

Chairmanship: Azerbaijan

1006th PLENARY MEETING OF THE FORUM

1. Date: Wednesday, 30 March 2022 (in the Neuer Saal and via video teleconference)

Opened: 10 a.m.
Suspended: 1 p.m.
Resumed: 3 p.m.
Closed: 4.25 p.m.

2. Chairperson: Ambassador R. Sadigbayli
Mr. F. Osmanov

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

Agenda item 1: SECURITY DIALOGUE: “POST-CONFLICT REHABILITATION AND PEACE-BUILDING: LESSONS LEARNED IN THE OSCE REGION AND THE WAY AHEAD”
 - *Presentation by Dr. E. Huseynov, Special Representative of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan in the liberated territories included in the Karabakh Economic Region of Azerbaijan*

 - *Presentation by Mr. M. Brajić, Head of the Department for NATO and the Partnership for Peace, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina*

 - *Presentation by Ms. S. Šimičić, Head of the Arms Control Division, Ministry of Defence of Croatia*
Chairperson, Dr. E. Huseynov (FSC.DEL/174/22 OSCE+) (FSC.DEL/175/22 OSCE+), Mr. M. Brajić (FSC.DEL/176/22 OSCE+), Ms. S. Šimičić, United States of America (FSC.DEL/157/22 OSCE+), France-European Union, Turkey (FSC.DEL/160/22 OSCE+), Armenia (Annex 1), Russian Federation (Annex 2), Ukraine, France-European Union, Switzerland

Point of order: Armenia, Chairperson

Agenda item 2: GENERAL STATEMENTS

- (a) *Russian war of aggression against Ukraine*: Ukraine (Annex 3), United States of America (Annex 4), Canada, France-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, San Marino and Ukraine, in alignment) (Annex 5), Switzerland (Annex 6), United Kingdom (Annex 7), Turkey (Annex 8), Georgia (Annex 9), Austria, Lithuania (Annex 10), Latvia (Annex 11)
- (b) *Special military operation to denazify and demilitarize Ukraine*: Russian Federation (Annex 12) (FSC.DEL/171/22), United Kingdom (Annex 13), Ukraine, Canada, United States of America, France-European Union
- (c) *Recent provocations by Azerbaijan*: Armenia (Annex 14), Azerbaijan (Annex 15)

Agenda item 3: ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- (a) *Briefing on the “DEFENDER-Europe 2022” military exercise and linked exercises*: United States of America (FSC.DEL/162/22 OSCE+)
- (b) *Photographic exhibition entitled “Souls of Karabakh: A Long Journey to Peace” by photo journalist Reza, being held in Vienna from 30 March to 14 April 2022*: Chairperson
- (c) *Request for assistance in enhancing the capacities of the national authorities of Azerbaijan to implement explosive hazards risk reduction and response action*: Armenia, Chairperson

4. Next meeting:

Wednesday, 6 April 2022, at 11 a.m., in the Neuer Saal and via video teleconference



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

FSC.JOUR/1012
30 March 2022
Annex 1

Original: ENGLISH

1006th Plenary Meeting
FSC Journal No. 1012, Agenda item 1

STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF ARMENIA

Dear colleagues,

Today's Security Dialogue is yet another manifestation of how Azerbaijan is abusing the function of Chairmanship of the Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC), distorting of the Forum's mandate and totally disregarding the common security interests of the OSCE participating States for the sole purpose of advancing its narrow political agenda. Moreover, the delegation of Azerbaijan did not hesitate to distort our shared commitments by stating, in its concept note for the Security Dialogue, that at the OSCE Lisbon Summit "the FSC was tasked with looking at, *inter alia*, post-conflict rehabilitation through its mandate." I wish to point out to my colleagues, who are probably not accustomed to the deception tactics of the Azerbaijani delegation, that in the Lisbon Document 1996, the participating States agreed that "the FSC will also look at the prospects for promoting co-operative forms of verification and at how best to use CSBMs [confidence- and security-building measures] and other arms control instruments in preventive diplomacy, crisis management and post-conflict rehabilitation", and not at "post-conflict-rehabilitation and humanitarian demining" as misleadingly suggested in the aforementioned concept note. Distortion of the mandate of one of the OSCE decision-making bodies is an extremely disturbing and dangerous trend, especially when carried out by its Chairmanship.

Dear colleagues,

Since the end of the hostilities in November 2020, we have been witnessing the glorification by the Azerbaijani authorities, including that country's delegation to the OSCE, of Azerbaijan's use of force against Artsakh. Today's Security Dialogue is a further attempt by Azerbaijan to legitimize its war of aggression and the results of its use of force against Artsakh, and the presentation by the Special Representative of the President of Azerbaijan in the so-called Karabakh Economic Region of Azerbaijan is a case in point. Instead of polluting this venue with Azerbaijani State propaganda, Mr. Huseynov should, rather, have spoken about the ethnic cleansing of the Armenian territories currently under the control of Azerbaijan, about the attempts by the Azerbaijani authorities to erase any trace of the historical existence of Armenians in Artsakh, and about Azerbaijan's ongoing aggression against Artsakh with its ultimate aim to ethnically cleanse the latter of its Armenian population. For already a week now, the Azerbaijani armed forces have been illegally occupying areas in the Askeran region of Artsakh, infiltrated by them in flagrant violation of

the trilateral ceasefire statement of 9 November 2020, which stipulated that the forces of the two parties were to remain in their current positions at the time of signature. Moreover, the Azerbaijani armed forces attacked the positions of the Artsakh Defence Army, using firearms of various calibres together with Bayraktar TB2 combat drones. As a result, three servicemen of the Artsakh Defence Army were killed and 14 were wounded.

We note with regret that all this was made possible by the lack of condemnation on the part of the international community, including the OSCE, with regard to the systematic use of force by Azerbaijan against Artsakh and Armenia. The OSCE's silence – on Azerbaijan's glorification of the use of force and crimes committed against Armenians, on its occupation of Armenian territories, constant military escalation and ceasefire violations along the border with Armenia and the line of contact in Artsakh, on its intimidation and terrorizing of the civilian population of Armenia and Artsakh – this silence has encouraged Azerbaijan to continue its illegal and provocative actions, not least at the OSCE.

Armenia is committed to all efforts to establish a lasting and sustainable peace in the region, but peace can never be built on the use or threat of force. Only a full and comprehensive settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict can lead to a lasting and sustainable peace.

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/1012
30 March 2022
Annex 2

ENGLISH
Original: RUSSIAN

1006th Plenary Meeting
FSC Journal No. 1012, Agenda item 1

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

Mr. Chairperson,

First of all, I should like to thank the Azerbaijani Chairmanship for having organized this Security Dialogue on post-conflict rehabilitation and peace-building in the OSCE area. We believe it important for this item to be a regular feature of the Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC) agenda. We are grateful to the distinguished speakers for their detailed coverage of the regional aspects of the topic under discussion.

Like other countries, Russia also regards the OSCE's work in the area of early warning, conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict rehabilitation as one of the Organization's key tasks. For us, capacity-building by the OSCE in the area of crisis management should focus on implementing the existing potential. There is no need to reinvent the wheel – the resources that have already been accumulated are by no means poor.

The Forum has developed a proven toolkit that enables participating States to move more smoothly through the post-conflict rehabilitation phase. First and foremost, this refers to the OSCE's assistance mechanism for the management of stockpiles of small arms and light weapons (SALW) and conventional ammunition.

Today, the main focus of OSCE project activities is shifting to Central Asia, which, as yesterday's briefing by the Conflict Prevention Centre showed, could have to deal with the enormous risks of illicit cross-border trafficking in arms and ammunition. These are the consequences of the shameful withdrawal of the United States of America from Afghanistan, where some 85 billion dollars' worth of US hardware, including 358,000 automatic rifles, 22,000 armoured vehicles, 176 artillery pieces, and also helicopters and transport planes, were left behind. The statistics are simply appalling. Against this backdrop, the whole world is watching the United States and its allies "pumping" lethal weapons into Ukraine, with the risks of subsequent illegal spillover of SALW and ammunition into other regions plain to see. The US Government continues to follow the same pattern of prioritizing short-term interests while ignoring the possible disastrous consequences.

We absolutely disagree with those participating States that attribute the current difficult state of affairs in European security to the situation in Ukraine. Here it is worth

noting that the OSCE has unfortunately failed in its political settlement of the internal Ukrainian conflict, and Russia is now having to end the protracted armed confrontation in the neighbouring country on its own. But in reality, serious problems emerged decades ago when, after the collapse of the Soviet Union, the United States saw itself as the “ruler of destinies”, allowing it to interfere in the internal affairs of States on every single continent and to overthrow unwanted governments with impunity. International security is also under considerable stress because the United States and its allies have chosen a NATO-centric model of European security at the expense of pan-European institutions and then proceeded to destroy the entire arms control architecture. They are responsible for killing the Treaty on the Limitation of Anti-Ballistic Missile Systems and the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty and weakening the full functionality of the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe and the Treaty on Open Skies.

Mr. Chairperson,

As stated in the concept note issued by your team for the meeting, OSCE participating States should look to the future, drawing on their historical experience and existing co-operation mechanisms to promote peace and security. In that context, we should like to elaborate on our country’s approach to the regional aspects of post-conflict settlement touched upon by the keynote speakers.

The Russian Federation still takes the position that there is a need to continue the strict implementation of the trilateral agreements set out in the statements by the leaders of Azerbaijan, Armenia and Russia on 9 November 2020, 11 January and 26 November 2021 on a complete ceasefire and cessation of all hostilities in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict zone.

Progress on project activities to unblock transport links and economic ties and to start delimiting and demarcating the Armenian-Azerbaijani border through the establishment of a dedicated bilateral commission will enable significant headway to be made towards normalizing relations between Armenia and Azerbaijan, and also further strengthening security and stability in the region.

The Russian peacekeeping contingent is taking appropriate measures to ensure security and monitor the situation in its area of responsibility. Unfortunately, armed incidents sometimes occur on the border between Azerbaijan and Armenia. Our peacekeepers are undertaking extensive measures to stabilize the situation and prevent it from escalating. To guarantee that incidents do not repeat themselves, it is necessary for the parties to unconditionally implement all the provisions of the trilateral statement of 9 November 2020.

