



Chairmanship: Lithuania

714th PLENARY MEETING OF THE FORUM

1. Date: Wednesday, 17 April 2013

Opened: 11.05 a.m.

Closed: 12.30 p.m.

2. Chairperson: Ambassador G. Čekuolis

The Chairperson, on behalf of the Forum and Ireland-European Union (FSC.DEL/57/13), offered condolences to the United States of America with regard to the bombing at the Boston Marathon. The United States of America thanked the Forum for its expression of sympathy.

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

Agenda item 1: OPENING STATEMENT OF THE LITHUANIAN
FSC CHAIRMANSHIP BY AMBASSADOR
DALIUS ČEKUOLIS, POLITICAL DIRECTOR, MINISTRY
OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF LITHUANIA

Chairperson, Political Director of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Lithuania (FSC.DEL/55/13 OSCE+), Ireland-European Union (with the acceding country Croatia; the candidate countries the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Iceland, Montenegro and Serbia; the countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate countries Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina; the European Free Trade Association country Norway, member of the European Economic Area; as well as Andorra, Georgia, Moldova and San Marino, in alignment) (FSC.DEL/56/13), Luxembourg, Liechtenstein, Turkey, Armenia, United States of America, Russian Federation

Agenda item 2: GENERAL STATEMENTS

(a) *Adoption of the Arms Trade Treaty by the United Nations General Assembly on 2 April 2013:* Chairperson of the Informal Group of Friends on Small Arms and Light Weapons (United Kingdom), Russian Federation, United Kingdom

- (b) *International conference on military and political aspects of European security, to be held in Moscow on 23 and 24 May 2013*: Russian Federation
- (c) *Briefing on a series of surprise inspection measures conducted in March 2013 to assess the combat effectiveness of forces in southern Russia*: Russian Federation (Annex), United States of America

Agenda item 3: ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- (a) *Letter from the Chairperson of the Forum for Security Co-operation to the Chairperson of the Permanent Council on the dates of the 2013 Annual Security Review Conference (ASRC)*: Chairperson

The Forum for Security Co-operation agreed to forward the letter from the Chairperson of the Forum for Security Co-operation on the dates of the 2013 Annual Security Review Conference to the Chairperson of the Permanent Council (FSC.DEL/50/13/Rev.2 Restr.).

- (b) *Informal consultations on the FSC's contribution to the agenda and organizational modalities of the 2013 ASRC, to be held on 19 April 2013*: Chairperson, *Chef de file* of the FSC for the 2013 Annual Security Review Conference (Kazakhstan)
- (c) *Postponement of an informal meeting on the 2014 Annual Implementation Assessment Meeting*: Chairperson
- (d) *Matters of protocol*: Chairperson, Czech Republic, United Kingdom, Germany
- (e) *ODIHR meeting entitled Armed Forces and Women's Access to Combat Positions, to be held in Vienna on 19 April 2013*: FSC Co-ordinator for the Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security (Germany) (also on behalf of the FSC Co-ordinator on Matters Relating to UNSCR 1325 (Turkey))
- (f) *Global Exchange of Military Information (GEMI), to be held in Vienna on 24 and 25 April 2013*: Representative of the Conflict Prevention Centre
- (g) *Distribution of a brochure on the Peace and Security Summit, to be held in Stockholm from 28 to 31 May 2013*: Sweden

4. Next meeting:

Wednesday, 24 April 2013, 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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714th Plenary Meeting
FSC Journal No. 720, Agenda item 2(c)

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

Mr. Chairperson,

Today our delegation believes it necessary, on the basis of information received from the Ministry of Defence of the Russian Federation and as a sign of goodwill, to inform our distinguished colleagues about a series of measures conducted at the end of March on the orders of the President of the Russian Federation and Supreme Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation, Vladimir Putin, involving a surprise inspection to determine the combat readiness and combat capabilities of troops (forces) in southern Russia.

This large-scale inspection of the armed forces of the Russian Federation is already the second one to be conducted this year. Commenting on the results of the surprise inspection in February 2013 of troops stationed on the territory of the Central and Western Military Districts, the Minister for Defence of the Russian Federation, Army General Sergey Shoygu, announced that measures of this kind would become a regular occurrence.

The latest large-scale inspection was conducted for the purpose of evaluating the readiness of the troops (forces) to carry out their assigned tasks, and also to identify any problem areas having to do with the structuring of the military.

As part of the 28 March inspection, formations and troop units of the Southern Military District, the Black Sea Fleet, the airborne troops and the military transport units of the Russian air force were suddenly put on alert.

The inspection covered the military command and control authorities at the district, army and brigade levels, motorized infantry, parachute and air assault units, reconnaissance, communications and logistics units as well as the crews of combat and military transport aircraft and helicopters, warships and support vessels.

Some 7,000 service personnel, as many as 250 armoured vehicles, more than 50 pieces of artillery of various kinds, over 20 combat aircraft and helicopters along with some 30 ships of various kinds took part in the practical exercises.

