



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation Nr 680 Vienna, 25 April 2012

EU Statement on the Assumption of the Chairmanship of the Forum for Security Co-operation by Latvia

The European Union (EU) and its Member States welcome Latvia as the new Chair of the Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC). We wish the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia every success as a new member of the FSC Troika and thank Kazakhstan, which is leaving the Troika, for its efforts and commitment over the past year.

The EU and its Member States are grateful to Ambassador Andris Teikmanis, State Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Latvia, for his statement and to the Latvian FSC Chairmanship for setting out its programme. We believe it will provide a coherent and comprehensive framework for the FSC's work in the second trimester of 2012. We welcome the intention of the Latvian FSC Chairmanship to put the FSC work into the broader perspective of the challenges to the current security and strategic environment in the OSCE area.

We wish to express our sincere appreciation for the excellent work done during the first trimester of 2012 by the Kyrgyz FSC Chairmanship and, in particular, would like to highlight its role in the organisation and the conduct of the 22nd Annual Implementation Assessment Meeting (AIAM), as well as in successfully negotiating the first Annual Security Review Conference (ASRC) related decision.

Latvia's assumption of the Chairmanship of this Forum comes at an important juncture for the FSC working programme as it aims at duly preparing and successfully carrying out important events, like the Meeting to Review the

OSCE Plan of Action on SALW, the Annual Discussion on the implementation of the Code of Conduct (CoC), and the Annual Security Review Conference.

In this context, the EU and its Member States wish to reiterate their full commitment to the implementation of the OSCE Plan of Action on SALW and the great importance they attach to its further acceleration, especially with a view to its forthcoming review and the tasking provided for by the Ministerial Council Decision 6/11 adopted in Vilnius.

We support an active role for the OSCE in the Review Conference of the UN Programme of Action on SALW and will continue to contribute actively to the discussions with regard to the negotiations of a global Arms Trade Treaty and their implications for SALW related matters. The outcome of these processes should be considered by the FSC and, where appropriate, be taken into account in the normative update of the OSCE documents, including the 1993 OSCE Principles Governing Conventional Arms transfers. We believe a tasking to this effect might be a useful deliverable at the Dublin Ministerial Council.

We look forward to the first annual meeting to discuss the implementation of the Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security to be held in July 2012. It will provide a new, focused and regular opportunity to examine how well the Code is functioning in the current political and security conditions in the OSCE region, as well as to intensify our discussions regarding both the content of the information exchange and the ways for its further enhancement.

We are ready to provide support to the Latvian FSC Chairmanship's preparations, in cooperation with the Irish Chairmanship of the PC, of the FSC contribution to the ASRC scheduled to take place on 26th – 28th June 2012. There is no doubt that the timely and efficient preparation of the proceedings of Working Session 3 dealing with arms control and confidence- and security-building measures (CSBM) will have considerable impact on the fulfilment of the ASRC's main purpose as described by the Porto Ministerial Council Decision 3/2002. The ASRC should indeed take stock of the progress made and the political will invested in implementing the high-level tasking to "revitalize, update and modernize" conventional arms control and CSBM one and a half years after the OSCE Astana Summit meeting.

Further updating and modernizing the Vienna Document remains a key priority for the EU. With respect to the pertinent tasking of Ministerial Council Decision

7/11 we believe that “further impetus to the negotiations on modernizing the Vienna Document” should be given by prompt discussions and thorough examination of all proposals regarding increased military predictability and stability for all pS. Lowering thresholds for notification should be part of a first substantive adaptation.

Moreover, the EU and its Member States took a pro-active stance in the 22nd AIAM held on 6th – 7th March 2012 in Vienna. Whilst remaining important milestone in the implementation of the Vienna Document provisions, the AIAM's effectiveness could be considerably improved. In particular, by reshuffling its timetable to provide for more operational flexibility and thematic adaptivity. Possible ways to achieve this include promoting involvement by capitals in the discussions; being flexible about the time allocated to specific working sessions; making the AIAM's overall timetable more flexible; rebalancing responsibilities between coordinators and chairs; beginning preparations for the next AIAM sooner.

The EU and its Member States remain concerned at the continued lack of full implementation of the Vienna Document by a number of participating States. Full compliance with the provisions of this important CSBM constitutes a significant building block in the overall security of our continent. We urge those participating States that are not fulfilling all their obligations under the Vienna Document to engage with us, individually or collectively, to seek solutions that allow them to return to full compliance. The EU and its Member States offer support and assistance in pursuing such solutions.

While welcoming the Latvian FSC Chairmanship, the EU would like to reiterate its support for regional efforts towards the implementation of UNSCR 1540 (2004), including through information sharing, enhanced cooperation with the Security Council Committee established pursuant to UNSCR 1540 (2004) and United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA), as well as provision of practical assistance to participating States, at their request.

The EU and its Member States look forward to examining, within the FSC, ways of assisting in the implementation of UNSCR 1325 (2000) in accordance with OSCE MC Decision 7/11 on issues relevant to the FSC, as well as with MC Decision 3/11 on the conflict cycle. In particular, we would encourage action with respect to the gender aspects of the OSCE Plan of Action on

SALW, as well as within the principles of the Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security.

The EU is aware that the workload of the FSC Chairmanships in the rest of 2012 is demanding. We look forward to working constructively with the FSC Troika in order to deliver tangible results and benefits.

The acceding country CROATIA^{*}, the candidate countries the FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA, MONTENEGRO, ICELAND^{**} and SERBIA, the countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates countries ALBANIA and BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA, the European Free Trade Association countries LIECHTENSTEIN and NORWAY, members of the European Economic Area, as well as UKRAINE, the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA, GEORGIA and ANDORRA align themselves with this statement.

^{*} Croatia, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

^{**} Iceland continues to be a member of EFTA and the European Economic Area.