



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation Nr 644 Vienna, 11 May 2011

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

The European Union warmly welcomes Italy as the new Chair of the Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC). We wish Kazakhstan every success in its new role in the FSC Troika and thank Ireland, who is leaving the Troika, for its efforts over the past year.

The EU thanks H.E. Ambassador Gianfranco Varvesi for his Opening Statement and H.E. Giuseppe Cossiga, Deputy Minister of Defence of Italy, for his comprehensive statement. The EU supports the plans set out by the Italian FSC Chairmanship, which provide an excellent framework for working towards our common goals, including its plans for the Security Dialogue, which remains a valuable forum for addressing current security issues.

On this occasion the EU expresses its appreciation for the excellent work done in the first trimester by the Icelandic Chairmanship. Iceland oversaw the adoption of very important decisions on the destruction of conventional ammunition and on the High-Level Seminar on Military Doctrine. Important steps were also made on progressing our discussions on the updating of the Vienna Document 1999 (VD99). Iceland took over the FSC Chairmanship at a demanding time just after the Astana Summit, and their steady, careful and competent handling of the Forum's agenda have left us well-placed to make meaningful progress in the run up to Vilnius.

Italy assumes the Chair of this Forum at a crucial period, facing the challenging task of steering the modernisation of the VD99. We reiterate that the EU considers strengthening conventional arms control, including progress on the CFE regime, as well as enhancing and modernising confidence and security building measures (CSBMs) as a priority. Another key EU goal is strengthening

OSCE capabilities in all three dimensions to promote early warning, conflict prevention and resolution, crisis management and post-conflict rehabilitation.

The “Astana Commemorative Declaration: Towards a Security Community” specifically refers to issues pertaining to the work of the FSC and sets goals for the politico-military dimension: apart from reaffirming eminent politico-military principles enshrined in the OSCE Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security (Code of Conduct), it confirms that conventional arms control and CSBMs should be revitalized, updated and modernized and makes prominent reference to the updating of the VD99 by the FSC. It also calls for achieving greater unity in facing proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and illicit trafficking in Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW). These taskings from the highest political level will guide our further discussions and negotiations in the FSC. We must translate them into meaningful results.

In this light, the EU hopes that in the coming months the FSC will take forward the ongoing negotiations and will substantially update the VD99, including Chapters V and IX, in order to maintain its relevance in promoting military transparency and to fulfil the tasking set for us by our Heads of State or Government in Astana. The EU remains fully committed to playing a constructive role in this process and calls on all participating States to engage fully in the process.

The EU recalls again the adoption of the OSCE Plan of Action on SALW and supports its implementation. The EU will continue to make its contribution to OSCE activities in this field that complement the EU’s own efforts, including funding projects on SALW and Stockpiles of Conventional Ammunition.

The EU attaches great importance to the full implementation and the promotion of the Code of Conduct and reiterates its support for discussions on establishing periodic implementation assessment meetings. In particular, the EU welcomes the discussion on the implementation of the Code of Conduct planned by the Italian Chairmanship and looks forward to an early decision on the Reference Guide on the Questionnaire.

The EU looks forward to the High-Level Seminar on Military Doctrine later this month. We hope that this Seminar with a broad and high-level participation of all participating states will also provide a valuable contribution to confidence and trust amongst the participating States.

Mr. Chairman, the EU looks forward to co-operating with the Italian FSC Chairmanship during this important period and stands ready to engage constructively in the framework of this Forum.

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

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