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**United Kingdom
Delegation**

To the Organisation for Security and
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NOTE NO 13/03

The United Kingdom Delegation to the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) in Vienna presents its compliments to all other Delegations to the OSCE and would like to refer to the UK's intervention in Working Group B of the Annual Security Review Conference on 25 June 2003. This was not a formal statement; it was intended to be a contribution to the debate. Many Delegations have requested a copy of the intervention in writing and therefore a "fair" copy of what the UK delegate said, as far as it could be reconstructed, is attached.

The United Kingdom Delegation avails itself of this opportunity to renew to all other Delegations of the OSCE the assurance of its highest consideration.

UNITED KINGDOM DELEGATION
VIENNA

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UK INTERVENTION IN WORKING GROUP B – COMPREHENSIVE SECURITY

Very grateful to both Mr Grushko and Brigadier Vetschera for making their thought provoking interventions available well in advance, to allow careful consideration of their content. In accord with the aims of this conference as set out by the CIO this is not a prepared statement setting out the UK position, but a contribution to the debate.

There is much to agree with in both presentations. Mr Grushko rightly emphasises the right of all states parties to security, and the linkage between the security of one and the security of all. Brig Vetschera is right to address the aims of arms control as the basis for looking at its contribution to our future security.

However I do not agree that the main aim of Arms Control is to prevent the use of force – that is subject to the political decision of sovereign nations on issues which affect their national security.

We need to understand clearly what arms control is, and what it is not, if we are to maximise its usefulness. It is a tool, not an end in itself. It is a reflection of the desire of states to have stability and transparency, to have security at a lower cost in resources and manpower, and to ensure that legitimate military planning and preparation do not themselves contribute to the slide from crisis to war. As such the arms control and

CSBM regimes created under the OSCE aegis made a huge contribution, one might say an unprecedented contribution to security over the last decade. We should not toss them away lightly, or leave them to moulder away unused.

Does the tool have a future? Yes. But it is here that I would perhaps differ in emphasis from the analysis set out by our Russian friend. A number of agreements, associations and treaties currently contribute to the security of states in the OSCE area. The enlargement of NATO, the EU, the creation of the CSTO, offer security to those states that wish to adhere. This is good. But we should not be misled into believing that because the security of some is enhanced, that of others is reduced. Security is not a fixed commodity for division amongst our states, it is something which grows for all as each individual feels more secure. For this reason, we should, I believe, concentrate on the enhancement, utilisation and expansion of the instruments we have now. In this context the UK would be willing to re-open key documents (e.g the VD99) for scrutiny, but only when there is a clear case for adaptation. The key point is not the age of the document, but the continued relevance of its provisions. For us the VD99 is still relevant. The fault, if fault there is, does not lie with the document – we must look elsewhere to find out why we are not willing to use certain of its provisions. No number of new documents will alter participating States reluctance to use provisions if pS

deem it not in their interest to do so. Let us by all means look at our documents but let us not automatically assume that the answers to difficulty in implementation lie in the modernisation of the document. Ultimately all instruments, arms control and CSBMs amongst them, are only as useful as their signatories allow them to be.