



FSC Chairmanship: Serbia

**LETTER FROM THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE
FORUM FOR SECURITY CO-OPERATION TO THE FEDERAL
MINISTER FOR EUROPE, INTEGRATION AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS
OF AUSTRIA, CHAIRPERSON OF THE TWENTY-FOURTH
MEETING OF THE MINISTERIAL COUNCIL OF THE OSCE**

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 Forum in 2017.

In preparing this letter, I have consulted with the previous 2017 FSC Chairmanships of Romania and the Russian Federation. During 2017, the Chairmanships worked in close co-operation with each other to ensure continuity and efficiency in the implementation of the Forum's annual work programme.

Even though the situation in and around Ukraine remained the dominant topic of the discussions in the FSC, several initiatives put forward by participating States led to the adoption of six **decisions**, which were designed to support the implementation of existing commitments.

Also, the participating States decided to approve the use of the OSCE Communications Network to address security of and in the use of information and communication technologies in line with Permanent Council Decisions No. 1039, No. 1106 and No. 1202, upon the identification of contact centres/points for cyber/ICT security-related communications within capitals and provided that relevant operational requirements are elaborated and unhindered provision of services to the OSCE participating States in the politico-military dimension is ensured.

The strategic discussions during the **Security Dialogues** emphasized the FSC's importance as a platform for addressing and discussing security issues of common interest. Specifically, an active dialogue took place on matters related to topical European security issues, including, *inter alia*, confidence and security building measures (CSBMs), the Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security, small arms and light weapons and stockpiles of conventional ammunition, UN Security Council resolutions 1540 (2004) and 1325 (2000) and sub-regional military and defence co-operation. All three FSC 2017 Chairmanships actively stimulated discussions by organizing a total of nineteen Security Dialogues.

By continuing promoting **regional stability** and comprehensive and cooperative security Romania and Serbia dedicated Security Dialogues to the sub-regional issues in South East Europe and the Black Sea; politico-military activities undertaken by OSCE Missions; SALW projects in the Republic of Moldova and implementation of the Agreement on sub-regional arms control Article IV, Annex 1-B, Dayton Peace Accords. Furthermore, under the Chairmanship of the Russian Federation, a number of Security Dialogues were held with the participation of Collective Security Treaty Organization, Shanghai Cooperation Organization

and Wassenaar Arrangement emphasizing the importance of the OSCE's comprehensive and co-operative concept of security.

Under the Chairmanship of Romania, the 27th Annual Implementation Assessment Meeting took place in Vienna, between 28 February and 1 March 2017 during which the participating States discussed the present and future implementation of agreed confidence- and security-building measures (CSBMs).

Under the Chairmanship of the Russian Federation, the Sixth Annual discussion on the implementation of the **Code of Conduct** on Politico-Military Aspects of Security was held on June 14, 2017, in Vienna. Furthermore, under the respective Chairmanships of Romania and Serbia the role of the military chaplains in the armed forces and the freedom of belief (in peacetime or at war), as well as were the role of parliaments in the democratic control of armed forces was discussed. In May 2017, a seminar on the Code of Conduct for participating States of South East Europe and other interested participating States and Partners for Co-operation was held in Budva, Montenegro. Additionally, for the first time a Conference on the OSCE Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security was held in October 2017 in Washington D.C., United States of America. This event provided an unique opportunity to discuss the provisions of the Code of Conduct in the North American context and to facilitate better implementation, to promote awareness and to support outreach of the Code of Conduct. With the Code of Conduct providing the key normative framework for security sector governance, the FSC Support Section has also supported the OSCE towards developing a coherent and coordinated approach to security sector governance and reform (SSG/R) and in bringing the concept of SSG/R closer to its participating States.

With the participation of International Atomic Energy Agency, EU, **non-proliferation** issues were promoted at the Security Dialogues organized by Romania and the Russian Federation with the emphasis on implementation of UNSCR 1540 (2004), in particular, to identify new and emerging risks and threats to international WMD proliferation regime and through national export control experiences and best practices of the OSCE participating States. The 1540 Committee and its Group of Experts recognised the efforts already made by the OSCE participating States to promote the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004), as well as the role of the OSCE Secretariat in promoting the appointment of 1540 national Points of Contact and encouraging the development of a network among them.

By supporting **gender** equality and integrating gender perspectives in politico-military dimension, Romania and Serbia organized two Security Dialogues seeking the role of military in implementing the UNSCR 1325 and enhancing women`s role in both conflict-related and peacetime operations. The OSCE and UNODA initiative was launched during the Romanian Chairmanship on "Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Education Partnership" enhancing knowledge and training of women in the field of arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation. For this purpose a Scholarship for Peace and Security was developed by support of a number of participating States.

The issue of **confidence- and security-building measures** (CSBMs) was accorded particular importance during the tenure of the three FSC Chairmanships, which was highlighted through a number of activities in 2017. Romania held a special meeting on Vienna Document 2011 raising topical issues on arms control, modernization of the Vienna Document and its need for update.

In 2017 a significant work was accomplished in the area of **small arms and light weapons (SALW) and stockpiles of conventional ammunition (SCA)**. A meeting on

deactivation of SALW was held on March 30, 2017. As a result a process of developing minimal standards for deactivation of SALW was taken forward and enhanced. Furthermore, by contributing to transparency, predictability and stability in the OSCE area, an online reporting tool was introduced under the Chairmanship of the Russian Federation allowing participating States to simultaneously submit national SALW reports to both the OSCE and the UN. This contributes to lessen the reporting burden on participating States and to encourage a co-ordinated approach to reporting. On the basis of the OSCE Document on SALW, Serbia organized a special meeting to review the implementation of OSCE Assistance projects in the field of SALW and stockpiles of conventional ammunition on October 3-4, 2017. As the result of the meeting the various aspects of project management issues were discussed as well as shortcomings and room for improvements were identified.

The FSC contributed within its mandate to the **Annual Security Review Conference**, held from 27 to 29 June 2017 through sessions, focusing on politico-military elements, including conventional arms control and confidence - and security - building measures. During the Conference, discussions were held with focus on elements related to the wide range of politico-military security in the OSC. Moreover, a special session was devoted to the Structured Dialogue, a process that addresses challenges and risks in the wider politico-military sphere and explores possibilities of reversing the negative trends in the European security architecture.

The Romanian FSC Chairmanship issued a perception paper (FSC.DEL/124/17) containing Chair's conclusions and recommendations after the thematic debates that were held in accordance with their programme of work. In their view, the perception paper would add an extra layer of memory about progress the FSC succeeded to achieve in addressing topics of broad interest and would assist future Chairs in defining the starting line of their related endeavours.

All three FSC Chairmanships in 2017 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, with the participation of high officials from the NATO, EU, US **four joint FSC-PC meetings** have been held by November 2017 on military aspects of cyber-security, on support to the national authorities in migration crisis by the security forces, and on developments with regard to the Structured dialogue, in order to address cross-dimensional issues relevant to the work of both the FSC and the PC.

Finally, media coverage indicated a significant level of public interest in the FSC's work, judging from the OSCE webpage views, engagement on Twitter, Facebook Podcast interviews, comments and shares.