We are aware of the difficult humanitarian situation in the region as a result of the gas pipeline accident and are in close contact with both sides in order to resolve the problem. We are convinced that any steps creating problems for civilians that would exacerbate an already difficult humanitarian situation should be avoided.

We are ready to actively promote the conclusion of a peace treaty between Armenia and Azerbaijan.

Mr. Chairperson,

For almost 27 years now, Russia, as an official international mediator, has fully supported the Dayton format as the basis for building peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina. We are convinced that the goals of consolidating peace, stability and security in Bosnia and Herzegovina can be achieved only if the fundamental principles of Dayton – the independence and sovereignty of the country, the equality of its three constituent peoples and the two entities with broad constitutional powers – are respected. This document, which was signed in 1995 and is fundamental for Bosnia and Herzegovina, remains valid and the administrative scheme and the balance of interests of the three peoples provided for therein are effective if strictly adhered to.

Russia has consistently advocated winding down the Office of the High Representative (OHR) for Bosnia and Herzegovina, pursuant to the 2006 decision of the Steering Board of the Peace Implementation Council. However, the insistence with which Western partners have sought to prolong the functioning of the OHR suggests to us that they intend to use that resource to revise Dayton and secure unrelated objectives. The “less Dayton, more Brussels” approach they advocate, and the European Commission’s “14 priorities” for Bosnia and Herzegovina in the context of its application for European Union candidate status bear this out. Some of the “priorities” regarding the powers of the entities go against the Dayton Agreement. Russia strongly disagrees with this logic.

We are ready to work together to put the post-conflict settlement process in Bosnia and Herzegovina back on a positive track on the basis of the Dayton principles. We see this as the key to peace and security in the region.

As we know, the common denominator of the governments’ efforts in the region is the process of European integration, designed, as the European Union intends, to ensure stability and economic growth in this part of Europe. However, European integration has not been a panacea for all ills. There are still many unanswered questions when it comes to reconciling this policy by the States in the region with their interests in co-operating with countries outside the EU zone. Russia also opposes NATO’s expansion into the Balkans, which only exacerbates European security problems. We hope that the United States, NATO and the European Union have the political will and sense not to turn the region into another front of anti-Russian confrontation, otherwise it will have objective consequences for Europe as a whole.

Mr. Chairperson,

In conclusion, I should like to point out that in the context of pan-European instability, impartial action by the OSCE in the conflict cycle is of fundamental importance. At the same time, there is a need to avoid deviating from the status-neutral stance of both the officials in our Organization and the co-mediators in the settlement of conflicts in the OSCE area. If a balance of interests and a willingness to engage constructively are taken into account, acceptable solutions can be found in the interests of all parties concerned.

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



1006th Plenary Meeting

FSC Journal No. 1012, Agenda item 2(a)

**STATEMENT BY
THE DELEGATION OF UKRAINE**

Mr. Chairperson,

Allow me to deliver, on behalf of the delegation of Ukraine, a statement on the subject of the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine.

Hiding behind fictional accusations of neo-Nazism in Ukraine and even more absurd allegations that Ukraine was planning to attack Russia using nuclear, biological and chemical weapons, the Russian Federation continues to wage its barbaric war against Ukraine.

The Russian armed forces continue to launch numerous strikes on civilian targets in Ukrainian cities, in particular in Kyiv, Kharkiv, Chernihiv, Sumy and Mariupol. While the Russian defence ministry keeps insisting that all strikes are conducted only with high-precision weapons, reality proves otherwise. The widespread use of unguided weapon systems, such as rockets and free-fall air bombs, is causing significant human losses among civilians and destroying critical civilian infrastructure.

On 24 March, the Russian forces shelled the village of Yavkyne (Mykolaiv region) with cluster munition fired from Tornado-S multiple-launch rocket systems. As a result, three civilians were killed and 13 were wounded. Moreover, several residential buildings, a local school, a hospital and some administrative buildings were seriously damaged.

On 26 March, as a result of artillery shelling targeting a residential building in the town of Boyarka (Kyiv region), four civilians were killed, including one child.

On 27 March, again as a result of artillery shelling, seven civilians, including two children, were killed in the settlement of Oskil (Kharkiv region). Three adults and two children were wounded. In total, since the beginning of the large-scale invasion on 24 February 2022, 145 children have been killed and 222 wounded.

The situation in the city of Mariupol remains absolutely tragic. According to estimates by the local administration, approximately 300 civilians were killed as a result of the air strike on a theatre carried out by the Russian forces on 16 March.

All claims by Russian propagandists that the theatre was being used as a headquarters of the Azov Regiment, which then blew it up from the inside, are purely fabricated. They are spreading such allegations in an attempt to absolve the Russian forces of responsibility for this despicable, bloody crime. This is quite simply obnoxious.

Civilians who survived the Russian bombing and artillery shelling are now being forcibly deported to the Russian Federation. The Russian invaders are confiscating people's identity documents. They have already forcibly deported around 6,000 Mariupol residents to the Russian filtration camps in order to use them as hostages and exert further political pressure on Ukraine.

It is extremely cynical that the Russian armed forces are firing on evacuation convoys trying to leave Mariupol and head for the government-controlled territory of Ukraine. These actions by the Russian Federation constitute a gross violation of the laws and customs of war and of the norms of international humanitarian law, in particular the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and Protocol I Additional to the Geneva Conventions.

Despite the extremely difficult situation on the ground, the Ukrainian troops in Mariupol continue to defend the city. As the defenders of Mariupol declared, they were not going to surrender and leave behind their wounded and slain brothers-in-arms. It is worth recalling that on 6 March, Mariupol was awarded the honorary title of Hero City of Ukraine for the outstanding heroism shown by its defenders and inhabitants during the ongoing siege of the city by the Russian invaders.

The Russian troops came to Ukraine supposedly to fight imaginary neo-Nazis, yet they continue to launch indiscriminate strikes targeting numerous memorials dedicated to the millions of victims of the Second World War. Two Holocaust memorials have already been damaged. First, Russian missiles struck the Babyn Yar memorial site in Kyiv. And more recently, on 26 March, they struck the Drobytsky Yar Holocaust memorial near Kharkiv, erected on the site where up to 20,000 prisoners from the Jewish ghetto were murdered in 1941 and 1942.

The Russian Federation cynically continues with its plan to destroy the economy of Ukraine, its industry and infrastructure. Numerous air and missile strikes have already left hundreds of thousands of people without electricity, water supply, heating and communication. On 26 March, the Russian Federation launched a missile strike on the petroleum depot in the city of Dubno (Rivne region). On the same day, another petroleum depot and a plant were damaged in Lviv as a result of a missile strike. At least five civilians were wounded.

More than 3,500 infrastructure facilities have been destroyed since 24 February 2022. According to preliminary estimates, the economic losses of Ukraine already total 565 billion US dollars. That figure is rising daily.

Since the beginning of the full-scale invasion, over 1,200 missiles have been launched by the enemy from the Russian Federation, Belarus, the occupied Crimean peninsula and the adjacent territorial waters. On 26 March alone, Russia fired a record number of missiles into the territory of Ukraine, including 52 missiles from ships and at least 18 from the territory of Belarus. However, on that same day, Ukraine's air defence set a record for the number of

targets shot down: out of at least 70 Russian missiles, only eight could continue on their deadly path.

At the same time, Russia is stepping up its illegal activities and piracy in the Black Sea through the use of drifting mines. Russia's deliberate use of drifting sea mines turns them *de facto* into weapons of indiscriminate action that threaten civilian shipping first and foremost, including merchant and passenger ships, thereby endangering human life at sea. The Russian navy tries to conceal its criminal activities by using sea mines from military depots seized by Russia in 2014 following its occupation of the city of Sevastopol.

Responsibility for acts of piracy in the Black Sea and the use of drifting mines as weapons of indiscriminate action, and for the unpredictable consequences arising as a result, rests solely with the Russian Federation and its naval forces. Ukraine insists on bringing Russia to international responsibility for its illegal actions in the Black Sea, its war crimes and the use of sea mines as weapons of indiscriminate action.

In violation of the norms and principles of international humanitarian law, the Russian occupiers continue to terrorize the local population in the temporarily occupied areas of Kyiv, Zaporizhzhia, Chernihiv, Kherson and Kharkiv regions. The invaders shell residential areas, rob banks, loot shops, abduct officials, rape women, and murder civilians or capture them as hostages.

We are fully convinced that all individuals responsible for the war crimes committed in Ukraine will be held accountable under international law. No one can escape criminal liability, be it a representative of the Russian political leadership, a senior officer of the general staff or an ordinary soldier obeying unlawful orders.

As is clearly stated in the OSCE Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security: "The responsibility of superiors does not exempt subordinates from any of their individual responsibilities."

The promoters of hostile Russian propaganda, who are hiding the truth about Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, whether operating in the media or on the diplomatic front, undoubtedly also bear responsibility for the atrocities of this war.

The Prosecutor General's Office of Ukraine continues to register new crimes committed by the Russian armed forces in Ukraine. As at 30 March 2022, 3,411 crimes of aggression and war crimes have already been registered. In just one week since the last meeting of the Forum for Security Co-operation, 1,010 new crimes have been perpetrated by the occupation forces. These figures clearly demonstrate how barbaric this war is.

Esteemed colleagues,

The armed forces of Ukraine continue to conduct defence operations in all directions. A number of successful counter-attacks were carried out in the areas of Irpin, Bucha and Hostomel in the Kyiv region. As result, over the past three days, we have been seeing a decrease in Russian activities to the north-west of Kyiv and the partial withdrawal of units that lost their combat capability.

As at 30 March 2022, the aggressor State has already lost over 17,300 military personnel in Ukraine. The total number of destroyed or captured Russian weapons and military equipment includes:

- 605 tanks;
- 1,723 armoured combat vehicles;
- 305 artillery systems;
- 96 multiple-launch rocket systems;
- 4 missile launchers;
- 54 air defence systems;
- 131 aircraft;
- 131 helicopters;
- 81 medium-altitude long-endurance unmanned aerial vehicles;
- 7 boats and ships;
- 1,184 military vehicles;
- 75 fuel and lubricant tanks; and
- 21 pieces of special military equipment.

