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**Permanent Delegation of the  
Republic of Belarus to the  
OSCE, JCG and OSCE**

**Statement by the Chairperson  
on the Occasion of the Assumption of the FSC Chairmanship by the Republic of Belarus**

Dear colleagues,

It is a great honour for me to welcome you to the first plenary meeting of the Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC) after the spring recess and the first one under the Belarusian Chairmanship. I hope all of you had a pleasant and relaxing Easter holidays and now are full of energy and enthusiasm to embark on a magnitude of tasks and challenges, which offer this OSCE body.

But let me first start with an expression of appreciation to the outgoing Azerbaijani Chair, which has done an excellent job and paved the way for the next Chairmanships throughout the whole year. It is a pleasure for me that we will continue our co-operation within the FSC Troika for the next four months.

I would like to convey my deepest thanks to the Austrian Delegation and especially to Ambassador Werner Ehrlich who is now leaving the Troika. We benefited a lot from his thoughtfulness and experience during the Austrian Chairmanship and his time in the Troika. I will continue to rely on your support, Ambassador, further on.

Let me also warmly welcome the Delegation of Belgium as a new member of the Troika. We are looking forward to close and fruitful collaboration with our Belgian colleagues who, in the run up to the Ljubljana Ministerial Council, will take over the Chair of the FSC.

Last but not least I would like to mention the important and helpful role of the Conflict Prevention Centre (CPC) and its FSC Support Unit.

Dear Colleagues,

Extending the FSC Chairmanship to four months in 2001 brought positive results, provided enough time for substantive work and ensured necessary continuity that were exemplified by the activities of previous Chairmanships. In the beginning of this year we together with other members of the FSC Troika of 2005 decided to further reinforce and enhance the effectiveness of the FSC Chairmanship. In the opening statement of the Azerbaijani Chair in January a working programme of the future FSC Chairmanships was outlined. This was a new idea aimed at concentrating our efforts on the FSC tasks in the course of the whole year and thereby making all three chairmanships coherent and mutually complementing. I would like to assure the delegations that we would do our best to continue the path treaded out by our Azerbaijani colleagues.

The Forum for Security Cooperation occupies a distinct place within the OSCE architecture. With its autonomous decision-making capacity based on its time-tested mandate and its impressive acquis built through the adoption and successful implementation of a series of key documents in the field of arms control and confidence- and security-building, the FSC represents the ever important politico-military pillar of our Organization.

Arms control, disarmament and confidence and security-building measures (CSBMs) remain indispensable elements within the OSCE's comprehensive, co-operative and indivisible approach to security. Needless to say, every achievement by the FSC contributes directly to the overall success of the OSCE in promoting and advancing this concept.

The changing nature of security environment creates new challenges for the OSCE, including those of politico-military dimension. These threats and challenges are of multifaceted, cross-dimensional character and constantly question the relevance and validity of the existing OSCE instruments adopted within the politico-military dimension. Quoting from para.45 of the OSCE Strategy to Address Threats to Security and Stability in the XXI Century, this "requires a double-track response..., notably that full implementation, timely adaptation and, when required, further development of arms control agreements and CSBMs are key contributions to our political and military stability". We intend to go in line with the OSCE Strategy aiming at its full implementation in the politico-military area. I believe this should be our general goal, which represents a framework for other more specific tasks of the Forum.

I would like to share with you some views on our tasks ahead and touch upon the following issues, which are of particular importance for the Belarusian Chairmanship.

**1. Preparation for the 2005 Annual Security Review Conference (ASRC), which will constitute a major event for our Organisation in this year.** Due to the tireless efforts of our Italian Chef de File Mr. Emanuele Farruggia together with the Azerbaijani Chair the FSC Decision No. 2/05 on the contribution of the Forum has been adopted. The draft list of politico-military elements, which might be discussed during the conference, has been tabled to the agenda of the Working Group "B" for further deliberations. We will discuss this draft list of elements and try to hand it over to the Slovenian Chairmanship-in-Office (CiO) in due course. I rely on assistance of our Chef de File in this respect. According to the agenda and modalities of the ASRC the FSC Chair will report on relevant FSC activities during the opening plenary session. The other pending issue is the nomination of a Co-ordinator for the Working Session on Comprehensive Security. We will be discussing this issue together with the Troika members as well as with the CiO and will nominate the coordinator at the earliest convenience.

