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

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

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1. Introduction and objective

This report is submitted in accordance with Decision No. 16/09, on Issues Relevant to the Forum for Security Co-operation, adopted by the Seventeenth Meeting of the Ministerial Council in Athens. It provides an overview of efforts undertaken in the Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC) in the field of arms control agreements and confidence- and security-building measures (CSBMs), in accordance with its mandate, during the period from November 2009 until November 2011.[1]

It also addresses the information exchanged in the FSC between participating States on the implementation of agreed CSBMs, normative initiatives and developments in the Forum, as well as other related activities carried out in the Organization. The report reflects the discussions that took place and the decisions adopted in the Forum. Detailed information on implementation may be found in the Conflict Prevention Centre Summary Report on Recent Trends in the Implementation of the Vienna Document 1999 and Other Measures Addressed during the Annual Implementation Assessment Meeting[2].

2. Efforts by the FSC since the Athens Meeting of the Ministerial Council

The Athens Ministerial Council in 2009 called on the FSC to "explore ways in which to strengthen the OSCE's politico-military toolbox, with particular attention to strengthening current arms control and CSBM instruments, including strengthening the Vienna Document 1999"[3]. Consequently, the FSC engaged in a constructive dialogue on the updating of the VD99, and in May 2010 adopted Decision 1/10, which establishes a procedure for an update of the VD every five years, starting no later than 2011. The provisions of this decision became the most politically and substantively important improvement to the Vienna Document 1999, since they marked the end of a long period of stagnation in the Vienna Document discussions and launched the updating process by providing a clear framework for regular modernization of this key OSCE politico-military document.

To further structure the work of the FSC, the participating States decided by FSC Decision 7/10 that Chapter V, on Prior Notification of Certain Military Activities, and Chapter IX, on Compliance and Verification, should be updated as a package. In addition, in October 2010, the FSC Chair appointed a Co-ordinator to collect the views, ideas and inputs of the delegations, to assist the FSC Chairmanship and to keep the FSC informed on the progress made.

The debate among the participating States in the Forum was also enriched by contributions from the academic community during two special Security Dialogues dedicated to the Vienna Document in February 2010 and in February 2011.

By the Astana Summit in December 2010, the FSC had adopted five so-called Vienna Document PLUS Decisions, which update the current provisions of the VD99 and will eventually be incorporated into the Vienna Document 2011. During the Astana Summit, the Heads of State and Government of the participating States again recognized the need to revitalize, update and modernize the confidence- and security-building measures and called on the FSC to work to that end.

[1] The deadline for submitting input for this report was 7 November 2011.
[2] FSC.GAL/19/10/Corr.1, 16 February 2010 and FSC.GAL/19/11.
[3] MC.DEC/16/09.

By 7 November 2011, the FSC had adopted the following Vienna Document PLUS Decisions:

- Decision 10/10, Taking National Holidays into Account when Planning Verification Activities – 27 October 2010;
- Decision 15/10, Eligibility of Air Bases for Hosting Visits – 24 November 2010;
- Decision 11/10, Timing of a Demonstration of New Types of Major Weapon and Equipment Systems – 10 November 2010;
- Decision 12/10, Incorporating FSC Decision 1/10 into the Vienna Document, Chapter XII – 10 November 2010;
- Decision 13/10, Updating the Listing of Partners for Co-operation mentioned in Chapter XII – 10 November 2010;
- Decision 4/11, Updating the List of OSCE Participating States Mentioned in the Introduction – 15 June 2011;
- Decision 6/11, Accuracy of Co-ordinates of Formations, Combat Units, Air Formations and Air Combat Units – 20 July 2011;
- Decision 7/11, Amendments and Additions to Chapter IX "Compliance and Verification", Paragraphs 98 and 127 – 27 July 2011;
- Decision 10/11, Updating the Title and Introduction of the Vienna Document 1999 – 28 September 2011.

In addition, 18 more proposals are under discussion in the Forum for Security Co-operation. They pertain to Chapters I, III, V and IX.

3. Overview of arms control and CSBM implementation in 2010 and 2011

During 2010-2011, the OSCE participating States continued to implement their joint commitments under the Vienna Document 1999 (VD99)[4]. The OSCE Conflict Prevention Centre (CPC) maintained records of exchanges of information taking place as part of those commitments. These are regularly reflected in the CPC Monthly Reports and CPC Quarterly and Annual Surveys on CSBM Information Exchanged. In addition, the CPC produces an annual summary report that reflects trends in the implementation of CSBMs.