Owing to its substantial losses in manpower and military equipment, the Russian Federation is forced to mobilize additional reserves. According to available information, up to 150 mercenaries from the occupied Georgian territory of South Ossetia were transferred to the temporarily occupied territory of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea for further participation in the hostilities. More than 1,000 mercenaries from the Wagner Group, an infamous Russian private military company, have been deployed to eastern Ukraine to participate in the so-called “Russian special military operation”.

In the occupied parts of Donetsk and Luhansk regions, a so-called “general mobilization” began on 19 February 2022 and continues to this day. This is also the case in the territories that came under the temporary control of the occupiers after 24 February. Men aged between 18 and 55 years are forced to serve in the Russian military. On 21 March, to increase the number of troops mobilized, the age limit for “conscripts” was raised from 55 to 65 years.

According to human rights organizations, the occupying forces attempt to forcibly mobilize even those Ukrainian citizens who avail themselves of humanitarian corridors to leave Mariupol and other cities of Donetsk and Luhansk regions where hostilities are taking place.

An official decree on another conscription campaign to be held in Russia, which will also affect residents of the temporarily occupied Crimea, is expected to be issued at the end of this month.

We strongly denounce the forced enlistment of Ukrainian citizens from the occupied territories into the armed forces of the Russian Federation or other armed formations controlled by it. Such actions are a violation of international humanitarian law and a war crime.

Mr. Chairperson,

Ukraine continues to take all possible steps to bring the bloodshed to an end and to stop the war. We remain open to constructive negotiations and expect the same approach from the Russian Federation. Our position is clear. As was stated by the President of Ukraine, Volodymyr Zelenskyy, in his address to the Ukrainian people on 29 March: “Ukraine is willing to negotiate and will continue the negotiation process. To the extent that really depends on us. We expect to get the result. There must be real security for us, for our State, for sovereignty, for our people. Russian troops must leave the occupied territories. Ukraine’s sovereignty and territorial integrity must be guaranteed. There can be no compromise on sovereignty and our territorial integrity. And there will not be any.”

In closing, we demand that the Russian Federation immediately cease its war of aggression against Ukraine and unconditionally withdraw all its forces and military equipment from the entire territory of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders, including the temporarily occupied areas of Donetsk and Luhansk regions, and the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol.

Mr Chairperson, I kindly request that our statement be attached to the journal of the day.

Thank you, Mr Chairperson.



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

FSC.JOUR/1012
30 March 2022
Annex 4

Original: ENGLISH

1006th Plenary Meeting
FSC Journal No. 1012, Agenda item 2(a)

**STATEMENT BY
THE DELEGATION OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.

I am speaking to the subject raised by Ukraine on Russia's war of aggression. As this will be the last opportunity to do so under your Chairmanship, let us take a step back and assess the ramifications of this war, both the human toll and its strategic consequences.

It is clear that now after five weeks, Putin's war is a strategic failure and moral catastrophe. It has brought needless suffering on millions of Ukrainians. It has backfired and resulted in the opposite of its stated goals: Not only in terms of battlefield operations and military objectives, which have manifestly not been met, but at the strategic level.

First, with respect to the Ukrainian people, Russia has neither "liberated" them nor won hearts and minds. Vladimir Putin, by all accounts, launched his invasion for conquest with the expectation of a lightning victory that would allow him to overthrow the legitimately elected government in Kyiv and set up a puppet regime. By all accounts, he expected millions of Ukrainians to warmly welcome Russian troops arriving to occupy their country. Instead, the Ukrainian people bravely took up arms in defence of their nation, resisted Russia's invasion with courage and resolve, and refused to be subjugated.

So, what has Putin accomplished five weeks into his assault intended to make Ukraine a vassal State? It's a lamentable list: destruction of Ukrainian cities, towns, and critical infrastructure and endangerment of nuclear facilities; killing and injuring of untold numbers of innocent civilians; displacement of more than a quarter of Ukraine's entire population; and let us not forget the death of thousands of young, mostly conscripted Russian soldiers, many of whom were deployed without fully comprehending their mission. Rather than winning hearts and minds of Ukrainians, Putin's war has won their enmity and laid waste, not just to cities and towns, but to fraternal bonds between the Russian and Ukrainian people.

In short, Putin's war is a failure for the simple fact that might will never make right. As President Biden underscored in Warsaw a few days ago, "A dictator bent on rebuilding an empire will never erase a people's love for liberty. Brutality will never grind down their will to be free. Ukraine will never be a victory for Russia."

Second, with respect to Russia itself, Putin's war has come at a significant cost to the Russian people and to Russia's stature in the world. It has yielded severe sanctions; a doubling down of domestic repression, prompting hundreds of thousands of Russians to leave Russia; and international isolation and reprobation of Russia. By prosecuting a war of aggression in violation of international law, Russia has become a pariah State economically and politically. The international community has resolutely rejected Russia's actions. Once again on 24 March, 140 nations voted in the United Nations General Assembly to condemn the dire humanitarian consequences caused by Russia's further aggression, with only five votes against: North Korea, Syria, and Eritrea, in addition to Russia and Belarus. This followed an almost identical outcome in the 2 March General Assembly vote in which 141 nations deplored Russia's invasion and demanded a full withdrawal of its forces. On 17 March, the International Court of Justice also ordered Russia to suspend its military operations.

Third, with respect to European security, Putin, by all accounts, believed NATO and our European Union partners would fracture in the face of his war of aggression on Ukraine. Again, he achieved the opposite. NATO and our European partners have never been more united and resolved. Prior to its further invasion of Ukraine, Russia had sought "guarantees" from NATO and the United States, including a rollback of NATO's forward presence near Russia's border. Since 2014, following Russia's invasion of Crimea, there had been approximately 4,500 Allied forces deployed on the eastern flank with three battle groups in the Baltic States. Russia repeatedly and falsely mischaracterized NATO's enhanced forward presence, including in this Forum, as "containment" of Russia. Russia also repeatedly criticized US and other NATO members' defence expenditures. As President Biden stated in Warsaw this past Saturday, "The Kremlin wants to portray NATO enlargement as an imperial project aimed at destabilizing Russia. Nothing is further from the truth. NATO is a defensive alliance. It has never sought the demise of Russia. In the lead-up to the current crisis, the United States and NATO worked for months to engage Russia to avert a war ... Time and again, we offered real diplomacy and concrete proposals to strengthen European security, enhance transparency, and build confidence on all sides. But Putin and Russia met each of the proposals with disinterest in any negotiation, with lies and ultimatums. Russia was bent on violence from the start."

What has Russia's further invasion of Ukraine accomplished in terms of its stated goal of rolling back NATO? The opposite: There are now approximately 100,000 US forces on land, in the air, at sea, in Europe, training, exercising, and standing ready to deter and defend against any threat. Of these, 10,500 US forces are in Poland to ensure that we have robust deterrence and assurance in the face of Russian aggression. In response to Russia's invasion, NATO has activated its defence plans, deploying elements of the NATO Response Force and placing 40,000 troops, along with significant air and naval assets, under direct NATO command supported by Allies' national deployments. NATO is also establishing four additional multinational battlegroups in Bulgaria, Hungary, Romania, and Slovakia. Faced with the gravest threat to Euro-Atlantic security in decades, NATO will also significantly strengthen its longer-term deterrence and defence posture with an increased focus on collective defence. Meanwhile, NATO members have committed significantly more resources to defence expenditures with many more countries meeting or exceeding their two per cent goal of GDP.

In short, NATO's unity of purpose in response to Russia's aggression represents another strategic failure for Putin. We must stress, this is a defensive, preventative, and proportionate response, on NATO's part, not an escalation. It was Russia that escalated by bringing war to NATO's borders. Russia alone is responsible for its war of aggression. Ukraine has the right to defend itself; security assistance provided to Ukraine by more than 30 countries is enabling Ukraine's defence, not fuelling war.

Russia must de-escalate and stop its war. It can begin here today in this Forum for Security Co-operation by dialling back its rhetoric and dispensing with threats and propaganda. Russia can institute a ceasefire, withdraw troops, and negotiate with Ukraine in good faith. Russia's claimed reduction in military activities in the north of Ukraine so far appears to be a repositioning of forces rather than a withdrawal and strikes against Kyiv have continued. It also does not give Russia free reign to subjugate the east and south of Ukraine. At the end of the day, Russia will be judged not by what it says, but what it does.

There is an off-ramp should Putin choose to take it. There is no reason for Russia to compound its strategic failures with further escalation. We underscore again, in this regard, that any use of weapons of mass destruction by Russia will meet with a severe response.

Thank you, Chairperson. Please attach this statement to the journal of the day.



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

FSC.JOUR/1012
30 March 2022
Annex 5

Original: ENGLISH

1006th Plenary Meeting
FSC Journal No. 1012, Agenda item 2(a)

**STATEMENT BY
THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE EUROPEAN UNION**

The delegation of France, in its capacity as EU Presidency, passed the floor to the representative of the European Union, who delivered the following statement:

Mr. Chairperson,

We continue to face a brutal act of aggression by the Russian leadership against its sovereign, independent and peaceful neighbour. President Putin chose to bring war back to Europe. This is not only an unprovoked, unwarranted cold-blooded invasion, but a most serious challenge to the stability in Europe and a massive threat to the international peace order as a whole.

Such use of force and coercion has no place in the twenty-first century. Hence, in a united response, we, together with our partners, will continue to stand up to the Kremlin and do everything in our power to stop it pursuing its path of aggression. We were clear about it before 24 February 2022 and remain determined to continue this course. Last week, the European Council, the NATO Summit and the G7 Summit sent an unequivocal message of our unwavering transatlantic unity. We also welcome the strong political response from the international community standing together with another clear vote at the United Nations General Assembly, unmistakably condemning the Russian actions. Sitting on the fence is not an option for anyone in the face of such imperialistic aggression against a peaceful nation.

Ukraine, as the victim of the Russian aggression, has an inherent right to self-defence in accordance with Article 51 of the UN Charter. The European Union and its Member States will continue to provide co-ordinated political, financial, material and humanitarian support to Ukraine in this darkest hour. We pay tribute to the courage of the Ukrainian people and to the Ukrainian armed forces' efforts to defend Ukraine's population and statehood against the military attacks from the east, south and the north.