**2. The issue of small arms and light weapons (SALW) will remain among the core elements of the FSC activities during our Chairmanship.**

- First of all it relates to the project activities. Up to now we have requests for assistance in accordance with the OSCE Document on SALW from three participating states – Belarus, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan. All requests are at different stage of implementation. Today, I hope, we will be briefed by the CPC on the results of the last Staff Assessment Visit to Belarus, which concluded a series of visits at the end of March.

I would like to encourage all potential donor states to pay more attention to these requests. Here we will be relying on the support and guidance from our Coordinator Mr. Claes Nilsson as well as the CPC. In the Chair's view additional efforts are needed for thorough implementation of the project development phase. It will in no way prejudice potential donors' voluntary assistance, but rather strengthen the OSCE capability to implement its "clearing house" function. We are looking forward to furthering progress with the requests in Belarus and Tajikistan and to deploying assessment mission in Kazakhstan.

- Touching upon the issue of more effective implementation of the OSCE SALW Document as well as other commitments in this field I would like to come across three important decisions that have been taken by the FSC at the end of the last year and subsequently endorsed by the Ministerial Decisions in Sofia. These are the "Decision on Export Controls of MANPADS", the "Decision on Standard Elements of End-User Certificates for SALW Exports", and the "OSCE Principles on the Control of Brokering in SALW". Being a valuable tool in combating illicit trafficking in SALW they significantly underpin and reinforce existing

decisions and documents in this area. For this reason I would like to call upon the participating States to its timely and proper implementation and, if possible, its relevant promotion on the international arena in the same way the FSC is doing with regard to the SALW Best Practice Guides.

- - Second Biennial Meeting of States to review the implementation of UN Programme of Action on SALW will be held in July this year. The OSCE's achievements and contribution to the process of combating illicit trade in SALW at a global level since the first meeting in 2003 deserve to be presented in New-York and the input of our Organisation should be significant and tangible. Apart from a presentation at the Biennial Meeting we can consider organising a side-event on the margins of the meeting to get participants familiarised with the specific activities the OSCE is conducting in the FSC framework and in the field, namely project activities. The inventory of existing SALW decisions and the review of the implementation of the OSCE Document on SALW could also become a consistent part of the contribution to the Second Biennial Meeting. As the state that has initiated this process we are ready to continue our work in this direction.

### **3. The problem of stockpiles of conventional ammunition has been identified among the priorities for all three Chairmanships in 2005.**

I would like to commend the US Delegation together with other sponsors for the timely and pertinent initiative on the development of "best practices" guide on stockpile management and destruction of conventional ammunition. In our view it will facilitate the implementation of the OSCE Document on Stockpiles of Conventional Ammunition and could serve as additional contribution to the FSC progress report to the Ljubljana Ministerial. A continuing support of our Co-ordinator Mr. Jernej Cimpersek and CPC is also very much appreciated in this regard.

The FSC has received five requests for assistance from the participating states in accordance with the OSCE Document on Stockpiles of Conventional Ammunition. We are witnessing a progress with regard to the Russian Federation and Tajikistan. Let me again, like in case with SALW, stress the Chair's view that additional efforts are needed to facilitate assessment and project development phases. Such an approach means that no request should be left without response. It is especially important in the light of a task for the FSC to prepare a comprehensive report on further implementation of the Document to the 13<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Ministerial Council 2005 in Ljubljana in accordance with the Sofia Ministerial Decision No. 5/04.

We also support and will do our best to enhance FSC cooperation with the OSCE field operations, implementing specific projects. Two more requests dealing with mélange disposal have been passed to the OSCE through the field missions. The FSC is informed about ongoing and planned mélange projects by the OSCE missions in Armenia and Uzbekistan. Ukraine has also requested OSCE assistance on mélange disposal and some other OSCE countries are known to be faced with this problem. Therefore, a forthcoming workshop in Yerevan in June 2005 planned by the OSCE Centre in Yerevan and announced in the FSC before the Easter recess finds full support of the FSC Chair and the Troika and could also be used as a practical platform for the development of such OSCE mélange program. In this regard the idea of a "Comprehensive OSCE Mélange Program" could be considered by the FSC.

