear the primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security, continue to withdraw from arms control treaties, such as the Open Skies Treaty and the Treaty on Conventional Forces in Europe, seriously undermining the validity of the treaties and enabling other actors to take advantage of the weaknesses of arms control regimes and mechanisms.

The current security environment is further exacerbated by technological advances, such as UAVs, satellite controlled weapon systems, loitering, long range, precision guided munitions, etc. These threats should also be taken into consideration in particular for regulating and limiting their proliferation whether by the existing or future arms control mechanisms.

This leads me to the question posed by the Armenian FSC Chairmanship on whether we need a new arms control framework. Before answering directly to this question, I would like to touch upon the existing principles of the conventional arms control regime.

First is the principle of sufficiency meaning that states should maintain such military capabilities which are sufficient to ensure their security and not create military domination. This principle is closely linked to the principle of limitation of forces. Two other principles, which are verification and transparency, are aimed at ensuring compliance with sufficiency and limitation. In other words, these principles are aimed at establishing military balance with lower level of military capabilities.

These basic principles are supplemented with norms regulating arms transfers. There is a conventional wisdom that arms control measures should contribute to conflict prevention and reduction of risks thus, arms exporting states should take into account several factors, such as the existence of conflicts around the recipient country, respect for human rights law and international humanitarian law in the recipient country, the level of compliance by recipient states with their commitments and obligations and etc.

I am sure that all of you are well aware of these principles and norms. I decided to have a brief look at them in order to say that theoretically, even if the OSCE participating States at some point agree on the development of a new arms control framework, I believe that the new arms control framework will be based on abovementioned well-crafted principles and norms. There is no need to invent “a new bicycle”.

However, under current circumstances I personally do not see any window of opportunity for the development of new arms control framework. I recall that negotiations on the framework for negotiations to strengthen and to modernize the conventional arms control regime in Europe, which started here in Vienna in 2010 provoked interesting debates in academic circles, some were making optimistic others pessimistic forecasts. I believe that disagreements and contradictions among States that eventually led to the destruction of negotiations in 2011 not only persist today but have deepened. Here, I would like to stress that the unsuccessful attempt to revitalize and modernize the CFE treaty is also directly linked to the current stalemate on modernization of the

Vienna Document. I will speak about the Vienna Document shortly but now I would like to point out some reasons that make the likelihood of developing an agreement on a new arms control treaty rather low if not to say impossible.

First, non-compliance with the existing commitments and obligations harms confidence among the participating states,

Second, national interests prevail over international security alongside with changing nature of military capabilities and threat perceptions by the states. Moreover, gradual erosion of arms control regime could be beneficial for some states.

Third, is the fact that negotiations on a future arms control agreement will not be limited to a small group of states or blocks. The more states are engaged, the more difficult is to reach a consensus.

Now let me share with you my views on the current state of affairs around the conventional arms control regime. In my opinion the following **four factors are the main reasons of the gradual erosion of conventional arms control regime**:

First, partial implementation of existing commitments and obligations,

Second, absence of enforcement mechanisms. Here I would like to make some clarifications. When I'm speaking about enforcement mechanisms, may be one option could be the creation of an independent body with verification functions at expert level. In such case it will act without undue political constraints and will foresee the actual implementation of arms control regime and whenever needed will raise the instances of non-implementation and violation of the commitments by participating States.

This brings me to the third factor, absence of appropriate reactions by the OSCE and its participating states to the violations of commitments,

Fourth, weaknesses of multilateral frameworks to regulate international relations, which function as multilateral frameworks for bilateral relations.

The possibility of launching new negotiations on a new agreement is pretty low, which makes the implementation issue extremely important. Maybe some mechanisms, such as the CFE Treaty, were created in a different time with different aims and seem outdated in light of current security challenges and need modernization, but this does not mean that it should not be implemented in the way it stands now. If not, the international community runs the risk to witness once gain the

materialization of the perception that arms control no longer reduces the risk of military escalation and the use of force is acceptable in international relations, as we have seen it in our region.

I do believe that the OSCE confidence- and security-building measures which are capable to promote military transparency if implemented in good faith. In this regard I would like particularly to emphasize that the OSCE has developed a set of advanced confidence- and security-building measures, amongst them the stabilizing measures for localized crisis situations. But this document was never utilized although it could have contributed to crisis resolutions in many cases.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The security situation in our region, in the South Caucasus, clearly shows the consequences of the crisis over the conventional arms control regime.

Let me touch on the consequences of non-compliance with the arms control commitments and obligations in our region.

The CFE Treaty. In 1992 the Tashkent agreement was signed by 8 former USSR countries for the implementation of the CFE Treaty. It established maximum levels for holdings of conventional armaments and equipment by these countries. But the agreement was not ratified by two countries which means that it never came into force. This legally binding document signed with the aim to implement the legally binding CFE Treaty was downgraded to a voluntary instrument from the beginning. Consequently, it led to dangerous arms race and uncontrolled accumulation of weapons in our region.

The Vienna Document on Confidence-and Security-Building measures. You are well aware of the concerns of Armenia regarding the implementation of the provisions of the Vienna Document and particularly its Chapter 5 on Prior Notification of Certain Military Activities by our neighbor. Some countries of our region for decades have been conducting large-scale military exercises, which were **NEVER**, I would like to stress, **NEVER** notified under the Vienna Document. As recent war showed such exercises were intended for the preparation of the use of force.

So, the use of force in our region to large extent became possible due to the violations of the existing commitments and based on tragic experience of our region I would strongly recommend to concentrate on the implementation issue.

In conclusion, let me stress that solutions **require common, comprehensive and joint approaches**, as no country alone can tackle challenges and threats in the interrelated international

security system. It is impossible to find a sustainable solution without cooperation, which means that international actors also must share the responsibility. However, that cooperation should not be directed against any particular state or group of states but it should serve to create a basis for global security.

In the light of current security situation, it is hard to predict the future of international relations. One thing is certain, states will continue to be key actors in shaping the international relations and it is in their best interest to re-engage in cooperation as arms race in parallel with rapid development of modern technologies poses acute threat to international peace, security and stability.

Thank you.