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**FSC Chairmanship: the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia**

**LETTER FROM THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE  
FORUM FOR SECURITY CO-OPERATION TO THE MINISTER FOR  
FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF IRELAND, CHAIRPERSON OF THE  
NINETEENTH MEETING OF THE MINISTERIAL COUNCIL**

Your Excellency,

As the Chairperson of the Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC), it is a pleasure for me to inform you about the activities of the FSC in 2012.

In preparing this letter, I have consulted this year's FSC Chairmanships, which in addition to the Republic of Macedonia, are Kyrgyzstan and Latvia. During 2012, the Chairmanships continuously worked in close co-operation with each other to ensure continuity, balance and efficiency in the implementation of the Forum's annual work programme in accordance with its mandate and the tasks from the Ministerial Council Meeting in 2011.

The focus of the FSC's work in 2012 continued to be on the core politico-military issues, such as small arms and light weapons (SALW), stockpiles of conventional ammunition (SCA), the Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security, the implementation of UN Security Council resolutions (UNSCR) 1540 (2004), arms control and confidence- and security-building measures (CSBMs) and efforts to update the OSCE Principles Governing Non-Proliferation of 1994 as well as exploring the role of the FSC in the area of implementation of the UNSCR 1325 (2000). Separate progress reports on further implementation of the commitments on those issues were submitted to the Ministerial Council and contain more detailed information about developments in the FSC during 2011–2012 regarding these aspects of its work.

Initiatives put forward by delegations had by November led to the adoption of 9 decisions, which were designed to support the implementation of existing commitments. The FSC also contributed within its mandate to the Annual Security Review Conference (ASRC) that provided an opportunity to exchange views on arms control and confidence- and security-building measures, as well as to the preparation of Dublin Ministerial Council meeting's documents.

In line with the priorities identified in the Astana Commemorative Declaration (2010) and in the MC Decision 7/11 on Issues Relevant to the Forum for Security Co-operation, in 2012, the Forum engaged in further discussions to update, revitalize and modernize

confidence- and security-building measures. Particularly, by November 2012, the FSC had adopted one Vienna Document Plus decision. Active discussions on a number of other concrete proposals related to the Vienna Document took place in 2012.

The strategic discussion during the Security Dialogue emphasized the FSC's importance as a platform to address and discuss security issues. Specifically, an active dialogue took place on matters related to topical European security issues, including, *inter alia*, the strategic security environment in the twenty-first century; the democratic control of the armed forces as an integral part of the OSCE Code of Conduct; missile defence and the European Phased Adaptive Approach; the EU civilian crisis management and response capabilities; the improved security and stability through co-operation, capacity-building and reform; the Republic of Armenia's approaches in the context of the concept of co-operative security; ; the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation; the Wassenaar Arrangement; the implementation of UNSCR 1540 in Belarus and Serbia; the Montenegro Demilitarization Programme; the Bundeswehr Verification Centre and a possible way ahead for implementation; South-Eastern Europe's response to the security challenges outside of the region; the Mine Action Programme of the OSCE office in Tajikistan; implementation of UNSCR 1325 in the OSCE region and the gender perspective in relation to military and security operations; the work in the political military dimension of the OSCE addressed by the OSCE Secretary General; the international small arms control standards and the Article IV of the Dayton Peace Agreement Annex 1-B.

As envisaged by Chapter XI of the Vienna Document 2011, the FSC held the twenty-second Annual Implementation Assessment Meeting (AIAM) on 5 and 6 March 2012. The Meeting provided an opportunity for participating States to discuss present and future implementation of agreed CSBMs, and allowed experts to exchange experiences, make suggestions and to assess the state of implementation. The Heads of Verification Centres (HoV) meeting, held on 14 December 2011 on the margins of the Annual Exchange of Military Information, served to exchange experiences and information on technical aspects of implementation of agreed measures under the provisions of the VD 2011. The next HoV meeting will take place on 13 December 2012, for the first time as a full day event, consisting of specialized working groups.

The FSC also contributed to the OSCE Annual Security Review Conference, held from 26 and 28 June 2012. The Discussions during the Conference focused on enhancing security dialogue and for reviewing security work undertaken by the OSCE and its participating States, including the Astana Commemorative Declaration and recent Ministerial Council Decisions No. 6/11, 7/11, and 8/11. The session provided an opportunity to exchange views on issues related to arms control and confidence- and security-building measures in the OSCE area, such as the Vienna Document 2011, and to address outstanding challenges and opportunities at a strategic level.

The OSCE Documents on Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) and on Stockpiles of Conventional Ammunition (SCA) remained one of key topics on the FSC's agenda. Two years after the adoption of the OSCE Plan of Action on SALW, the FSC held a meeting to review its implementation and an Expert Level Session on SALW Stockpile Management, Surplus Reduction and Destruction on 22-24 May 2012. A number of concrete proposals were made to improve the implementation of the Plan of Action. Accordingly a document outlining possible implementation steps of the Plan of Action was suggested and

issued by the FSC Chair based on the proposals made during the Meeting. Next, the FSC Chair participated in the UN Second Review Conference on the UN Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects held on 27 September and 7 September 2012, at which the OSCE achievements to implement the UN Programme of Action were introduced. Furthermore, in accordance with Ministerial Council Decision No. 6/11 on SALW and Stockpiles of Conventional Ammunition (SCA) and the subsequent FSC Decision No. 3/12, the OSCE Document on SALW was reissued incorporating all supplementary decisions related to SALW. The CPC, together with the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, has conducted an analysis of the States' methodology for compiling annual information exchange on SALW exported to and/or imported from other participating States during the previous calendar year. The report uncovered possible reasons for mismatches in the information provided by participating States and put forward recommendations in this regard.

