

Chairmanship: Germany

960th PLENARY MEETING OF THE FORUM

1. Date: Wednesday, 11 November 2020 (via video teleconference)

Opened: 10 a.m.

Closed: 11.15 a.m.

2. Chairperson: Mr. M. Bleinroth

Prior to taking up the agenda, the Chairperson reminded the Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC) of the technical modalities for the conduct of that FSC meeting during the COVID-19 pandemic, as outlined in FSC.GAL/109/20.

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

Agenda item 1: GENERAL STATEMENTS

- (a) *Situation in and around Ukraine:* Ukraine (FSC.DEL/304/20) (FSC.DEL/304/20/Add.1), Germany-European Union (with the candidate countries Albania, Montenegro and North Macedonia; the European Free Trade Association countries Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, members of the European Economic Area; as well as Andorra, Georgia, Moldova, San Marino and Ukraine, in alignment) (FSC.DEL/305/20), Canada, United Kingdom, United States of America, Russian Federation (Annex 1)
- (b) *Development of an OSCE best practice guide on combating illicit trafficking of small arms and light weapons (SALW) and conventional ammunition (CA):* Austria (also on behalf of France) (Annex 2), Germany-European Union (FSC.DEL/303/20), United States of America, Canada, United Kingdom, Russian Federation (Annex 3), Chairperson of the Informal Group of Friends on SALW and SCA (Latvia) (Annex 4), Austria

Agenda item 2: ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- (a) *Financial contributions to the Information Management and Reporting System (iMARS) project:* Finland, France

- (b) *Informal meeting on implementation of assistance projects on SALW and SCA in the OSCE area, to be held on 12 November 2020, and a meeting on guidance notes for assistance projects, to be held on 17 November 2020:*
FSC Co-ordinator for Assistance Projects on SALW and SCA (Austria)

4. Next meeting:

Wednesday, 18 November 2020, at 10 a.m., via video teleconference



**Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
Forum for Security Co-operation**

FSC.JOUR/966
11 November 2020
Annex 1

ENGLISH
Original: RUSSIAN

960th Plenary Meeting
FSC Journal No. 966, Agenda item 1(a)

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

Mr. Chairperson,

Our position regarding the internal Ukrainian conflict remains unchanged – there needs to be full implementation of the Minsk Package of Measures of 12 February 2015 through direct dialogue between the Ukrainian Government and the authorities in Donetsk and Luhansk. The Russian Federation, as a mediator alongside the OSCE, France and Germany, stands ready to facilitate this in every possible way.

The current momentum of the negotiation process on a comprehensive peaceful settlement of the crisis in Ukraine is discouraging. The discussions that took place on 10 November during the videoconference meeting of the Trilateral Contact Group's Security Working Group failed once again to yield any concrete results. The remarks made on the eve of that meeting by the heads of the Ukrainian delegation to the Trilateral Contact Group (TCG), Leonid Kravchuk and Oleksiy Reznikov, in connection with the draft plan proposed by the Ukrainian Government consisting of joint steps for implementation of the Minsk agreements raises a legitimate question: do these remarks bring a peaceful resolution of the internal Ukrainian conflict any closer? In particular, it was stated that Ukraine cannot implement the points of the Package of Measures in the order in which they have existed since 2015 and were endorsed by United Nations Security Council resolution 2202, and that the sequence of these points needs to be revised. In that connection, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, Sergey Lavrov, sent messages to the Foreign Ministers of France and Germany with excerpts from recent interviews with the aforementioned Ukrainian representatives and called on his "Normandy format" colleagues to evaluate the conformity of these comments with the Minsk Package of Measures. We are counting on a substantive response from the French and German Governments.

The ceasefire regime in Donbas is being violated by sporadic provocations along the line of contact. On 5 and 6 November, the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine (SMM) recorded a significant rise in violations of the truce in the Donetsk region. A team of workers from the Donetsk filtration station came under small-arms fire. This is a vital infrastructure facility that supplies water to around half a million inhabitants on both sides of the line of contact. Further prolongation of the armed violence in Donbas is unacceptable. We

assume that there will be an investigation into the aforementioned incident and that the perpetrators will be brought to justice.

