



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE FSC on 13 March 2019 EU Statement on SALW/SCA

The European Union and its Member States warmly welcome the speakers to the Forum for Security Co-operation and thank them for their interventions. We commend the Swiss FSC Chairmanship for including the topic of SALW/SCA on the agenda of this Forum for the second time during its tenure.

As already mentioned in January in this Forum, we see this security dialogue as an important follow up to the MC.DOC/5/18 and the continuation of efforts of previous FSC Chairmanships, including the Biennial Meeting to Assess the Implementation of the OSCE Documents on Small Arms and Light Weapons and Stockpiles of Conventional Ammunition, held on 2 and 3 October 2018, where several suggestions were put forward taking into account technical and global developments related to SALW and SCA.

The EU and its Member States attach great importance to enhancing peace and security in the OSCE area by reducing the threat posed by illicit trafficking and excessive accumulation of SALW and conventional ammunition. We remain committed to the full implementation of the OSCE Documents on SALW and SCA, the OSCE Plan of Action on SALW and the UN Programme of Action which provides a valid and effective strategy to fight against the illicit trade in SALW and a global forum to share and develop further actions at national, regional and international levels. Furthermore, and in line with decisions and statements on SALW in the Ministerial Councils of Vienna (2017) and Milan (2018) that have supported the necessity to explore ways to complement the existing OSCE measures aimed at addressing the illicit trafficking of SALW and acknowledged the need for the OSCE to continue to enhance its SALW related norms and best practices and their implementation, we believe that the OSCE can be a useful forum to explore enhancing existing mechanisms and best practices in the field of illicit trafficking of SALW and excessive accumulation of conventional ammunition, and to discuss current initiatives in these areas, including on maritime transport and through inland waters.

At our meeting in January, we have shared the main features of the new EU Strategy against illicit firearms, small arms and light weapons and their ammunition adopted in November last year, replacing the 2005 SALW strategy, which guides the EU's work to this end.

We would like to recall that the main objective of the revised EU Strategy remains the full and effective implementation of the UN PoA and the ITI at national regional and global levels. The Strategy therefore puts forward measures to improve implementation of the UN PoA at national and regional levels in the EU. It also proposes cooperation and assistance in other regions of the world and at global level. This support will include collection and destruction of surplus SALW and ammunition, physical security and stockpile management for SALW and ammunition, capacity development for marking, record keeping and tracing, capacity development for arms export control, capacity development for law enforcement in countering illicit trafficking, support for embargo monitoring and tracing of diverted weapons.

Poor and unsafe stockpile management is a key factor allowing arms and ammunition to be diverted from the licit to the illicit markets. In line with the Strategy, the EU and its MS will continue to help other countries to improve the management and security of state-held stockpiles by strengthening national legislative and administrative frameworks and institutions that regulate the legitimate supply and stockpile management of SALW and ammunition for defence and security forces, with a particular focus on marking and record keeping. The EU will also promote and implement standards and good practices for the handling of small arms and ammunition (ISACS - international small arms control standards/MOSAIC-Modular small arms control implementation compendium, IATGs - international ammunition technical guidelines).

In this context, the EU and its MS fund various projects in cooperation with the OSCE or other implementing partners working in the OSCE region. These included the EU funding for a project in Georgia and North Macedonia to strengthen security by reducing the threat from the uncontrolled proliferation of SALW and conventional ammunition, or the Council Decision in support of the South-Eastern and Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SEESAC), including for the implementation of the Franco-German Regional Roadmap on combating illicit arms trafficking in the Western Balkans, as well as a dedicated project for

SALW control in general. Projects in other OSCE countries and regions with the OSCE as implementing partner are currently under consideration.

This support is fully in line with the principles which guide the new Strategy, namely to promote cooperation and partnerships at all levels, to take responsibility in relation to priority regions, and to promote a global rules-based order with multilateralism as its key principle.

Mr. Chairman, we thank you for the opportunity to exchange views on this important topic. Thank you for your attention.

The Candidate Countries NORTH MACEDONIA*, MONTENEGRO*, SERBIA* and ALBANIA*, the Country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and Potential Candidate BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA, and the EFTA countries ICELAND and LIECHTENSTEIN, members of the European Economic Area, as well as UKRAINE, the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA, GEORGIA and SAN MARINO align themselves with this statement.

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