In 2012, the OSCE continued implementation of projects in response to requests for assistance on SALW and SCA. Dealing with the requests from participating States with regard to destruction and stockpile management and security of SALW and SCA remains one of the most dynamic areas of implementation of the Documents on SALW and SCA. During the year, one project in Albania was completed. Also during the year, the OSCE continued the implementation of three joint assistance programmes with the UNDP, one in Montenegro, one in Georgia and the other one in Belarus, and launched two projects in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia. This year, the Forum also received one new request for assistance on SALW and SCA from Bulgaria. In the field of practical assistance on SALW and SCA, special attention should be paid to resolving issues regarding the financing of the projects in Albania, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Montenegro, Serbia and Ukraine. The FSC continued to manage a comprehensive SALW and SCA programme. In addition to regular donations to established projects, this programme facilitates contributions to SALW and SCA projects under development.

The Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security retained its importance in the work of the FSC in 2012. For the first time an Annual Implementation Discussion on the Code of Conduct was held on 11 July 2012 in Vienna. This meeting provided a unique opportunity to discuss how to promote and improve the implementation of the Code of Conduct including its annual information exchange, to undertake an evaluation discussion and to examine the application of the Code of Conduct in the context of the existing political and military situation. In addition, the fifth regional seminar pursuant to FSC Decision No. 1/08 was held in Riga, Latvia, from 18-20 June 2012, for the countries of the Baltic Sea area. The focus of the seminar was on issues such as the parliamentary oversight of armed forces, security sector reform and UNSCR 1325, the respect for international humanitarian and human rights law and the rights of armed forces personnel. Lastly, the Code of Conduct also continued to remain on the agenda of the FSC meetings during the year. In particular, a Security Dialogue which focussed on the democratic and parliamentary control of armed forces was organized in June 2012.

The general level of implementation of information exchanges in 2012 was stable and high. FSC Chairs continued to make extensive use of the Announcing and Reminding Mechanism in order to improve the availability of information among participating States. These efforts helped increase compliance with obligations, although not all participating States have yet provided the required information.

Activities also continued to support the implementation of UNSCR 1540 (2004) on non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery. In 2012, a number of country-specific dialogue visits were organized in co-ordination with the UNSC 1540 Committee and the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs. As a direct result of these visits, the National Action Plans on the implementation of the resolution have been developed by the Republic of Belarus, the Republic of Serbia and Kyrgyzstan. In addition, such a dialogue was initiated with ten more countries from the OSCE region. The success of the OSCE efforts in the facilitation of the implementation of the Resolution has been recognized by a number of OSCE participating States, as well as the UNSC Committee 1540 and its Experts. Worthwhile mentioning is the OSCE/UNODA Workshop on the implementation of the UNSCR 1540 held in Vilnius in June this year.

Furthermore, the Forum has been instrumental in facilitating information sharing among participating States on matters related to non-proliferation. In line with the FSC Decision 19/11, CPC has developed and currently maintains a Network of Points of Contact on UNSCR 1540, which has also been shared with the UNSC 1540 Committee. Forty-six participating States have identified and appointed to the OSCE their national Point of Contact on UNSCR 1540 implementation. In addition, throughout 2012, several regional events and tailor-made trainings on UNSCR 1540 were organized in the OSCE region. The OSCE has become one of the most active regional organizations in advancing the implementation of the resolutions 1540 and 1977, in close collaboration with the UNSC 1540 Committee.

Lastly, in July 2012, the FSC Chair appointed a Co-ordinator on Non-proliferation Issues (FSC.DEL/86/12) who was tasked, among others, to explore ways to update the OSCE 1994 Principles Governing Non-Proliferation as well as to continue to identify and strengthen, when and as appropriate, specific forms of the OSCE's contribution to assist participating States in the full implementation of UNSCR 1540.

In line with Ministerial Council Decision 7/11, the FSC continued to examine ways in which it can assist in the implementation in the OSCE region of UNSCR 1325 (2000) on Women, Peace and Security. In order to promote specific activities related to the implementation of the Resolution two Security Dialogue Meetings were organized by the FSC Chair dealing with the Implementation of UNSCR 1325 in the OSCE Region and UNSCR 1325, Related Resolutions and Gender Perspectives in Relation to Military and Security Operations/Missions. In addition, in 2012, the FSC Chair appointed an FSC Chairperson's Co-ordinator on Matters Relating to UNSCR 1325 (FSC.DEL/32/12).

Finally, all three FSC Chairmanships in 2012 continued to work jointly with the Permanent Council (PC) on issues of relevance of both bodies as part of the OSCE's concept of comprehensive and indivisible security. To this end, two joint FSC-PC meeting had been held by December 2012 on peacekeeping operations and on Transition Aspects in Afghanistan to address cross-dimensional issues relevant to the work of both the FSC and the PC.