The Ukrainian Government's plans to continue the militarization of the country are not conducive to creating a favourable environment for the de-escalation of tensions in Donbas. During his annual address to the Verkhovna Rada (Ukrainian Parliament) on 20 October, the President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelensky announced that Ukraine had begun manufacturing the latest weapons models, including the Obolon-A artillery fire control system and the Bars mortar system. The Vilkha-M multiple-launch rocket system and Typhoon missile system are undergoing testing. The frigate *Hetman Sahaidachny* is being overhauled. Furthermore, the Ukrainian Ministry of Defence received a consignment of RPO-16 rocket-propelled infantry flamethrowers last week. Thanks to their thermobaric warhead, these make it possible to conduct effective strikes against armoured vehicles and wipe out enemy forces in strongholds at a distance of up to one kilometre.

It would be interesting to hear an answer as to what the purpose of all this demonstrative sabre-rattling is. Incidentally, the Deputy Secretary of the National Security and Defence Council, Serhiy Kryvonos, confirmed in a recent rapid-fire interview with the Ukrainian television channel Obozrevatel-TV that the Ukrainian armed forces command is waiting for the right combined political, international and military moment to launch an offensive in Donbas.

Against this backdrop, a number of OSCE participating States continue to train the Ukrainian army and flood the country with foreign weapons and equipment, which on numerous occasions have subsequently ended up in the zone of confrontation in Donbas. We have learned that the Ukrainian Government, in co-operation with foreign companies, intends to develop air defence systems and build unmanned combat aerial vehicles and warships. This year, the Congress of the United States of America approved a military aid package for the Ukrainian Government totalling 250 million US dollars, while a memorandum for the amount of 1.25 billion pounds sterling was signed with the United Kingdom for the purpose of strengthening the Ukrainian navy. Once again, we emphasize that participating States that provide military-technical assistance in any form to the Ukrainian Government share responsibility with the Ukrainian military for the casualties among the civilian population and for the destruction in eastern Ukraine. We urge our partners to fulfil their obligations under the OSCE politico-military instruments fully and responsibly, something they themselves regularly advocate.

The Ukrainian Government should put an immediate stop to the punitive operation against the civilian population of Donbas, withdraw its weapons and move them to the designated storage sites, disarm illegal groups, and pull the foreign military equipment and mercenaries out of Ukraine. The inhumane socio-economic blockade of Donbas should be lifted and the region itself granted special status as a matter of urgency. Political and security measures are closely interlinked and should be implemented simultaneously in the sequence provided for by the Minsk agreements. We emphasize the direct responsibility of the Ukrainian side for the practical implementation of the Minsk Package of Measures and the instructions issued at the "Normandy format" summit in Paris on 9 December 2019.

All opportunities and mechanisms for promoting a comprehensive peaceful settlement in eastern Ukraine are available. Progress depends on the Ukrainian Government being

genuinely ready for direct dialogue, geared towards practical results, with the representatives of Donetsk and Luhansk. It is time for our international partners and Ukraine's "minders" to finally stop misrepresenting the true causes of the internal Ukrainian crisis, and for the co-mediators of a peaceful settlement to demand that the Ukrainian Government abandon its make-believe negotiations within the TCG and embark, rather, on constructive and responsible work with a view to achieving peace in Donbas in accordance with the Minsk Package of Measures.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. I request that this statement be attached to the journal of the day.



**Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
Forum for Security Co-operation**

FSC.JOUR/966
11 November 2020
Annex 2

Original: ENGLISH

960th Plenary Meeting

FSC Journal No. 966, Agenda item 1(b)

**STATEMENT BY
THE DELEGATION OF AUSTRIA (ALSO ON BEHALF OF FRANCE)**

Mr. Chairperson,
Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen,

Recent terrorist attacks, such as those in Austria and France as well as quite a number in other OSCE countries prove yet again that our European security is common and indivisible. While the investigation is yet to reveal, in the months to come, the details of the last attack, it is clear that illicit trafficking of small arms and light weapons (SALW) and conventional ammunition (CA) as well as their illicit ownership and misuse, often provides the tool for such violent acts.

Combating illicit trafficking of SALW and CA is one of the commitments of OSCE participating States, explicitly outlined in the OSCE Documents on SALW and SCA, but also reiterated in other FSC decisions. Tackling the problem of illicit trafficking requires a shared and co-ordinated responsibility of a wide range of national authorities. There is an urgent need to discuss these experiences and take stock of the growing body of knowledge and practices about preventing, combating and investigating illicit trafficking of SALW and their ammunitions. This knowledge and the good practices should be reflected and incorporated into the OSCE normative framework as a matter of urgency. Exchanging good practices and enhancing co-operation at regional level would be consistent with the priorities highlighted in 2018 by the 3rd Review Conference of the United Nations Programme of Action.