This is a barbaric war of choice. While waging this war President Putin must have known that his decision would inevitably bring immense human suffering. Every day we are witnessing exactly this on the ground. The situation in Mariupol is disastrous. People cannot even bury the dead, not to mention pay their last respects to their loved ones in dignity. Russian troops have been shelling the city with artillery, rockets and missiles – damaging or destroying over 90 per cent of the city. They bombed an art school in which 400 residents had

taken shelter – a repetition of the hideous crime committed at the Mariupol Russian Drama Theatre last week. Russian troops are consciously creating a humanitarian catastrophe, which Moscow reprehensibly blamed on Ukraine for refusing to surrender.

Russia is directing attacks against the civilian population and is targeting civilian objects, including hospitals, medical facilities, schools and shelters. These violations of international humanitarian law, which could amount to war crimes and crimes against humanity, must stop immediately. Deliberate attacks directed against civilians and civilian objects, including the indiscriminate and disproportionate use of explosive weapons in populated areas, constitute unacceptable breaches of international humanitarian law. We are appalled by the reports indicating that Russian forces have been using cluster munitions against civilians. The use of thermobaric and white phosphorous bombs has also been reported.

We therefore call upon the Russian Federation to urgently agree to a sustained ceasefire in order to allow for safe passage for civilians who wish to leave and comply with its obligation to ensure the free and safe movement and access for those delivering humanitarian assistance. We condemn the reported cases of forcible transfer of Ukrainians to Russia. Forcible transfers of protected persons is a gross violation of international humanitarian law. We also recall that, as in all conflict situations or situations of displacement, women and children are particularly vulnerable to human rights abuses and their rights must be safeguarded and upheld at all times.

Abidance by international law, including international humanitarian law, is a must. In its order of 16 March 2022, the International Court of Justice has ordered Russia to immediately suspend its military operations on the territory of Ukraine, stating that it was not in possession of evidence substantiating Russia's allegations of "genocide" on the territory of Ukraine. We demand that Russia comply with the provisional measures order of the Court, which is binding under international law. And, in the context of our Organization, we call upon Russia to adhere to our politico-military *acquis*, notably paragraph 13 of the Code of Conduct, according to which "No participating State will attempt to impose military domination over any other participating State".

To hold those responsible to account, we support all efforts to gather evidence and document the atrocities of this war, including by the International Criminal Court's Prosecutor, the United Nations Human Rights Council and the OSCE, through the Moscow Mechanism. The perpetrators of serious human rights violations and possible war crimes, including any responsible government officials and military leaders, will not go unpunished.

Mr. Chairperson,

Let us reiterate that the Russian claims about biological labs and chemical weapons in Ukraine are another desperate attempt to construct an absurd *casus belli*. Those allegations have been debunked by many around this table and they do not have any credence. In the event of a biological or chemical incident, Russia would bear full responsibility.

President Putin embarked on a path aiming to destroy Ukraine. What he is doing is in fact destroying the future of his own country and of its own people. Ukrainian soldiers do defend their homeland, their families who often fled their homes in search of safe shelter.

They fight and make their highest sacrifice for the future of their country. But what are the Russian soldiers dying for? Many of them quite young, barely entering their adulthood.

If the Russian leadership were convinced about the choice they made, they would not have resorted to unprecedented censorship of the war that they do not admit to be a war. Roskomnadzor tried again to block the diffusion of the interview of President Zelenskyy to Russian journalists last Sunday, but in vain. What were they afraid of? To listen to what is really going on in Ukraine, including about losses by Russian armed forces? The contrast to the Russian President would have been striking indeed.

Mr. Chairperson,

In conclusion, let me reiterate that the European Union and its Member States condemn President Putin's horrendous aggression against Ukraine in the strongest possible terms. We demand that Russia immediately and unconditionally cease its military actions and withdraw all its troops. Equally, Russia must stop its State-run disinformation campaign and cyberattacks. We reiterate our unwavering support to the sovereignty, territorial integrity, unity and independence of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders. We also reiterate our call on Belarus to stop facilitating Russian attacks and to abide by its obligations under international law.

I request that this statement be attached to the journal of the day.

The candidate countries the Republic of North Macedonia¹, Montenegro¹, and Albania¹, the EFTA countries Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, members of the European Economic Area, as well as Ukraine, Georgia, Andorra and San Marino align themselves with this statement.

1 The Republic of North Macedonia, Montenegro and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.



1006th Plenary Meeting
FSC Journal No. 1012, Agenda item 2(a)

**STATEMENT BY
THE DELEGATION OF SWITZERLAND**

Mr. Chairperson,

Over the past five weeks of Russia’s ongoing military aggression against Ukraine, we have witnessed unprecedented challenges to the Ukrainian population, to the OSCE and ultimately to the Forum for Security Co-operation. Not only is a return to “business as usual” unthinkable in these circumstances: the European security architecture as a whole has been called into question by Russia’s grave violation of international law. While the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe and the Treaty on Open Skies have been sidelined for some time already, what we have seen in the wake of this war is a complete disregard for the last pillar of conventional arms control, the Vienna Document 2011, and all that it stands for – first and foremost, mutual transparency aimed at confidence- and security-building, one of the principal ingredients of the OSCE’s success over the years.

Mr. Chairperson,

The Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security – a key OSCE normative document setting out clear commitments to which all the participating States, including the warring parties, have subscribed – has been blatantly violated since the very first day of the hostilities. It must be stressed that human rights in particular, whether those of civilians or those of soldiers, are inviolable. Paragraph 37 of the Code states that the armed forces may not be used “to limit the peaceful and lawful exercise of their human and civil rights by persons as individuals or as representatives of groups [or] to deprive them of their national, religious, cultural, linguistic or ethnic identity”. In connection with the ongoing war in Ukraine, Switzerland calls on the warring parties to ensure, as set out in paragraph 31 of the Code, “that armed forces personnel vested with command authority exercise it in accordance with relevant national as well as international law and are made aware that they can be held individually accountable under those laws for the unlawful exercise of such authority and that orders contrary to national and international law must not be given”. The Code further stipulates in the same paragraph that “[t]he responsibility of superiors does not exempt subordinates from any of their individual responsibilities.” This shows that – even over 25 years after its adoption – the Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security has lost none of its relevance. Switzerland urges all parties to respect their commitments under the Code of Conduct.

Mr. Chairperson,

The humanitarian situation in Ukraine, especially in the south and east of the country, is dire. Civilian casualties, the destruction of critical infrastructure and large-scale forced displacement continue unabated, driving a significant rise in humanitarian needs. In the city of Kharkiv, according to the municipal authorities, more than 1,140 buildings have been destroyed since the military offensive began. Of these, nearly 1,000 – around 88 per cent – are residential buildings, which raises serious concerns about the sheltering and protection of civilians in the worst-affected areas. As reported, the number of people in the Kherson region without access to water and electricity continues to grow, having reached approximately 51,250 on 23 March. Meanwhile, a humanitarian convoy sent by the Government of Ukraine on 24 March to deliver life-saving assistance to Mariupol failed to reach people in need: it was blocked and remained outside the besieged city for three days. The mayor of Mariupol has reported that people are beginning to die of starvation.

Switzerland urges the warring parties to strictly adhere to international humanitarian law. They must ensure protection of the civilian population as well as of persons *hors de combat*, and respect the rules on the conduct of hostilities. Urgently needed humanitarian access has to be authorized and facilitated by all the parties without delay.

In closing, Switzerland reiterates its appeal to Russia to stop its military aggression against Ukraine immediately and to withdraw its forces from Ukrainian soil. Only a cessation of hostilities and a political agreement can prevent the tragedy of further human losses.

Thank you.



1006th Plenary Meeting
FSC Journal No. 1012, Agenda item 2(a)

**STATEMENT BY
THE DELEGATION OF THE UNITED KINGDOM**

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. This statement is delivered under the topic raised by Ukraine and I request that this be accurately reflected in the journal of the day.

Mr. Chairperson, just over a month ago President Putin launched his unprovoked, premeditated and barbaric attack on Ukraine. Just over a month ago, the Ukrainian people were living ordinary, peaceful lives. Now, as a result of President Putin's actions, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) estimates 3.8 million people have fled Ukraine to neighbouring countries and a further 12.7 million are stranded in conflict-affected areas within Ukraine. The humanitarian situation that President Putin has created is truly horrifying.

The indiscriminate destruction of civilian infrastructure and the horrendous amounts of violence unleashed on the Ukrainian people is abhorrent.

For weeks, frustrated Russian military commanders have been attempting to break the Ukrainian people's spirit and resolve by subjecting them to a near continual onslaught from: multi-launch rocket systems, ballistic missiles, artillery, cruise missiles, cluster munitions, thermobaric rockets, and unguided air-dropped munitions. Maternity wards, schools, homes and other civilian infrastructure have been bombed without any regard for civilian life. Families are being starved out in freezing basement shelters and targeted as they flee. These are not the actions of a Great Power. They are reprehensible and cowardly.

All those carrying out war crimes should know they cannot act with impunity. Indiscriminate attacks against innocent civilians amount to war crimes, for which those who are complicit, must be held accountable.

The once great Russian military has been frustrated and outsmarted by our Ukrainian friends who, against the odds, have snarled up Russia's invading army, inflicting defeat after defeat. Their resistance remains staunch and well co-ordinated. The vast majority of Ukrainian territory remains in Ukrainian hands. Ukraine has taken up the fight and shown the world the meaning of bravery and courage.

Mr. Chairperson, the Russian Government's attempt to redraw the map of Europe in blood, and conquer an independent and democratic State by force of arms is an attack on the

security and freedom of Europe. The United Kingdom, along with many others, repeatedly warned that this would be a massive strategic mistake and would come at a severe cost. In this regard, we continue to support Ukraine, our friends, in their fight for their homeland.

Last week, Prime Minister Johnson announced that the United Kingdom would provide 6,000 more defensive missiles to Ukraine. This now more than doubles the defensive lethal aid provided to date to a total of more than 10,000 missiles. Additionally, 25 million pounds of financial assistance for the Ukrainian military was also announced.

I would reiterate, all of our support to the democratic sovereign nation of Ukraine is defensive in nature and will help them defend themselves against this Russian war of aggression.

Mr. Chairperson, President Putin badly miscalculated in Ukraine. His Plan A has failed, his ridiculous false pretexts exposed for the world to see, and yet, his government continues to peddle disinformation and censor free speech to try and cover up his lies.

