



EUROPEAN UNION

62nd Joint Meeting of the Forum for Security Cooperation and the Permanent Council Vienna, 9 March 2016

EU statement on European Security

The European Union and its Member States warmly welcome the distinguished guests Mr. Andreas Michaelis, Political Director, German Federal Foreign Office and Prof. dr. Joris Voorhoeve, Professor of International Organisations, Leiden University, to this joint FSC/PC meeting. We thank the speakers for their stimulating presentations.

At the outset, we must underline that international law and the fundamental principles of the OSCE, including the respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, and inviolability of borders of States and freedom of States to choose their own security arrangements, must be strictly observed by all participating States.

Adherence to these fundamental principles is essential to return to the path of stability and security in Europe. Lack of their observance has led to the loss of mutual trust and confidence. Russia's aggression against Ukraine, its illegal annexation of Crimea and Sevastopol and deliberate destabilisation of eastern Ukraine must be reversed. These acts represent a most serious violation of international law, as well as OSCE principles and commitments, thus undermining the European rule-based security order.

We deeply regret that the security situation in eastern Ukraine is deteriorating. It has severely affected the civilian population and it further worsens the already grave humanitarian situation. The SMM monitors experience restrictions on an almost daily basis and heavy weapons and foreign armed formations are yet to be withdrawn. We call on all sides to adhere to the Minsk Agreements and to take immediate action to consolidate the ceasefire and move towards a sustainable political solution in line with OSCE principles and commitments.

Against the backdrop of the crisis in European security there is an urgent need to further strengthen the OSCE's ability to respond to crises based on its comprehensive concept of security, as well as to make better use of all the OSCE's capacities and mechanisms. We need to strengthen the OSCE's effectiveness across the conflict cycle and to achieve tangible progress in resolution of the protracted conflicts in Georgia and the Republic of Moldova, and of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

The OSCE concept of comprehensive security has proven its enduring relevance. There can be no lasting security and stability without respect for democracy, the rule of law, human rights and fundamental freedoms.

The crisis in and around Ukraine reminds us that the instruments for conventional arms control and CSBMs hold significant potential for early warning and conflict prevention, if applied and fully implemented, in letter and spirit. We remain committed to their full implementation. At the same time, given the significant changes in the security environment over the past years, we encourage all participating States to display the necessary political will in order to achieve progress in updating and modernising the politico-military toolbox. We remain convinced that full implementation of a strengthened Vienna Document will further contribute to increasing military stability, transparency and predictability and thus be beneficial for all of us.

Madame Chair, the High-Level Military Doctrine Seminar three weeks ago reminded us of the multifaceted security challenges ahead. We are facing a more connected, contested and complex world. The traditional distinction between internal and external policy has become increasingly blurred, for example on hybrid warfare, terrorism and cyber security. It is necessary for the OSCE to reinforce its efforts in addressing transnational threats, as well as current challenges such as the refugee and migratory flows, with a cross-dimensional approach. We were also reminded of the immense importance of partnerships, and the need to tackle the new security challenges in the OSCE region and its neighbourhood to the east and across the Mediterranean. The European Union and its Member States are in the process of strategic reflection, led by the High Representative, aimed at developing a broad EU Global Strategy on Foreign and Security Policy to guide the European Union's global

actions in the future. We are trying to bring together a broad set of instruments at our disposal, including CSDP missions, to act comprehensively and contribute to our shared objectives of conflict resolution, peace and stability on our continent.

Several speakers at the High-Level Military Doctrine Seminar suggested that, given the enormous security challenges we face, it was a high time to exploit the value of the OSCE as a platform for dialogue, based on the need to respect international law and fundamental principles of the OSCE. We agree, and overcoming the current crisis depends on the latter. As part of this, we should seize every opportunity for genuine dialogue, based on good faith and political will, with a view to reinvigorating Conventional Arms Control and CSBM regimes.

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

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