As part of the inspection, individual units and subunits of the airborne troops engaged in practical exercises. The personnel of the 45th detached special-purpose airborne troop regiment along with troop units of the Tula airborne troop formation were put on alert. In the course of a single night, the airborne troop subunits carried out a number of practical combat training exercises involving live firing at training ranges in the central region of Russia, after which, following the completion of a march using standard-issue equipment, they loaded their equipment on to military transport aircraft and departed by air for the area where the landing exercise was to take place. The landing was carried out using Il-76 aircraft at an unfamiliar location characterized by difficult terrain. At training ranges within the Southern Military District parachute subunits conducted tactical exercises involving orientation in difficult terrain and the rapid assembly of the troops once on the ground, following which they immediately took part in practical exercises together with subunits of the Southern Military District formations involving the destruction of a simulated enemy with practice firing from all kinds of standard-issue weapons.

The ships, air units and Black Sea Fleet coastal troop subunits carried out a number of exercises at combat training ranges. A squadron of large landing vessels from the Black Sea Fleet, consisting of the “Azov”, the “Saratov”, the “Nikolay Filchenkov” and the “Novocherkassk”, carrying military equipment and marines on board, left their base at Sevastopol on 28 March and, accompanied by escort and support vessels, travelled 200 miles, while conducting a range of training exercises involving a night-time sea crossing in formation. At the same time, Black Sea Fleet air units joined in these activities in line with the overall concept of the exercises. More than 10 Su-24 aircraft took off from the Gvardeyskoye airfield along with more than 5 Ka-27 and Ka-27PS helicopters from the Kacha airfield.

In the Black Sea, near the Caucasus coast of Russia, two landing squadrons were formed (a main squadron and a decoy squadron), which included, in addition to the ships already mentioned, the large landing vessels of the Baltic Fleet, namely the “Kaliningrad” and the “Alexander Shabalin”, which were located at Novorossiysk. Protecting the squadrons were small anti-submarine vessels of the Black Sea Fleet. The ocean minesweepers “Turbinist”, “Ivan Golubets”, “Vitse-Admiral Zakharin” and “Valentin Pikul” were assigned the task of protecting the landing vessels against mines near the landing site on an empty beach near Novorossiysk. The task of providing cover for the forces from the direction of the sea was entrusted to the small missile-carrying boats “R-60” and “R-109”. A total of some 20 warships and approximately 30 support vessels of the Black Sea Fleet were operating at sea. Su-24 and Be-12 aircraft and Ka-27 naval air force helicopters were used for reconnaissance in the designated areas and for hunting down and detecting submarines.

The active phase of this exercise took place on 29 and 30 March at three training ranges in the Krasnodar region under the supervision of the Supreme Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation. A sea and air landing was carried out. The active phase concluded with live firing by ships of the Black Sea Fleet.

Simultaneously, large landing vessels successfully carried out an amphibious landing on an empty beach in the vicinity of the Opuk training range near Feodosiya. Su-24 naval aircraft had the task of supporting the landing operation from the air. The landing was preceded by a number of practical training exercises. For example, the escort vessels of the landing squadron engaged in naval combat with simulated enemy ships. Virtually all the

combat units that took part in the inspection engaged in artillery fire against targets at sea, in the air and on the shore, worked on ways of improving different aspects of joint manoeuvring, and focused on ways of organizing the defence of a squadron of vessels as it makes its way at sea against attacks from the air and against sabotage. The support vessels performed their functions in full, thereby greatly contributing to the success of the warships' operations at different stages in the deployment and operations of the forces at sea.

Following the conclusion of its active phase, the troops and forces involved in the inspection proceeded to the winding down of their activities at sea and on the ground and marched back to the locations at which they permanently stationed. The personnel of the parachute battalion of the Tula airborne division relocated to Krasnodar for the purpose of flying on to Ryazan on military transport aircraft. Reconnaissance officers of the 45th detached special-purpose airborne troop guard regiment were also flown by military transport aircraft to Kubinka near Moscow. The airborne troops of the 7th (mountain) airborne assault guard division, stationed on the territory of the Southern Military District, completed marches using standard-issue equipment to the locations where they are permanently stationed at Anapa, Stavropol and Novorossiysk. Similarly, Southern Military District brigades marched more than 900 kilometres. On 31 March and 1 April the warships and support vessels that had taken part in the exercise returned to Sevastopol.

These measures are not covered by the commitments regarding prior notification of military activities as set out in Chapter V of the Vienna Document 2011 on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures. Firstly, these exercises were conducted without the prior notification of the troops taking part in them. Secondly, they did not reach the level of the minimum thresholds for notification of military activities. Nevertheless, as a gesture of goodwill, the Russian Federation has demonstrated its openness. Proof of this can be seen, in particular, in the information regarding the inspection posted on the website of the Russian Ministry of Defence on virtually a real-time basis.

I thank you, Mr. Chairperson, and ask that this statement be attached to the journal of today's meeting.