



**FSC CHAIRPERSON'S PROGRESS REPORT
TO THE SIXTEENTH MEETING OF THE MINISTERIAL COUNCIL**

**"EFFORTS IN THE FIELD OF ARMS CONTROL AGREEMENTS AND
CONFIDENCE- AND SECURITY-BUILDING MEASURES IN
ACCORDANCE WITH ITS MANDATE"**



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1. Introduction and objective

This report is submitted in accordance with Decision No. 3/07 of the Fifteenth Meeting of the Ministerial Council, on Issues Relevant to the Forum for Security Co-operation. It provides an overview of efforts made in the Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC) in the field of arms control agreements and confidence- and security-building measures (CSBMs), in accordance with its mandate, during the period from December 2007 until November 2008, taking into account, *inter alia*, the outcome of deliberations at the Special FSC Meeting on Existing and Future Arms Control and Confidence- and Security-Building Measures in the OSCE Area, on 24 October 2007.¹ It also addresses the information exchanged in the FSC between participating States on the implementation of agreed CSBMs, normative initiatives and developments in the Forum, and other related activities carried out in the Organization. The report reflects the discussions and decisions adopted in the Forum. Detailed information on implementation may be found in the Conflict Prevention Centre Summary Report on Recent Trends in the Implementation of the Vienna Document 1999 and Other Measures Addressed during the Annual Implementation Assessment Meeting².

2. Overview of arms control and CSBM implementation in 2008

During 2008, the OSCE participating States continued to implement their joint commitments under the Vienna Document 1999 (VD99)³. As requested by the FSC, the OSCE Conflict Prevention Centre (CPC) maintains records of exchanges of information that take place as part of these commitments. They are regularly reflected in the *CPC Monthly Reports* and *CPC Quarterly and Annual Surveys on CSBM Information Exchanged*. In addition, and at the request of the FSC, the CPC has since 2007 produced an annual summary report that reflects trends in the implementation of CSBMs.

As can be seen from the 2008 CPC Summary Report, the level of CSBM implementation in the OSCE region is relatively stable and high. Measured by the number of submissions under various information exchanges, such as the Annual Exchange of Military Information (AEMI) and the Global Exchange of Military Information (GEMI), the level of implementation has remained steady during the past five years. Overall, there have not been any major changes in the implementation of these CSBMs during the past years.

Some smaller variations can, however, be detected. For example, all but one participating State provided their information on AEMI for 2008, compared with 54 submissions in 2007 and 51 in 2006. By 12 November 2008, 36 participating States had submitted information on their defence planning, which may result in a lower number of submissions than in 2007. Also, 2008 was an active year in terms of conducting inspections and evaluation visits under VD99: By 12 November 2008, a total of 108 inspections and 75 evaluation visits had been conducted.⁴

¹ The deadline for submitting input for this report was 12 November 2008..

² FSC.GAL/18/08, 11 February 2008.

³ *Vienna Document 1999 of the Negotiations on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures*, adopted at the 269th Plenary Meeting of the OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation in Istanbul on 16 November 1999, FSC.DOC/1/99.

⁴ Includes both VD99, paragraphs 74 and 107, and regional measures specified in Chapter X of VD99.

In 2008, 50 participating States were technically connected to the Communications Network.⁵ Over half (31) of the end-user stations were connected to the network over 99 per cent of the time, and a large majority (47 end-user stations) at least 95 per cent of the time. In 2008, the online time of two participating States was less than 80 per cent. One State was continuously offline despite having the technical capacity to be connected.

3. Efforts by the FSC since the Madrid Ministerial Council Meeting

During 2008, many proposals were made regarding the improvement of implementation of the VD99 provisions. Two of these resulted in new FSC decisions. Also the Forum's Security Dialogue was revitalized. Implementing and strengthening the *acquis* of CSBMs remains high on the Forum's agenda.

On 19 December 2007, the FSC adopted Decision No. 17/07, on Measures to Improve the Availability of Exchanged FSC-Related Information. In the Decision, the participating States recalled the importance of a timely and full implementation of all FSC-related information exchanges and recognized the need to have all FSC-related information exchanges readily available in one place, and decided to supplement current practice and provide all relevant FSC-related information exchanges also in an electronic format for further distribution.

The eighteenth Annual Implementation Assessment Meeting (AIAM), held on 4 and 5 March 2008, once again confirmed its importance as an annual event to review the implementation of CSBMs, which remains a main priority for the FSC. During the discussions in the AIAM, experts exchanged experiences, made suggestions, and gave their assessments of the implementation of the OSCE commitments in the field of CSBMs. However, some delegations referred to the need for more open discussion in the future and expressed their disappointment with the lack of such open and focused discussions at the 2008 Meeting.