The level of CSBM implementation under the Vienna Document 1999 in the OSCE region is relatively stable and high. Measured by the number of submissions under various information exchanges, such as the Annual Exchange of Military Information (AEMI) and the Global Exchange of Military Information (GEMI), the level of implementation has remained steady during the past five years.

Altogether, 55 participating States provided information under the AEMI exchange for 2010 and 2011. For Defence Planning, the numbers are significantly lower. In 2010, 45 participating States submitted this information, and by 7 November 2011, 40 countries had provided information on their Defence Planning. In addition, there are five participating States that have not submitted any information on their defence planning and budgets during the past five years.

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

The reporting period was also active in terms of verification under Chapter IX of the Vienna Document 1999. In 2010, 97 inspections and 48 evaluation visits were conducted. By 7 November 2011, the respective numbers for 2011 were 91 and 39.

The implementation of the VD99 was discussed during the two Annual Implementation Assessment meetings in March 2010 and March 2011, as well as at the Meeting of Heads of Verification Centres in December 2010. The meetings proved useful in terms of the modernization of the VD99, since some proposals were later on followed up in the FSC and resulted in decisions.

In 2011, 51 participating States were connected to the Communications Network; only one OSCE participating State having military forces was not connected to it. The reliability of the Network remained very high, with the servers in Vienna available over 99.9% of the time. In addition, over half (35) of the end-user stations were connected to the Network at least 99% of the time, and the overall availability of all the End User Stations connected to the Network exceeded 97%. The custom-designed OSCE software packages used to process notifications and to prepare annual information exchanges is continuously updated and provided to participating States for their use. The OSCE Communication Network remains a highly reliable, safe and secure tool for participating States, and for their use in support of the CSBMs.

4. Other activities

Following the recommendation of the VD99, the FSC organized a High-Level Military Doctrine Seminar on 24-25 May 2011. The Seminar brought together close to 300 senior military officials from the participating States and Partners for Cooperation. The purpose of the meeting was to examine developments in military technology and military doctrines and their implications for security in the OSCE area. Issues such as the changing nature of conflicts, hybrid threats and challenges, and technological advancements were also discussed at the two-day event. The discussion was considered to be a useful CSBM, and it was recommended that similar topics, such as presentations on military doctrines, should also be included in the weekly FSC agenda.

In July 2011, the CPC organized a seminar on the OSCE Code of Conduct and Confidence- and Security-Building Measures in the South Caucasus and Black Sea Region in Odessa, Ukraine. Participants from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Georgia, Romania and Ukraine discussed the role of CSBMs and arms control for future security in the OSCE area, and examined the potential role of CSBMs in conflict resolution.

In July 2010 and June 2011, the OSCE Centre in Astana and the Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Kazakhstan organized the annual regional training on the Vienna Document 1999. The workshops brought together participants from Central Asia and the South Caucasus to discuss issues related to the Annual Exchange of Military Information as well as the practical verification activities.

5. Conclusions

The degree of implementation of the commitments related to the Vienna Document 1999 (VD) remained high and stable throughout the past two years.

The Annual Implementation Assessment Meetings (AIAM) in 2010 and 2011 proved to be valuable platforms for discussing CSBMs in the OSCE region, including their implementation and further development. In addition, the Meeting of Heads of Verification Centres (HOV) in 2010 also considered useful proposals for further enhancing the implementation of the VD.

The High-Level Military Doctrine Seminar held in 2011 served as an important CSBM and permitted an examination of developments in the military field and their implications for security in the OSCE area. This practice of holding regular seminars has proven to be very useful and should be continued in the future, also taking into account the lessons learned identified during past Seminars.

FSC Decision 1/10 established a solid procedure for incorporating relevant decisions into the VD and foresees that a special meeting will take place every five years or more frequently, starting not later than 2011, in order to reissue the Vienna Document. This decision ended a long period of stagnation and provided a framework for a regular modernization of this key document. The OSCE Summit in Astana in 2010 gave further impetus to the efforts to revitalize, update and modernize conventional arms-control and confidence- and security-building regimes.

Throughout 2010-2011, the FSC engaged in very active discussions on the proposals to update the Vienna Document, resulting in nine VD PLUS decisions that will be incorporated into the reissued Vienna Document.

The discussion on 18 other proposals is still ongoing and will continue in 2012. The appointment of the FSC Chair's Coordinator proved to be a useful tool in promoting further discussion on the proposals related to this document.

In the coming year, it will be important to maintain the momentum in the ongoing updating and modernization of the Vienna Document, thereby also fulfilling the tasking of the Astana Commemorative Declaration. By engaging in constructive discussions on current and future proposals, the participating States will be able to revitalize important CSBMs that are key to security and stability in the OSCE region.