Austria and France consider, among others, the development of an OSCE best practice guide on combating illicit trafficking of SALW and CA as one effective way to operationalize the OSCE Documents on SALW and SCA. Currently a food-for-thought paper is in a drafting phase and we aim to distribute the paper later this week. Let me underline that we stand ready to bring this initiative forward and would welcome your support for this initiative.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.



**Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
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FSC.JOUR/966
11 November 2020
Annex 3

ENGLISH
Original: RUSSIAN

960th Plenary Meeting
FSC Journal No. 966, Agenda item 1(b)

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

Mr. Chairperson,

Last week's terrible crimes in Austria and France once again confirmed the barbarous nature of terrorism. Our country is willing to intensify co-operation with the OSCE participating States in combating this global challenge. We share the concerns of the international community regarding the uncontrolled spread of small arms and light weapons (SALW) and stockpiles of conventional ammunition (SCA) and advocate further consolidation of international efforts to counter this dangerous trend. There is a clear link between terrorism, crime and the entry of weapons into the black market, including from countries where they are produced without licences or under expired licences obtained from the States holding the rights. Illegal trafficking in weapons, their parts, components and ammunition remains the principal source of sustenance for terrorist and extremist groups.

On a positive note, we take heed of the Austrian initiative to develop a best practice guide on combating illicit trafficking of SALW and conventional ammunition. We shall familiarize our Government with the relevant "food-for-thought" document when it is officially distributed among the participating States.

In general, we support the draft OSCE Ministerial Council decision on normative aspects of SALW and SCA presented last week by the German Chairmanship. It is currently being studied by the relevant experts in Moscow, and we expect to receive their substantive comments in the near future. We believe that agreement by the participating States on this document would facilitate the practical implementation of the OSCE Documents on SALW and SCA.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. I request that this statement be attached to the journal of the day.



**Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
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FSC.JOUR/966
11 November 2020
Annex 4

Original: ENGLISH

960th Plenary Meeting

FSC Journal No. 966, Agenda item 1(b)

**STATEMENT BY
THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE INFORMAL GROUP OF FRIENDS ON
SMALL ARMS AND LIGHT WEAPONS AND STOCKPILES OF
CONVENTIONAL AMMUNITION (LATVIA)**

Thank you, Madam Chairperson.
Dear colleagues,

Please allow me to take the floor in my capacity as the Chairperson of the Informal Group of Friends on Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) and Stockpiles of Conventional Ammunition (SCA).

I would like to reiterate the OSCE participating States' commitments with regard to combating illicit trafficking of SALW and SCA as they are outlined in the OSCE Documents on SALW and on SCA and have been underscored by the implementation of OSCE norms and best practices. Although it has been said many times already, I would like once again to emphasize that when applied, these norms and best practices do contribute to reducing and preventing the excessive and destabilizing accumulation and uncontrolled spread of SALW and conventional ammunition.

I fully agree with Austria that recent tragic events across Europe once again underline the need for joint and strengthened efforts to prevent, investigate and combat illicit trafficking. The problem of the illicit trafficking of SALW and conventional ammunition should be an integral part of the OSCE's wider efforts in the fields of early warning, conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict rehabilitation.

I also concur with Austria that one of the steps we could immediately take is to share experiences, knowledge and practices related to preventing, investigating and combating illicit trafficking. This knowledge and best practice should be operationalized by reflecting it in and incorporating it into the OSCE normative framework. For instance, as proposed by Austria, we could develop a new OSCE best practice guide on combating illicit trafficking of SALW and conventional ammunition. As we are all aware, although not binding in nature, the OSCE Best Practice Guides aim to assist the development and application of national policies by participating States, and to encourage higher common standards in the control and management of SALW and SCA.

Therefore, I would like to express my full support to Austria for bringing this initiative forward, with the aim of supporting participating States' efforts to tackle illicit trafficking by strengthening national ownership and capacities for SALW control.

I encourage participating States to join and support this work by sharing lessons learned, reflecting best practices and providing voluntary expert advice on this new guide through the Informal Group of Friends platform. As the Chairperson of the Informal Group of Friends on SALW and SCA, I stand ready to provide facilitation and co-ordination in support of the development of this new best practice guide.

I thank you for your attention. I kindly ask that this statement be attached to the journal of the day.