Those complicit in the Kremlin's unprovoked aggression and those who peddle its blizzard of lies to hide the truth from the Russian people should be ashamed. They have lost their last shred of credibility with the international community. How can they stand in front of the mirror and look at themselves with dignity or self-respect? How can they look at their family and friends with integrity? Their part in the Kremlin's unprovoked, premeditated and barbaric attack on Ukraine has led the Russian people into a quagmire and turned Russia into an international pariah. Shame on them.

We will make the Russian Government pay the price of its actions. The United Kingdom stands with the Ukrainian people in their fight for their homeland. We will work with our partners – for however long it takes – to ensure that the sovereignty, territorial integrity, and the independence of Ukraine is restored.

Thank you. And I ask that this statement be attached to the journal of the day.



1006th Plenary Meeting
FSC Journal No. 1012, Agenda item 2(a)

**STATEMENT BY
THE DELEGATION OF TURKEY**

Mr. Chairperson,

I am speaking in connection with the subject raised by Ukraine.

Let me start by reiterating our strong and sincere call for the declaration of an urgent and permanent ceasefire.

Like many other countries, my country is tirelessly working with all parties to facilitate a peaceful resolution of this crisis.

Following the telephone conversations held by President Erdoğan with President Putin and President Zelenskyy last weekend, negotiating delegations of the Russian Federation and Ukraine met in Istanbul yesterday. We hope that the ongoing talks will pave the way for a return to dialogue and diplomacy.

Our country will continue to render every kind of support to the negotiation process with a view to enabling the immediate establishment of a ceasefire and peace. The humanitarian situation must be improved without delay.

There are no winners in wars and no losers in a fair and just peace.

Mr. Chairperson,

There are obvious security risks for the Black Sea littoral States due to the presence of naval mines.

The Turkish naval forces have detected and neutralized two naval mines that had drifted into Turkish territorial waters and posed risks to our maritime security. After neutralization of the mines, maritime traffic has safely been reopened in co-ordination with the Turkish coastguard and naval forces.

Both our Russian and Ukrainian counterparts were duly notified. Furthermore, we are co-operating with two other littoral countries: Bulgaria and Romania. We are keeping a vigilant eye on this risk.

Mr. Chairperson,

The Russian Federation's attack against Ukraine is a breach of international law. It must stop.

The humanitarian crisis is unfortunately intensifying as a result of this attack.

In just one month, over a quarter of the Ukrainian population have been displaced, leaving behind their homes and belongings. The numbers of displaced persons and refugees are rising daily. Some 13 million people are estimated to be stranded in conflict-affected areas or are unable to leave owing to the heightened security risks and the destruction of bridges and roads, but also because of the lack of resources or information on where to find shelter and accommodation. Millions of civilians in Ukraine are currently living in constant fear. Millions are unable to meet their basic needs, including access to food, water and medicines.

The humanitarian assistance provided by the Turkish Government continues unabated. For our part, we will not forsake our brothers and sisters in Ukraine. Representatives of our Government, NGOs and the Turkish Red Crescent are stationed along the border assisting the refugees who are fleeing Ukraine. We also continue to support and facilitate United Nations aid operations launched from Turkey. We call on for the facilitation the humanitarian work being carried out by the United Nations agencies in Ukraine.

Mr. Chairperson,

We regret that children in particular are facing a dire situation. As the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child stated, it is currently estimated that around a hundred children have been killed and thousands injured. This is a massive crisis of children's rights. According to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), 4.3 million children in Ukraine have been displaced over the past month – that is more than half of the estimated 7.5 million children in the country. This tragedy must stop.

Allow me to reiterate that we reject the ongoing assault on Ukraine. We strongly support the preservation of the sovereignty, political unity and territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders, including its territorial waters.

Mr. Chairperson,

My country wants peace, serenity and prosperity in its region. We will resolutely continue to press for peace and stand by international law. We will carry on contributing in good faith to any effort in any format that seeks to find a peaceful way out of this situation.

We kindly ask that our statement be attached to the journal of the day.

Thank you.



1006th Plenary Meeting
FSC Journal No. 1012, Agenda item 2(a)

**STATEMENT BY
THE DELEGATION OF GEORGIA**

Mr. Chairperson,

This statement is delivered under the issue raised by Ukraine.

Georgia aligns with the statement delivered by the delegation of the European Union. In addition, I would like to make the following remarks.

Over a month into Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, we are faced with humanitarian consequences on a scale that has not been seen in Europe since the Second World War.

Within these five weeks, thousands have died or have been injured, homes and infrastructure have been destroyed, and millions of lives irreversibly altered. As reported by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), more than half of Ukraine's children are now displaced. Up to four million people have fled to neighbouring countries for safety and shelter. Those who remain are struggling under constant bombardment and shelling, as occupation forces continue to brutally attack civilians and civilian infrastructure. The war has also limited people's access to livelihoods and has disrupted essential services.

Since our last meeting, there has been no sign of respite for the population in the besieged cities, particularly in Mariupol, where local authorities have reported thousands of deaths and critical shortages of food, water and medicine.

We remain gravely concerned by the continuous abductions and executions perpetrated by the Russian forces as well as by reports of forced transfers of residents of the occupied territories to Russia.

We call on Russia to uphold international humanitarian law, stop targeting civilians and civilian infrastructure, and ensure the safe functioning of humanitarian corridors and delivery of aid.

We are following the environmental, nuclear and radiation safety threats stemming from Russia's aggression with great alarm. We support the IAEA's efforts to ensure the

safety and security of Ukraine's facilities. Again, we urge Russia to stop endangering nuclear facilities, as such actions bring dire consequences for the entire European continent.

Mr. Chairperson,

Russia's actions in Ukraine are a manifest violation of the Charter of the United Nations and the international law, including those of international humanitarian law.

Georgia reiterates its unwavering support for Ukraine's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders, including Crimea and Donbas, and for Ukraine's navigational rights in its territorial waters.

I thank you, Mr. Chairperson, and kindly ask that this statement be attached to the journal of the day.



1006th Plenary Meeting
FSC Journal No. 1012, Agenda item 2(a)

**STATEMENT BY
THE DELEGATION OF LITHUANIA**

Mr. Chairperson,

Thank you very much for giving me the floor. Lithuania fully aligns itself with the statement delivered by the European Union. However, in support of our Ukrainian colleagues, allow me also to add some remarks in my national capacity.

Lithuania continues to condemn in the strongest possible terms Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine – a peaceful and democratic European State. We also condemn the role of Belarus, as facilitator and therefore as co-aggressor, in this.

Ukraine has been attacked by Russia for its choice to uphold democratic values, to pursue a European and Euro-Atlantic integration course, and also for its ability to show to the people of Russia, and Belarus, that there is another model of life that is possible – to live free and independent, in dignity, in prosperity, and with all the guarantees provided to the people by the rule of law.

We can see the beginning of this eye-opening for the Russian people even from the example of Russian soldiers who were sent to attack Ukraine. In their phone calls to their families that were intercepted by the Ukrainian security forces – and there are thousands of such recordings made public – Russian soldiers admit that the Ukraine they see with their eyes is a completely different country compared with the image of Ukraine that was constructed by Russia's propaganda.

They were told that everyone in Ukraine was waiting for them as “liberators”. But they came and saw that this was not the case. From the highest political leadership of Ukraine (with President V. Zelenskyy showing outstanding leadership) to 80–90-year-old grandmothers (*бабуки*) – everyone in Ukraine is resisting them.

They also used to hear that Ukraine was a “failed State”. But they came and saw that it was not the case. Some of them are now telling their families with such big surprise, that Ukrainians have Western cars, Western trademark clothing, electricity, toilets inside their houses and not outside. One of them could not believe seeing asphalt on a Ukrainian village road for the first time in his life.

They used to hear in Russia that Ukrainians were starving and that people did not have what to eat there. But they came and saw this was false too. In Ukraine, people had food, their refrigerators and supermarkets were full; at least before Russia's invasion.

And as Russian soldiers themselves had not eaten for a number of days, nor they had thought they would be able to afford to buy simple household items if/when they return, they boasted on the very same phone to their families that they had looted people's houses, as well as supermarkets. They said so with such pathos, as if they were the biggest heroes for doing this. Some of them even admitted they had to kill Ukrainian civilians to get this food, or they had raped women living there.

I could continue and continue, including on how Russian soldiers complained to their loved ones they were sent to fight so-called "Nazis" but that they had not seen any of them yet. And we have to say to them – they will not find them there, as those "Nazis" exist only in the imagination of the Kremlin.

The delegation of Russia again showed a bunch of lies in their pictures, including with some Nazi symbols allegedly used in Ukraine. But what would be the comment by the same delegation to the fact that Dmitry Utkin, one of the founders and leaders of Russia's private military company Wagner, now sent to Ukraine, has several Nazi tattoos on his body?

Moreover, there are many more Wagner fighters like him, who – as it was reported in open sources when they fought in Syria, the Central African Republic and other places – have similar Nazi tattoos, wear Wehrmacht uniforms, use Nazi salutations, and keep writing Nazi and white supremacist slogans on the walls of the buildings. What would be the explanation by Russia to all this? Some real Nazis fighting imaginary ones?

The delegation of Russia is always keen to use numerous audiovisual materials in their presentations. But do they have all the necessary permissions to do so? The credentials of authors were placed on just two photos they showed. But what about all the others? We demand that this delegation meets this legal requirement in full – during the meeting today and in the future.

The Russian representative in his statement openly rejected the right of the people of sovereign and democratic States to freely choose the future of their States, to decide on the domestic, foreign and security policies of their States. The Russian representative even expressed threats that European security would be shattered provided States decide to join the European Union and NATO.

The Kremlin leadership (which is de facto a criminal KGB gang with V. Putin in the lead) denies this right to the people of Russia, punishes and represses Russian people for every attempt to express their political views. The Kremlin would like to exert a similar influence not only on the Russian people, but also on the people of other States. But this will not happen.

In fact, the major problem is that Russia cannot accept the sovereignty and independence of other States, cannot recognize the will of the free citizens of other nations. Russia's position of questioning the sovereign choice of other States to decide their foreign and security policy is wrong and in violation of the fundamental principle of European

security that every sovereign nation has the right to choose its own security arrangements. Russia has also subscribed to this principle, but refuses to respect it.