A Meeting of Heads of Verification Centres was organized on 3 March 2008 for the second time, immediately prior to the AIAM. It was a unique opportunity to exploit the collective knowledge and expertise of the participating States in the practical implementation of CSBM measures, and to exchange experiences and recommendations on their improvement. It thereby supported the goals of openness and transparency in the OSCE politico-military dimension.

On 16 April 2008, the FSC adopted Decision No. 2/08, on Taking National Holidays into Account When Planning Verification Activities. In the Decision, the participating States decided, without prejudice to the right of each participating State under VD99 to request and to conduct inspections and/or evaluations at a time determined by the inspecting/evaluating State, to take into account information on officially recognized national and religious holidays of the receiving State.

In addition, on 18 June 2008, the Chairperson of the FSC made a statement noting the willingness of participating States to underline the importance of complying strictly with the time frames established by VD99 for requesting an inspection or evaluation visit.

⁵ Also the Conflict Prevention Centre (CPC) and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) were connected to the OSCE Communications Network in 2008.

The sixth OSCE Annual Security Review Conference (ASRC), held on 1 and 2 July 2008, allowed participants to take stock of the security situation in the OSCE area on the basis of the OSCE's comprehensive approach to security, and offered a forum for a dialogue on topical security issues. As part of its agenda, the Conference provided an opportunity to exchange views on current issues related to all arms control arrangements and CSBMs in the OSCE area. Discussions on the current politico-military situation and the value of the OSCE's security dialogue, arms control arrangements and the CSBMs in the OSCE area revealed the continuing relevance of the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE). One delegation referred to a proposal made to draft a new treaty on European security. There was a prevailing view that the participating States should make full use of the FSC to respond to current challenges and, if necessary, to update and adapt existing OSCE documents and tools. According to the Chairmanship-in-Office (CiO), the 2008 ASRC provided sufficient substance for dialogue and offered a useful forum for the participating States to express their concerns on security-related issues. The Conference also generated various recommendations and suggestions for possible later work in appropriate OSCE bodies.

A number of specific proposals and initiatives were discussed in FSC working groups and plenary meetings between December 2007 and December 2008, including:

- A food-for-thought paper on possible FSC action toward improving the application of the compliance and verification measures in Vienna Document 1999 (FSC.DEL/51/08);
- A proposal for a draft decision on the specification of the dimensions (surface) of the “specified area” (FSC.DEL/493/07/Rev.2);
- A proposal for a draft decision on prior notification of major military activities (FSC.DEL/495/07/Rev.3);
- A food-for-thought paper on proposals for improving implementation of confidence- and security-building measures in accordance with the Vienna Document 1999 (FSC.AIAM/9/08);
- A food-for-thought paper on confidence- and security-building measures in the naval area (FSC.DEL/120/08);
- A proposal for a draft decision on a single deadline for submission of information on defence planning (FSC.DEL/494/07/Rev.3/Corr.1).

However, no agreement has so far been reached on these proposals. In addition, surveys of suggestions made at the seventeenth and eighteenth Annual Implementation Assessment Meetings were discussed in Working Group A (FSC.AIAM/34/07; FSC.AIAM/25/08/Corr.1).

The Forum's Security Dialogue on Arms Control and CSBMs was reinvigorated with presentations and discussions on several issues that are topical for the European security framework. These included, *inter alia*, presentations on possible confidence- and security-building measures in the naval area as proposed at the Special FSC Meeting on Existing and Future Arms Control and Confidence- and Security-Building Measures in the OSCE Area in October 2007, elaboration of an OSCE role in promoting cyber security, and a presentation on maritime security.

It is especially worth mentioning that the participating States conducted extensive dialogue in a consultative and constructive manner on security concerns surrounding increased tensions in Georgia. The dialogue in April and May concentrated on mitigating tensions following the

incident of 20 April 2008 involving the unmanned aerial vehicle shot down over Abkhazia, Georgia. The discussions in September and October focused on addressing the armed conflict in Georgia in August 2008.

A related, significant OSCE politico-military activity in 2008 was the use of VD99 risk reduction measures (Chapter III) to address the previously mentioned incident 2008 involving the unmanned aerial vehicle shot down over Abkhazia, Georgia. In the context of addressing the case, the provisions of Bucharest Ministerial Council Decision No.3, on fostering the role of the OSCE as a forum for political dialogue, were applied, when the Chairperson of the Permanent Council requested politico-military advice from the FSC.⁶

⁶ Letter of the representative of the Chairman-in-Office to the Chairperson of the FSC, CIO.GAL/67/08, 30 April 2008; reply of the Chairperson of the FSC to the representative of the Chairman-in-Office, FSC.DEL/115/08/Rev.1, 26 June 2008, PC.JOUR/719, Annex 2.