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EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE FSC on 3 April 2019
EU Statement on the OSCE Code of Conduct on Politico-military Aspects of Security: “Awareness Raising, Dissemination, Better Implementation and Outreach”

The Member States of the European Union warmly welcome the distinguished speakers to the Forum for Security Co-operation and thank them for their presentations. We commend the Swiss FSC Chairmanship for drawing our attention to this important topic.

We remain strong supporters of the OSCE Code of Conduct and attach great importance to the full implementation of its norms and principles. Russia’s illegal annexation of Crimea and Sevastopol and destabilising actions in eastern Ukraine as well as other conflicts have reminded us of the importance of the principles stipulated in the Code’s provisions on the relations between States and their indisputable and enduring relevance today, more than twenty years after their adoption. Ensuring strict implementation of OSCE politico-military commitments, including the provisions of the Code of Conduct, which are closely linked to those of the Helsinki Final Act and the Charter of Paris, in letter and spirit by all participating States, remains the top priority for us.

Mr. Chairman, we appreciate your approach to our discussion today, aiming at assessing the state of the Code's implementation and identifying possible voluntary measures that further promote transparency. We reiterate our strong position on the need to also assess the information exchange in qualitative terms. In this context we support all initiatives, such as organisation of peer reviews in regional settings which significantly contribute to increasing transparency between pS. In order to come to a

better understanding and to share our best practices, we continue to support voluntary reporting within the annual information exchange, inter alia on topics related to women, peace and security. We thank the Swiss Chairmanship and the speakers for presenting the outcome of the three OSCE outreach programmes conducted by the Mediterranean Academy of Diplomatic Studies in Malta, Tunisia and Jordan and the two studies on qualitative aspects of the 2018 Exchange of Information conducted by DCAF Geneva and Webster University Geneva.

We will continue to support the efforts of the FSC Chair, the Secretariat and the FSC Co-ordinator on the Code of Conduct to address issues related to improving deficiencies in implementing and reporting on the Code of Conduct as well as outreach activities in promoting the principles and norms stipulated in the Code of Conduct outside the OSCE area especially with OSCE Partners for Co-operation. EU Member States will continue their support to the execution of FSC Decision 1/08 on the Code of Conduct's Awareness Raising and Outreach Activities. In this context, we commend Cyprus for hosting a regional seminar from 20 to 24 May in Larnaca, promoting the Code of Conduct among participating States, particularly from the region. We attach high importance to the issues to be addressed by the seminar related to the democratic control of armed and security forces, parliamentary oversight, and the respect for international humanitarian and human rights law for armed forces personnel. We welcome the fact that the seminar will contribute to raising awareness of the Code of Conduct beyond the OSCE region in its neighbourhood.

We appreciate the consistent efforts of Switzerland, Germany and Austria to promote and support the Code of Conduct and the implementation of its norms and principles, including through providing support to regional and outreach activities. We look forward to celebrating the 25th anniversary of the adoption of the Code of Conduct this year and we thank Hungary for organising a dedicated Symposium to this end in Budapest in October, in cooperation with the Slovak OSCE Chairmanship.

Mr. Chairman, we thank you for the opportunity to exchange views on this important topic and we look forward to continuing our discussions on the implementation of the Code of Conduct at the upcoming Annual Discussion Meeting on 12 June. Thank you for your attention.

The Candidate Countries REPUBLIC OF NORTH MACEDONIA*, MONTENEGRO* and ALBANIA*, the Country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and Potential Candidate BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA, and the EFTA countries ICELAND, LIECHTENSTEIN 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.

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