Eighteen years ago, on 29 March 2004, Lithuania joined the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, NATO. To join the Alliance was a sovereign decision by the people of Lithuania and we had numerous reasons to do so. Today, in the face of full-scale Russian aggression against Ukraine, our NATO membership has a particular significance and meaning to the Lithuanian people.

Lithuania strongly condemns the numerous cases of alleged war crimes and crimes against humanity committed by Russia's occupying forces in Ukraine.

We have been underlining this since the very beginning – anyone responsible for this aggression and for the war crimes committed in Ukraine will not escape responsibility, including his/her personal one. Those who give the criminal orders to commit these crimes, those who then implement these orders, those who try to deny these war crimes or to whitewash them, everyone will have to account – either as perpetrators, or as accomplices. And I wish to repeat this again today.

Moreover, let me underline that these statements by our delegation (and many other delegations around this table) are not just empty words. They are followed with very concrete actions, both at the international and national levels. Let me refer to some of them.

On 28 February, the Government of Lithuania approved a decision to turn to the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court (ICC) over Russia's and Belarus' war crimes and crimes against humanity. Lithuania was the first State in the world to submit a State Party referral to this court on 1 March. Many other countries did the same and the ICC investigation is now ongoing. Lithuania also contributed 100,000 euros to it.

On 3 March, 45 OSCE participating States, including Lithuania, following bilateral consultations with Ukraine, invoked the OSCE Moscow Mechanism. Three independent experts, appointed by Ukraine, are now collecting evidence of war crimes and crimes against humanity by the aggressor forces in Ukraine, and their report will be soon presented to the OSCE Permanent Council.

On 15 March, the Minister of Justice of Lithuania sent a letter to the European Union Justice Commissioner and to the other European Union justice ministers, suggesting to start a discussion on a Special Tribunal for Russia at the European level.

On 25 March, at the initiative of Lithuania, the Joint Investigation Team comprising Ukrainian, Polish and Lithuanian representatives was created in Eurojust. Other States which started national investigations into these war crimes might consider joining it.

At a national level, the Office of the Prosecutor General of Lithuania opened a criminal investigation under Lithuania's Criminal Code, based on universal jurisdiction, on the account of a crime of aggression committed by the regimes of Russia and Belarus against Ukraine, as well as war crimes and crimes against humanity committed by them in Ukraine. Lately, the Office of the Prosecutor General of Lithuania, together with the Lithuanian police,

opened a dedicated website (<https://report.epolicija.lt/>) where everyone who has any information about these crimes can provide it.

Lithuania remains unwavering in its support for Ukraine and the Ukrainian people. We continue admiring their unity and resolve in defending their homeland. Ukraine, a democratic and sovereign European State, is now exercising its right to self-defence against Russia's aggression under Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations. We have been rendering assistance of various kinds to Ukraine and will continue providing all necessary support to that end.

Слава Україні! Тримай, Україно! Разом до перемоги!

(Glory to Ukraine! Hold out, Ukraine! Together to victory!)

Thank you.

I kindly ask 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/1012
30 March 2022
Annex 11

Original: ENGLISH

1006th Plenary Meeting
FSC Journal No. 1012, Agenda item 2(a)

**STATEMENT BY
THE DELEGATION OF LATVIA**

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.

Latvia fully aligns itself with the statement by the European Union. However, allow me to add a few remarks in my national capacity and in exercise of our right of reply to the statement delivered earlier by the delegation of the Russian Federation.

Dear colleagues,

Russian diplomats continue spreading lies and disinformation invented by the leadership of Russia to justify its war in Ukraine. Russia's President is desperately trying to hide the truth from the people of Russia, and it seems also from Russian diplomats.

If that is indeed so, I would ask our Russian colleagues to please listen to what Latvia and other free nations are telling you here at the Forum for Security Co-operation. This is Putin's and his supporters' war. Innocent people, including women and children, are dying because of their actions. Putin does not care about Christian values and morals either. It is vital that the Russian people understand what is happening. And they do understand. Let me give you a couple of examples.

Thousands of Orthodox Christians are against the Putin-initiated war in Ukraine. The first Russian Orthodox congregation to oppose the Putin regime and the dominance of its nominal leader was the Russian Orthodox Church in Amsterdam, which has announced its decision to withdraw from canonical allegiance to the Moscow Patriarchate and to join the Patriarchate of Constantinople instead. There are many others following the example of the Orthodox Church in Amsterdam.

Last week in Russia, in the Kostroma region, police arrested an Orthodox priest, Father Ioann Burdin, because he had condemned the war in one of his sermons – a stance which was described as “discrediting” the Russian armed forces.

We stand in solidarity with those who are bravely opposing Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

A couple of words about Russophobia, since our Russian colleagues accuse us of being Russophobes. Russophobia is a convenient excuse invented by the Kremlin to intimidate its country's people and to force them into misery and isolation.

Some relatives of a friend of mine who lives in Riga called her from Moscow and asked whether Russians are being offended in Europe these days. She explained to them that just like in their homeland, in Russia, Russians are not offended anywhere else.

Russia's invasion of Ukraine has prompted Russians who do not support Putin's policy and war in Ukraine, and who are seeing how their country is becoming increasingly isolated and facing a bleaker future, to flee abroad.

We know that the war against Ukraine will end in disgrace and poverty for Russia. And the Russian people know this, too. It is Putin who has become the greatest enemy of the Russian people. The war started by the Kremlin has no geopolitical or economic benefits for Russia. Only losses.

As the great Russian writer Lev Tolstoy once noted in his diary: "War is a product of despotism. [...] Those who want to fight against war should fight only against despotism."

Dear colleagues,

In closing, let me reiterate Latvia's unwavering support for Ukraine – not only diplomatically and politically, but also by strengthening Ukraine's self-defence capabilities to defend itself against Russia's unprovoked and irresponsible aggression.

Thank you for your attention.

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/1012

30 March 2022

Annex 12

ENGLISH

Original: RUSSIAN

1006th Plenary Meeting

FSC Journal No. 1012, Agenda item 2(b)

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

Mr. Chairperson,

The situation in Ukraine is a tragic consequence of the geopolitical engineering of the United States of America and its satellites, which have been bolstering their position in Ukraine for decades with a view to creating an anti-Russian military “bridgehead”. In the US Government’s “Great Game”, the authorities in Kyiv, who are under external “manual” control, are destined only to be an obedient tool. The same is true for most European Union countries, which are blindly following a world order based on US rules, to the detriment of their own interests. No matter how hard the “civilized” West tries to “save face” in front of its voters, we can see the double standards being applied: calls for peace and arguments about international humanitarian law are accompanied by transfers of lethal weapons to Kyiv, which eventually end up in the hands of neo-Nazi formations and are used against peaceful Ukrainians.

Future generations will assess how the “civilized” West turned a blind eye for eight consecutive years to the Ukrainian Government’s criminal orders to shoot the residents of Donbas with large-calibre and rocket artillery, driving the elderly, women and children into basements. In February 2022, against the backdrop of false statements about its desire for peace, Ukraine began large-scale preparations for an offensive by an attack force in the east of the country. The shelling of Donbas using prohibited large-calibre artillery increased. The ramp up of the Ukrainian security forces’ military activity was reflected in the daily reports of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine, but the West, which is on the “right side of history”, preferred to ignore this.

The Russian military has obtained secret cipher telegrams from Colonel-General Balan, Commander of the National Guard of Ukraine, dated 22 January 2022. The order, which our colleagues can see on the screens, sets out in detail a plan for the preparation of one of the attack forces for offensive operations in Donbas. All preparations for the attack were to be completed on 28 February, and the combat missions were to begin in March. These criminal schemes by the Ukrainian Government were conceptually and practically framed under the cover of an aggressive anti-Russian campaign by the Western media, designed to divert the attention of the international community.

The special military operation by the armed forces of the Russian Federation that began on 24 February thwarted a large-scale offensive by Ukrainian attack forces against the People's Republics of Donetsk and Luhansk, which are outside of the Ukrainian Government's control. The special military operation is being carried out strictly in accordance with the plan approved by the General Staff of the Russian Armed Forces. Our unconditional objectives are the protection of the civilian population of Donbas, the demilitarization and denazification of Ukraine, and the elimination of all sources of military threats to Russia from Ukrainian territory. They will be met.

As part of the demilitarization of Ukraine, high-precision weapons are being used to destroy military infrastructure, equipment and weapons in a targeted and accurate manner. This is what advanced weapons are being used for, including Kh-101, Kalibr and Iskander cruise missiles and Kinzhal hypersonic air-launched missile systems. Since the start of the special operation, 123 airplanes, 74 helicopters, 311 unmanned aerial vehicles, 189 anti-aircraft missile systems, 1,738 tanks and other armoured vehicles, 181 multiple-launch rocket systems, 726 field artillery pieces and mortars, and 1,592 special operations tactical vehicles of the Ukrainian armed forces have been destroyed.

The Russian army is not bombing cities in Ukraine as the United States and NATO countries did in Yugoslavia, Iraq and Afghanistan, where they destroyed inhabited residential areas. For us, the preservation of civilian infrastructure and the lives of Ukrainian civilians is crucial. The same cannot be said for the Ukrainian Government, which, according to the information we have, has officially given the nationalists of the Azov regiment the green light to keep civilians in Mariupol to use as human shields.

The situation is complicated by the fact that Ukrainian neo-Nazis in many cities deliberately set up combat positions in residential areas, schools, kindergartens and hospitals, and then shell multi-story buildings with Grad multiple-launch rocket systems, shifting the blame on to Russian soldiers. Ukrainians themselves tell this story. To expose one's fellow citizens to attack is an act of utmost inhumanity. But we are all well aware of those who are listed as instructors of the Ukrainian military and radicals – NATO instructors who trained them in urban warfare.

Mr. Chairperson,

Despite all of our country's efforts, the United States and its satellites are dealing an irreparable blow to the international arms control and export control system. In their anti-Russian frenzy, they continue to pump Ukraine with hardware without restraint. Since the beginning of the hostilities, the Kyiv regime has been supplied with 109 field artillery pieces, 3,800 anti-tank weapons, including Javelin, Milan and Konkurs anti-tank missile systems and NLAW, M-72 and Panzerfaust 3 rocket-propelled grenade launchers, 897 Stinger and Igla man-portable air defence systems (MANPADS), and countless small arms and rounds of ammunition. These transfers are fundamentally at odds with the commitments under the OSCE Document on Small Arms and Light Weapons, the Principles Governing Conventional Arms Transfers, the Principles for Export Controls of MANPADS, United Nations General Assembly resolution 62/40 on the prevention of the illicit transfer and unauthorized access to and use of MANPADS, the Elements for Export Controls of MANPADS, and the European Parliament resolution on control of arms exports.

