



**EUROPEAN UNION**

**OSCE Permanent Council Nr 939  
Vienna, 31 January 2013**

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**EU statement in response to the reports by the  
Chairpersons of the three Committees**

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The European Union and its Member States thank the Chair of the Security Committee, H.E. Ambassador Tacan Ildem, the Chair of the Economic and Environmental Committee, H.E. Ol'ga Algayerova, and the Chair of the Human Dimension Committee, H.E. Ambassador Vuk Žugić, for their presentations. Two weeks ago, Foreign Minister Kozhara outlined the priorities for the Ukrainian Chairmanship. The work of the three committees, each of which focusses on one of the three dimensions, can reinforce and complement the Chairmanship programme and we are pleased to have had the opportunity today to hear from the committee chairs on their plans for the period ahead. When we established the three committees in 2006, the intent was to improve the consultative process by making it more participatory, interactive and transparent. A key objective in this regard was to inform the debates, conclusions and decisions in the Permanent Council and we welcome the close link between the work of the three committees and that of the Permanent Council.

Mr Chairman,

Regarding the Security Committee, we welcome Ambassador Ildem back as Chair of the Committee. We fully support the high attention that both the Chairmanship and the Chair of the Committee will give this year to implementation of the TNT decisions adopted last year. After having successfully concluded in Dublin the long process of consolidating the

OSCE's mandates and laying the basis for strengthened coordination and coherence of action in the area of TNT, the focus must now be on fully implementing the respective decisions. We underline the need to work, where appropriate, with other international actors in the field and to ensure a cross-dimensional approach in addressing TNTs with full respect for the implementation of human dimension commitments. We see an important role for the Security Committee in overseeing the OSCE's activities on transnational threats and in particular the implementation of the decisions taken last year.

We agree that special attention and support need to be given to the Informal Working Group set up to develop a set of CBMs for cyber security. We welcome the reappointment of Ambassador Kelly as Chair of the Working Group and look forward to a speedy resumption of work with a view to adopting as soon as possible a first set of CBMs based on the "best guess" proposal made by the Chair of the IWG before Dublin.

We agree that the thematic meetings organised by the Committee Chair last year were worthwhile and useful, and we welcome his intention to have further similar meetings, including with a focus on UNSCR 1325 and on Afghanistan, this year.

We recall that we had a first exchange of views on the Security Committee Work Programme and Calendar of Events in last week's Security Committee meeting. We look forward to more concrete proposals from the Chair.

An important task of the Committee in the first half of this year will be the preparation of the ASRC. We recall our firm view that a 2-day ASRC is most

effective and most likely to ensure continued high level participation at the meeting.

Mr Chairman,

Regarding the Economic and Environmental Committee, we welcome the intention of the Chair to continue the practice of organising thematic Committee meetings. They have generated interesting, focussed discussions and valuable exchanges of best practice over recent years. We appreciate the choice of the topics proposed for the first half of this year. They fit well with this year's EEF theme, as well as ensuring continuity in our work in the Second Dimension.

We are especially pleased that our discussions on good governance, transparency and fight against corruption will continue in the Committee as well as in the Forum. We believe that the OSCE has developed a unique competence in the area of good governance and transparency. Further efforts in this regard should be continued, especially towards implementing the commitments made in the Declaration on Good Governance agreed last year by our Ministers in Dublin.

We would appreciate coordination and cooperation with other OSCE structures when discussing cross-dimensional topics such as critical energy infrastructure and environmental impact

We welcome the intention of the Chair to continue the tradition of inviting representatives of OSCE field operations, NGOs, academia and other specialised international institutions to our Committee meetings in order to

brief us on their projects and activities related to the work of the Second Dimension.

Finally, Mr Chairman, regarding the third dimension, the European Union reiterates its appreciation for the standing agenda in the Human Dimension Committee, including the item on voluntary reporting by participating States on the implementation of their commitments. We fully support the new chair's intention to continue this practice. We believe indeed that the standing agenda allowed for more substantive discussions in a constructive spirit, including with other relevant actors, as well as an increased interaction with OSCE Institutions and executive structures. Nonetheless, an intensified exchange with civil society representatives would help sustain the dynamic in the Human Dimension Committee. We invite the current and future Chairs to take this suggestion forward.

In terms of substance, the Committee is a very valuable complement to the human dimension events, by following up on the recommendations made during these discussions on the one hand, and by devoting attention to topics which have received less consideration during the events on the other hand.

We recall that we attach greatest importance to freedom of expression and the media, including safety of journalists, to freedom of assembly and association as well as to freedom of religion or belief, recognising that fundamental freedoms apply both online and offline. Other important topics to devote proper attention to are the right to a fair trial, combating

torture and other cruel and inhumane treatment, including the death penalty, as well as combating all forms of discrimination.

An overarching theme for the OSCE this year will be to implement the decision on Helsinki + 40 which we adopted at the Dublin Ministerial Council. We look forward to having an initial exchange of views at the first informal meeting on 12 February and to hearing from the Ukrainian Chairmanship on how they plan to take forward work in this area. Helsinki + 40 is a strategic multi-annual initiative which will be separate from the regular business of the organisation and will therefore require specific working arrangements dedicated to the realisation of its objectives. We expect to examine this issue in more detail following the initial Helsinki + 40 meeting and in this regard we will be open to consideration as how the expertise of the three committees could be utilised.

In conclusion, the EU wishes to reiterate its support for the work carried out by the three Chairs and to assure you of our intention to co-operate fully with you in the year ahead. We wish you every success.

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 Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the EFTA countries Liechtenstein and Norway, members of the European Economic Area, as well as the Republic of Moldova, Armenia, Georgia, Andorra and San Marino, 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 the EFTA and of the European Economic Area.