**4. The next issue in my list is non-proliferation.** The non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction has acquired an increased importance in the OSCE during the last 3-4 years in the context of growing threat of terrorism. At the same time one can observe that some important documents adopted in the OSCE in early 1990s are not able to meet the drastic changes in security environment nowadays. Here we can mention the OSCE Principles Governing Non-Proliferation adopted in 1994. By no means had they lost its relevance, but its timely adaptation is obviously required. Following the suggestion made during the 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Implementation Assessment Meeting (AIAM), we intend to conduct a Special FSC Session devoted to review

this document. The outcome of this meeting may eventually lead to the modernisation of the Principles. In our view it is also relevant in the context of 2005 NPT Review Conference to be held in April-May in New-York and implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution No.1540.

5. **This year's Annual Implementation Assessment Meeting produced a number of proposals.** We are grateful to the CPC for the timely preparation of the Survey of Suggestions submitted at the AIAM. We have to address all the proposals in a diligent and serious manner to ensure proper follow-up. For this reason I strongly encourage the participating States to pursue their proposals and table them for further discussion in the FSC. In our view, special attention deserves several suggestions regarding the implementation of Chapter IX of the Vienna Document 1999. I think we could use the last year's pattern when two German proposals on the Vienna Document-99 resulted in two Chairman's statements establishing a common understanding of its certain provisions. Another serious task, which is ahead of us, relates to the implementation by participating States their commitments according to Chapter IV of the Vienna Document-99 with regard to airbase visits and visits to military formations. We suggest the FSC Working Group "A" assumes the consideration of the respective suggestion from the AIAM without delay.

The Chairmanship intends to intensify the process of consultations with regard to the Turkish proposal on prior notification of the most significant military activity below the thresholds of the VD-99. This initiative would significantly increase the level of transparency and predictability in the OSCE region. I would like to encourage the interested delegations to start deliberations in the Working Group "B" as soon as possible.

6. We also intend to stimulate and facilitate the "**Security Dialogue**" as one of the most essential instruments to encourage a higher degree of transparency in national defence planning, armed forces reformation and modernisation. I am happy that a number of delegations have already indicated their readiness to address the FSC with their defence planning issues. In our national capacity we also plan to invite a couple of guest speakers who could share with us some views on specific security aspects.

7. **Coming back to the Sofia Ministerial tasks I cannot but mention the issue of border security.** According to the Ministerial Decision No.2/04 "Elaboration of an OSCE Border Security and Management Concept" the FSC will make its own contribution to this work within its competence and mandate. We are thinking of inviting the distinguished Hungarian Ambassador Mrs. Marianne Berecz, who chairs the informal group of friends on borders, with a view to brief the Forum on the progress achieved in this direction and to discuss the FSC contribution to this concept.

8. Recalling that spring for the OSCE is also a starting time for the deliberations on the next year **OSCE programme activities**, and following previous discussions in the FSC, I would like to see the FSC more involved in discussing political-military tasks having core-budgetary implications at the initial stage. In this regard, without prejudging the results of the technical financial discussions in the Advisory Committee on Management and Finance (ACMF), the FSC could consider politico-military part of the Program Outline 2006, including the CPC tasks and priorities for 2006. From its part the FSC Chair intends to contact the Chair of the ACMF and keep the FSC informed on the related budget process developments.

Dear Colleagues,

The security nowadays is becoming more and more cross-dimensional. It requires co-operative approach and joint efforts within all three dimensions of the OSCE. Therefore a stronger and enhanced co-operation between the FSC and the Permanent Council is required. We are fully satisfied with the level of cooperation with the Slovenian Chairmanship-in-Office

during our first four months in the Troika. I hope this tradition will be continued and expanded, including holding a joint PC-FSC meeting.

I would also like to mention our Partners for Co-operation. We intend to invite them to participate in the FSC plenary meetings as often as possible. If any of them would like to give a presentation in the “Security Dialogue” on security-related issues we would be ready to invite them to do so.

Dear colleagues,

There are several other important issues, which have to be discussed during our Chairmanship and further on. Among them I could mention the unresolved situation with the seminar on military doctrines. Another issue, which deserves further deliberations, is a possible review conference on the OSCE Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security.

I hope we do not pose for us too many ambitious tasks. We fully realise that some of them will require more time that has been allocated for our Chairmanship. The important task for the Belarusian Chairmanship, as I see it, will be to advance some ideas and suggestions through the FSC “pipeline” and allow our Belgian colleagues to successfully finalise them with a view to produce a sound and tangible FSC contribution to the Ministerial Council in Ljubljana.

Thank you for your attention.