



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation N°983 Vienna, 21 July 2021

EU Statement on the closing session of the Armenian FSC Chairmanship

The European Union and its Member States wish to take this opportunity to thank you, Ambassador Papikyan, and your able team for your efforts in chairing the FSC in the past few months.

This was a challenging trimester. Politico-military tensions are escalating again in the OSCE area. Conflicts are still claiming a high toll on human lives. Unusual military activities, including significant concentration of military forces near borders of other States, combined with the lack of transparency, are detrimental to our goal to re-establish trust and confidence among participating States. In this context, we regret that it was not possible to hold the Annual Security Review Conference (ASRC) as scheduled at the end of June. We fully support the ongoing efforts of the Swedish Chairpersonship to reach agreement by all participating States in order to enable holding the ASRC as soon as possible.

We underline that the resolution of all the conflicts in the OSCE area remains a top priority for the European Union. In particular, Russia's acts of aggression against Ukraine and its illegal annexation of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, continue to pose a major threat to our common security and the rules-based international order. Our support to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognised borders remains unwavering. The full implementation of the Minsk agreements is the way forward for a sustainable peace in eastern Ukraine. We urge the Russian Federation, as a party to the conflict, to comply

with the commitments that they have signed up to.

The European Union welcomed the ceasefire on the ground following the trilateral statement by Armenia, Azerbaijan and Russia on 9 November 2020 and will continue to promote a lasting and comprehensive settlement of this conflict, including by supporting stabilization, post-conflict rehabilitation and confidence-building measures. We reiterate our call on Armenia and Azerbaijan to resume the high-level political dialogue under the auspices of the co-chairs of the Minsk Group.

Mr. Chair, we commend you for the due attention dedicated during your Chairmanship to the issue of military transparency. We thank you for a specific Security Dialogue on this topic and for co-chairing, even before the official opening of your FSC Chairmanship, the joint FSC-PC meeting following the activation by Ukraine of the Risk Reduction Mechanism under the Vienna Document. We deplore that Russia chose not to engage meaningfully under this mechanism.

The Vienna Document represents a key confidence and security building measure. We reiterate our support for its substantial modernisation, as well as for the further development of Conventional Arms Control, Confidence and Security Building Measures and other instruments in the politico-military toolbox that continue to be under pressure. We urge all participating States to engage in good faith in the discussions on the modernisation of the Vienna Document, taking due account of all proposals on the table, including the joint proposal supported by 34 pS. We reiterate our position that the full implementation of the existing commitments remains essential for enhancing military transparency and political stability in the OSCE area.

Equally, we wish to recall the Ministerial commitment from Hamburg 2016 to work towards creating an environment conducive to reinvigorating arms control and Confidence and Security-Building Measures in Europe. In this regard, we value the Structured Dialogue as a meaningful, state-owned and state-driven process for in-depth exchanges on the current and future challenges and risks to security in the

OSCE area and we will continue to actively support it.

Mr. Chair, we were pleased to have the regular exchanges during your Chairmanship on the implementation of UNSCR 1325. The EU underscores that this topic should remain high on our agenda, as it is of the greatest importance for the OSCE in general and the FSC in particular. We furthermore underline that gender equality which is a cross-cutting issue covering all three dimensions remains a priority for the EU within the OSCE.

In conclusion, we look forward to the incoming Austrian FSC Chairmanship whom we assure of our full support. We wish Austria a good restart after the recess and every success on the way to the Ministerial Council in Stockholm.

The Candidate Countries REPUBLIC of NORTH MACEDONIA*, MONTENEGRO*, and ALBANIA*, 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.