Do Western countries realize that their actions are also prolonging the hostilities, dragging them into a proxy war with Russia and putting the Ukrainian population at risk of being hit by Western-made bullets? Are they aware that, at the behest of Ukraine's nationalist authorities, Western arms and ammunition are being chaotically distributed not only to women, the elderly and children, but also to criminals released from prison who engage in looting and violence? Of course our Western colleagues are aware of this, but as they see it, the fanatical goal of "containing" Russia justifies all means.

Another destabilizing factor is the influx to Ukraine of foreign mercenaries and terrorists, whose number has reached 6,500 people from 62 countries. Russian troops continue to target and eliminate them. As a result of high-precision weapons strikes over the past two weeks, some 600 "soldiers of fortune" have been eliminated, and more than 500 have left the country.

In the meantime, Ukrainian embassies around the world, in violation of the Vienna Convention of 1961, are actively recruiting them. In the Middle East, this effort is being co-ordinated by Western intelligence services and the Ukrainian Security Service. Our Anglo-Saxon colleagues have not been deterred by their regrettable experience of similar experiments. Have they really forgotten the tragic events of 11 September 2001 and the terrorist attacks in London and other European capitals? We have repeatedly warned that MANPADS and anti-tank missile systems falling into the hands of radicals in Ukraine and beyond would pose a real terrorist threat to all of Europe. The responsibility for any potential unfortunate consequences will continue to be borne by Western countries and Ukraine.

Mr. Chairperson,

The Ukrainian armed forces' ability to resist is based solely on the fear of reprisals by armed neo-Nazis. Let me remind you that Ukraine is the only OSCE participating State in which neo-Nazi formations are officially embedded in all military units. Azov, Aidar, Right Sector and other entities recognized as terrorist organizations in Russia are the bulwarks of the Kyiv regime. Fighters from the Donetsk People's Republic (DPR) and the Russian military find at their decimated positions not only images of swastikas, Nazi symbols and literature, but also insignia of foreign instructors from major NATO countries, in particular the United Kingdom and Canada.

There are more than 7,000 neo-Nazi fighters in Mariupol, where the humanitarian situation is disastrous. It has become custom for them to drive women and children out of basements, threatening them with weapons, and to direct them towards the advancing DPR units in order to hinder their advance. They prevent the evacuation of civilians by shooting them in the back. Moreover, the other day, in the basement of one of the schools where Azov nationalists had a base, military personnel found the mutilated body of a dead girl with a swastika burned into her stomach. For ethical reasons, we cannot show photographic evidence at this moment, but the relevant materials on the facts of neo-Nazi violence against peaceful Ukrainians will be sent to the parliaments of European countries.

I want to emphasize that the tragedy of Mariupol would not have happened if the local authorities had evacuated the population in time, instead of playing on the same side as the Ukrainian war criminals. For their part, Russian troops are making every effort to alleviate the suffering of the city's residents by conducting regular evacuations and delivering humanitarian aid.

At the same time, we are also witnessing incessant hypocritical attempts by the Ukrainian Government to justify its war crimes. A video has appeared on the Internet in which Oleksii Arestovych, an adviser to the Office of the President of Ukraine, is giving instructions on the correct way to deceive. The material is of practical interest in terms of how the Ukrainian nationalist regime and its Western handlers conduct propaganda in all possible formats. So, and I quote: “You have to act in the opposite way to how things really are. Note that this is a very non-trivial question. How exactly do you deceive? What path do you choose in order to deceive correctly and successfully?” Now, let us take a look at specific examples of how the schemes of total deception promoted by Ukraine and the collective West work.

At the 1005th plenary meeting of the Forum for Security Co-operation, we heard assurances from the Ukrainian delegation that the prisoner of war camps established in the country operate in accordance with the provisions of the Third Geneva Convention and that soldiers are treated humanely. This is a lie. The Ukrainian armed forces, not to mention the nationalist battalions, are treating captive Russian soldiers brutally. They torture the living and mock the dead. They call relatives from their phones to make fun of them. All records of cruelty were broken by a video posted in open sources, in which Ukrainian fighters shoot Russian prisoners in the legs and then beat them. This is how the Ukrainian Nazis have been treating captured Donbas defenders for eight years. The head of the United Nations Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine, Matilda Bogner, expressed serious concern about this incident and called for a full investigation. The Investigative Committee of Russia has already launched an investigation.

There is another example. Inaccurate statements were made in this hall that the Ukrainian border guards on Snake Island were killed on 24 February and that they allegedly uttered a profanity before their heroic death, direct quotations of which were worn on T-shirts in the Hofburg by some very impressionable European diplomats. It got to the point that the President of Ukraine declared his intention to award the border guards the title of “Hero of Ukraine” posthumously. Now, this is what really happened. Eighty-two soldiers of the Ukrainian garrison, including 13 officers of the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine, surrendered. As with all Ukrainian captives in the Russian Federation, they are treated in accordance with the norms of international humanitarian law, without being subjected to violence or psychological pressure. Some of them have already returned to Ukraine. At the same time, as revealed in interviews, the prisoners of war from Snake Island took it particularly hard that they had been “buried alive” in their native country, without clarification of the circumstances – and this was done with great propagandist pomp.

Unfortunately, there are an enormous number of such examples. Western countries do not want to hear about the real state of affairs in Ukraine and have erected an “iron curtain” where information is concerned. Nevertheless, we note with satisfaction that 50 foreign journalists participated with interest in the trip organized by the Russian Ministry of Defence to Donbas to talk to local residents who have been under shelling by the Ukrainian armed forces since 2014 (incidentally, a similar trip was organized by the Ukrainian side in November 2021, but the invitations were sent out not by the Ukrainian Ministry of Defence but by the US Embassy in Kyiv). It is a source of justified outrage that the media editorial offices of some Western countries prohibited the journalists accredited in Moscow from joining the tour and that the German newspaper *Freitag* broke off co-operation with the correspondent Ulrich Heyden after the trip. Truth is not fashionable in the West these days.

Mr. Chairperson,

We are seriously concerned that the Ukrainian military has created risks for navigation in the Black Sea and other seas. The Ukrainian armed forces, in flagrant violation of regulations and without drawing up the relevant maps, have laid some 400 moored contact mines on the approaches to the ports of Odessa, Ochakiv, Chornomorsk and Yuzhne. Currently, around 60 foreign ships are unable to leave Ukrainian ports. However, the Ukrainian Government refuses to ensure the safe passage of foreign ships and refuses to co-operate with Russia to resolve this issue. Under these difficult conditions, on 25 March, we announced the establishment of a humanitarian corridor for foreign ships to leave Ukrainian ports for the open sea. The increased threat of mines drifting off the anchor during the storm along the coast of the Black Sea States is aggravating the situation. Two such mines have already been discovered in the Bosphorus Strait and in the Black Sea near the border with Bulgaria. Thanks to the vigilance and high professionalism of Turkish specialists, they were neutralized in a timely manner. We urge OSCE participating States to exert influence on the authorities in Kyiv so that they take measures to lift the blockade and ensure the safety of foreign ships leaving Ukrainian ports.

The Ministry of Defence of the Russian Federation is continuing to analyse documents received that provide evidence of the development of biological weapons in Ukraine in close co-operation with the United States. Evidence has been uncovered of the involvement in the financing of these activities of structures that are directly linked to the current US leadership, in particular, the Rosemont Seneca Partners investment fund, headed by Hunter Biden. Furthermore, the fund is closely tied to the main contractors of the US military department, including the company Metabiota, which, along with Black & Veatch, is a major supplier of equipment to the Pentagon's biological laboratories around the world. It is also interesting that the British publication *Daily Mail* published emails from Hunter Biden's laptop that show that he could indeed be behind the financing of the US military biological weapons programme in Ukraine. Once again, we demand that the Ukrainian and US Governments provide all the information on the military biological activity at the laboratories on Ukrainian territory and take steps to resolve this issue and return to implementation of the 1972 Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC). We do not rule out the possibility of invoking the mechanisms of Articles V and VI of the BTWC.

Mr. Chairperson,

In conclusion, we again recommend that OSCE participating States pay close attention to the actions of the Ukrainian nationalists and ascertain for themselves the flagrant non-compliance by the Ukrainian Government with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Convention with Respect to the Laws and Customs of War on Land and the Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War and its Additional Protocols. For our part, we will continue to shed light on the true nature of the ruling regime in Kyiv and its nationalist henchmen.

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/1012
30 March 2022
Annex 13

Original: ENGLISH

1006th Plenary Meeting
FSC Journal No. 1012, Agenda item 2(b)

**STATEMENT BY
THE DELEGATION OF THE UNITED KINGDOM**

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.

If you will permit me, I would like to use my right of reply to address some points raised in my Russian colleague's statement.

We continue to condemn Russia's continued campaign of disinformation, including the ridiculous false pretexts we again heard today that Ukraine has been pursuing biological, chemical or even nuclear weapons in what is a transparent attempt to justify Russia's catastrophic military action. Over the past weeks we have exposed their lies in this regard and I will not repeat the detail again today.

Also today we again heard my Russian colleague's ridiculous claims that Ukraine is responsible for the impact on commercial shipping in the region. I would note that it is Russian naval forces that have established a distant blockade of Ukraine's Black Sea coast, effectively isolating Ukraine from international maritime trade. And, it is Russia that has targeted several foreign-flagged commercial vessels over the past weeks. As my Ukrainian colleague again highlighted today, Russian naval forces are also continuing to conduct hundreds of missile strikes against targets throughout Ukraine.

Let us be under no illusions, this is Putin's own war of choice and no one is fooled. The Kremlin is hiding from the world and its own people behind a veneer of lies, very much like our Russian colleague (who has not been seen in this room since the invasion began) hides behind his screen.

