



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE FSC on 10 April 2019 EU Statement - Closing session under the Swiss Chairmanship

Mr. Chairman, the European Union and its Member States would like to thank you and your able team for the excellent cooperation, the choice of topics and your innovative approach.

We commend your efforts to reinvigorate the discussion at the Working Group A, under the able leadership of Col Hans Lüber, on the Vienna Document, our main politico-military agreement on confidence and security building measures. We also congratulate you, as well as the Chairmanships of Lithuania and Luxembourg for the successful conduct of the 2019 AIAM, providing another opportunity for examining the implementation of the Vienna Document and identifying concrete areas where modernisation is urgently needed. We also highly value the fact that a dedicated Security Dialogue on the Vienna Document and its better implementation was an integral part of your agenda.

In this context, we reiterate our strong commitment to full implementation in letter and spirit of the existing principles and commitments in the politico-military dimension, which is essential for enhancing military transparency, predictability and political stability in the OSCE area. We remain strong supporters of a substantial modernisation of the Vienna Document. We continue to believe that it is vital to substantially modernise the Vienna Document, in order to increase military stability, transparency and predictability. At the same time, we want to recall the ministerial commitment of all participating States in Hamburg 2016 to work towards creating an environment conducive to reinvigorating arms control and Confidence and Security-Building Measures in Europe.

Mr. Chairman, your Chairmanship took place against the background of the clear violations of the rules based international order of which OSCE politico-military instruments form a key part. We strongly condemn the clear violation of Ukrainian sovereignty and territorial integrity by acts of aggression by the Russian armed forces since February 2014 and the illegal annexation of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol to the Russian Federation, which we will not recognise. We reiterate our well-known position on the unjustified use of force by Russia at the Kerch Strait on 25 November 2018 and its negative impact in the Azov Sea and Russia's violations of international law. The increasing militarisation of Crimea continues to impact negatively the security situation in the Black Sea region. We take this opportunity to recall our unwavering support to the sovereignty, territorial integrity, unity and independence of Ukraine within its internationally recognised borders.

We appreciate your choice of topics for discussion, which enabled us to examine issues of high importance to participating States, including EU Member States, and also topics that are particularly dear to your Delegation, including the regulation and good governance of Private Military and Security Companies. We have already mentioned the Vienna Document and we would like to take this occasion to commend Switzerland's long standing contribution as FSC Chairmanship's Coordinator. We would also like to thank Switzerland, as well as other participating States, for their invaluable support to the Code of Conduct on Politico-Military aspects of security, as well as for its continued attention to the OSCE's policies and projects on Small Arms and Light Weapons/Stockpiles of Conventional Ammunition (SALW/SCA). Of the other equally enjoyable discussions, we would in particular highlight the Joint FSC-PC meeting on Lessons Learned from Conflict Resolution through which the former Taoiseach (Prime Minister) of Ireland gave us much food for thought. We wish to highlight the session on women, peace and security, featuring prominent speakers with inspiring interventions. We interpret the high number of responses to the guest speakers as a sign of the importance OSCE participating States continue to attach to the promotion and implementation of the women, peace and security agenda in the OSCE and we encourage the incoming Chairmanships to further build on this potential. Gender equality and ensuring meaningful participation of women requires more than just one dedicated meeting per trimester; we therefore

appreciate your approach, including efforts to ensure parity of panels. A good practice we hope to see also in the future.

Mr. Chairman, it was a pleasure to work with you and your colleagues. We thank you once again for all your efforts and we look forward to cooperating closely with the incoming Tajik FSC Chairmanship.

The Candidate Countries NORTH MACEDONIA*, MONTENEGRO* and ALBANIA*, the EFTA countries ICELAND and NORWAY, members of the European Economic Area, as well as UKRAINE, the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA, GEORGIA, ANDORRA and SAN MARINO align themselves with this statement.

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