In this regard, I would also like to register our deep disappointment that our Russian colleagues had the audacity to use the Security Dialogue earlier today to further propagate their lies and disinformation on Ukraine. How do they have the audacity to frame these lies against the subject of "post-conflict rehabilitation"? It is Russia that has conducted an unprovoked, premeditated and barbaric attack against a sovereign democratic State. It is Russia that has conducted and continues to conduct horrific missile, air and artillery strikes that have torn through apartment blocks, hospitals and schools killing innocent civilians including children.

I call on my Russian colleagues to desist from shamelessly trying to frame their lies and false pretexts against the truth. Everyone in the room and the world knows that Russia could end this all now if it stopped its illegal actions, stopped committing war crimes, withdrew its forces and committed to a diplomatic pathway.

Thank you.

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1006th Plenary Meeting
FSC Journal No. 1012, Agenda item 2(c)

**STATEMENT BY
THE DELEGATION OF ARMENIA**

Dear colleagues,

The delegation of Armenia would like to inform the Forum for Security Co-operation about the evolving security situation on the line of contact in Artsakh.

On 24 March, the Azerbaijani armed forces, in flagrant violation of the trilateral statement of 9 November 2020, crossed the line of contact in the eastern part of Artsakh and infiltrated the village of Parukh, in the Askeran region of Artsakh, and adjacent areas. This violation of the trilateral ceasefire statement was confirmed both by the Russian Ministry of Defence and indirectly by the Azerbaijani Defence Ministry, which stated that “the positions and locations in the region are being clarified.”

In the evening of 25 March and during the night, the Azerbaijani armed forces, in an attempt to advance further, attacked the positions of the Artsakh Defence Army, using firearms of various calibres together with Bayraktar TB2 unmanned combat aerial vehicles. Units of the Artsakh Defence Army were compelled to engage the aggressor so as to halt its advance. As a result, three servicemen of the Artsakh Defence Army were killed and 14 were wounded. The inhabitants of the villages of Parukh and Khramort in Artsakh, including up to 200 women, children and older people, have already been evacuated.

The Ministry of Defence of the Russian Federation subsequently announced that it had urged the Azerbaijanis to withdraw to their previous positions. On 27 March, the Russian Defence Ministry issued a press release stating that the Azerbaijani armed forces had withdrawn their units from the village of Parukh in the Askeran region of Artsakh.

Nevertheless, we note that the incursion by the Azerbaijani armed forces into the territory of Artsakh, which is within the Russian peacekeeping contingent’s area of responsibility, is ongoing and that the situation continues to be extremely tense and fraught with the risk of further escalation. Against this background, according to the Ministry of Defence of Azerbaijan, air defence and artillery units of the Azerbaijani armed forces conducted military exercises with clear offensive objectives. Meanwhile, the Azerbaijani Defence Minister has instructed the armed forces “to be ready at any moment to use the newly adopted modern weapons, equipment and other combat means”.

Dear colleagues,

These provocative actions by Azerbaijan were preceded by its deliberate blocking of the supply of natural gas from Armenia to Artsakh, the shelling of civilian infrastructure with large-calibre weapons, psychological terror and threats against the civilian population of Artsakh and other steps aimed at continuing the ethnic cleansing of Artsakh. As my delegation has already noted elsewhere, Azerbaijan is trying to exploit the deteriorating security situation in Europe to continue its aggression against Artsakh.

The Republic of Armenia notes with satisfaction that the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chair countries have given a clear assessment of the latest escalation of the situation in Nagorno-Karabakh, recognizing that it was due to the movement of Azerbaijani troops.

We strongly condemn this unprovoked escalation and call on Azerbaijan to abandon its maximalist and aggressive policy and engage in negotiations.

We expect the Russian peacekeeping contingent, in whose area of responsibility the provocations and escalation are taking place, to undertake measures to bring about the immediate return of Azerbaijani troops to their initial positions and ensure adherence to the commitments under the trilateral ceasefire statement of 9 November 2020.

In this regard, it is worth recalling another similar flagrant violation of the trilateral ceasefire statement of 9 November 2020. As we have mentioned on numerous occasions, on 11 December 2020, just a month after it was signed, the Azerbaijani armed forces, in flagrant violation of Azerbaijan's commitments under the trilateral statement, attacked the positions of the Artsakh Defence Army near the villages of Hin Tagher and Khtsaberd, in the Hadrut region of Artsakh, occupying the two villages and adjacent territories. The Armenian forces were in the positions that they had held at the time of signature of the trilateral statement, which goes to show that the Azerbaijani propaganda about so-called sabotage groups was false. However, this did not prevent Azerbaijan – also because of the lack of a clear assessment of what happened – from portraying the 64 Armenian soldiers as “terrorists” and prosecuting them on trumped-up charges and confessions obtained under duress, which is a clear and serious violation of international humanitarian law. To date, more than 30 Armenian soldiers continue to remain in Azerbaijani captivity, facing mock trials.

We call on the international community, including the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office, the Secretary General and other relevant institutions, to exert political and diplomatic pressure on Azerbaijan so that it abandons its military provocations and ceasefire violations, the aim being to prevent further escalation of the situation in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict zone and in the South Caucasus as a whole.

I request that this statement be attached to the journal of the day.



1006th Plenary Meeting
FSC Journal No. 1012, Agenda item 2(c)

**STATEMENT BY
THE DELEGATION OF AZERBAIJAN**

Mr. Chairperson,

The traditional unconstructive approach of Armenia premised on baseless allegations against Azerbaijan reveals the true intentions of this country and constitutes a mere disinformation campaign.

On a general note, we remind the Armenian side that the comments it makes regarding the sovereign territories of Azerbaijan are an attempt to interfere with the internal affairs of Azerbaijan and constitute a violation of international law. Armenia, which forcibly kept a part of the territories of Azerbaijan under military occupation for nearly 30 years, ethnically cleansed hundreds of thousands of Azerbaijanis and deprived them of the right to live in their homes, has apparently become accustomed to violations of international law.

Non-compliance by Armenia with the trilateral statement of 10 November 2020, including refusal to withdraw the remnants of its illegal armed formations from the territories of Azerbaijan, where the Russian peacekeeping contingent is temporarily deployed to, is a source of serious concern and tensions. This is why Azerbaijan demands from Armenia to honour its obligations and withdraw the remains of its illegally stationed forces. Only after that there will be no basis for tensions or clashes.

We would like to emphasize that this demand relates only to the remnants of Armenia's armed formations illegally present in the territory of Azerbaijan, where the Russian peacekeeping contingent is temporarily deployed to, and not to the citizens of Azerbaijan of Armenian origin living therein. Armenia's deliberate distortion of this issue under the guise of "ethnic cleansing" exposes Armenia's true intentions and notorious disinformation campaign.

Claims about Azerbaijan's so-called violations of the trilateral statement are a part of Armenia's disinformation campaign. As informed by the Ministry of Defence of Azerbaijan, positions and deployment locations are being clarified on the spot within the internationally recognized borders of Azerbaijan. During this process, no clashes or incidents have occurred. The absence of any incident during this process was confirmed by media outlets both in Azerbaijan and Armenia.

However, on the morning of 26 March, illegal Armenian armed formations resorted to military provocations against the positions of the armed forces of Azerbaijan. As a result of immediate countermeasures, members of illegal Armenian armed detachments were forced to retreat.

This provocation once again testifies to the urgency of Armenia's full withdrawal of its forces illegally present in the territory of Azerbaijan as a prerequisite for peace and stability in the region. We also invite Armenia's representative not to distort the official information by Azerbaijan's Ministry of Defence through Armenia's disinformation lens.

Let us also touch upon Armenia's allegations on the gas supply. The malfunction of gas distribution lines in the territories included in the Karabakh economic region of Azerbaijan, which have been operating without maintenance for many years, has recently caused problems with the gas supply. Despite the heavy snowfall, the Azerigaz employees sent to the site took the necessary measures to eliminate the consequences of the accident. The supply of natural gas was fully restored after the completion of test work on 28 March. It should be clear that if Azerbaijan's intention was to cut off the gas then it would have done so in the previous two winter seasons. In reality, Azerbaijan tried to fix the issue as soon as possible.

Moreover, it is also inconceivable on what grounds Armenia now appeals to the international community on humanitarian issues. It must be recalled that Armenia is the country that for almost 30 years kept the Nakhichevan Autonomous Republic of Azerbaijan with a population of more than 400,000 in a gas blockade; carried out ecocide and culturicide in the Karabakh region of Azerbaijan, including water terror misusing the Sarsang reservoir; concealed information about the fate of about 4,000 Azerbaijanis who went missing in the early 1990s; and consistently prevented the arrival of international missions to these territories. Such an approach by this country is nothing but hypocrisy.

Overall, there is a clear dichotomy in Armenia's current position. On the one hand, Armenia expresses its readiness for a peace agenda with Azerbaijan and states that it adopts Azerbaijan's proposal on the basic principles for the establishment of relations between the two countries. Let us remind the Forum that these principles include, among others, mutual recognition and respect for each other's sovereignty, territorial integrity and inviolability of internationally recognized borders.

On the other hand, Armenia's officials continue their territorial claims against Azerbaijan in words and deeds. Their statements, including at this Forum, contradict their expressed readiness for peace with Azerbaijan. Armenia not only violates its commitment under the trilateral statement by refusing to withdraw fully the remnants of its illegal armed formations from the territory of Azerbaijan, but also continues to send reinforcements through the Lachin road – which in itself represents a serious violation of the provisions of the trilateral statement.

Against this backdrop, it becomes obvious that Armenia is either deeply confused and makes contradictory moves being unable to choose its direction, or Armenia is just "PR-ing" with a peace agenda to conceal its true intentions of previously failed territorial claims against Azerbaijan. Irrespective of the reason, it is these actions of Armenia that lead to tensions, and Armenia and its politico-military leadership are solely responsible for this.

Thus, first Armenia should decide for itself what it wants to achieve. If Armenia is indeed willing to consolidate regional peace and stability, then it is high time for this country to transition to practical steps in this direction. And one of such signs could be putting a stop to its groundless accusations against Azerbaijan, including in this Forum.

In closing, we stress once again that the armed forces of Azerbaijan will continue taking the necessary resolute measures to repel any provocations by Armenia and ensure the protection of Azerbaijan's sovereignty, territorial integrity and inviolability of internationally recognized borders.

I kindly request that this statement be attached to the journal of the day.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.