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**EUROPEAN UNION**

## **Joint meeting of the OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation and the Permanent Council**

**Vienna, 20 March 2019**

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### **EU Statement on Security Sector and Governance Reform**

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The European Union and its Member States warmly welcome the speakers to the Joint meeting of the Forum for Security Co-operation and the Permanent Council and thank them for their insights. We thank the Secretary General for the first report on the OSCE approach to SSG/R, which provides a very useful contribution to our exchange. The work on SSG/R provides a very good example of close cooperation across the OSCE executive structures including the autonomous institutions and field missions.

This joint FSC-PC is an important step in helping to provide common ground on the important topic of SSGR, following on from the informative briefing on 8 March, initiatives under previous Chairmanships as well as the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly resolution on SSG/R last year.

An inclusive, accountable and democratically controlled security sector, with full respect for human rights and the rule of law, is a crucial component to enhance the security of local communities and the population at large, but also at the level of individuals, to build trust. Therefore, a population's confidence in its security sector is an indispensable precondition for peace, security, and development. SSG/R is enshrined in the concept of comprehensive security, making it a core element of the OSCE's work. Indeed, the OSCE guidelines on SSG/R provide a good basis for further work. The OSCE is therefore well positioned to promote a comprehensive, cross-dimensional and inclusive approach, including civil society. Another essential aspect is the full, equal and active involvement of women in SSG/R and that women's participation in the security sector on a strategic and operational level is promoted.

The OSCE is of course not the only relevant multilateral actor in this field. It is key that the OSCE engage with other institutions on a common approach to our regional security and defence challenges, including through improved SSG/R cooperation from different

international missions in country. We also consider it vital to learn from the national experiences of bilateral partners.

The EU's strategic framework guides *short-, mid- and long-term* EU engagement in the area of SSG/R. The objective is to ensure complementarity and coherence of these SSG/R-related actions with programmes in the wider governance spectrum, including rule of law, justice and public administration reform – not only within the EU but also with other partners. The EU supports, under its development cooperation programmes, the governance and capacity of the security sector of partner countries to respond to their security needs – both civil and military. Moreover, the EU has two dedicated SSG/R missions: the European Union Advisory Mission for Civilian Security Sector Reform Ukraine (EUAM) and the EU Advisory Mission in support of Security Sector Reform in Iraq (EUAM Iraq). Many other EU Common Security and Defense Policy Missions incorporate SSG/R elements into their mandates.

Close co-operation with and between the EU and the OSCE, the UN and other relevant actors is therefore absolutely crucial, particularly in the implementation of UNSCR 2151. This co-operation facilitates and fosters a common understanding with respect to concepts, approaches and processes related to SSG/R, and should therefore enhance effectiveness of related support. National ownership, democratic control and accountability and gender-responsiveness are some of the central elements of this common understanding of SSG/R.

Experience shows that where capacity building is carried out in a limited manner, isolated from the political landscape, the tendency is to fall back on 'train and equip approaches'. These approaches tend to treat the problem as one of capacity deficit, neglecting the fact that dysfunction is often the result not only of weak capacity but of a particular constellation of detrimental political incentives. There may, for example, be political barriers to reform. Thus, both political will and capacity are needed to carry out such reform. Experience also shows that where donors are more flexible, devolve decision-making, engage beyond the short term, work on specific security and justice problems and coordinate among themselves, SSG/R is more likely to succeed.

The need to incorporate best practice is also important. Lessons around the implementation of SSG/R should be incorporated into a wider Security Sector strategy and consider the political economy and broader political dynamics of the recipients. Sustained SSG/R as part of an integrated approach to conflict prevention and building peace and security has a higher chance of lasting success.

We would like to take this opportunity to applaud the OSCE Executive Structures for the progress made to date in implementing the OSCE Guidelines on SSG/R. We note the mapping study published by DCAF for a number of multilateral organisations, including the OSCE.

We would also like to thank Ambassador Bohac for his efforts as Chair of the Group of Friends of SSG/R. We see merit in advancing the discussion on SSG/R within the OSCE across the dimensions and in opening discussions to all participating States. We regard today's discussion as another good step forward as it helps to provide common ground. In this regard we would like to invite SG to elaborate on the recommendations for the way ahead in his report and how best to take these forward. We see particular merit and an

opportunity to advance the initiative on promoting women's participation in the Security Sector.

We look forward to further discussions in this field under the Slovak Chairmanship, including on how to strengthen the effectiveness and coherence of the OSCE's approach.

The Candidate Countries NORTH MACEDONIA\*, MONTENEGRO\*, SERBIA\* and ALBANIA\*, the Country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and Potential Candidate BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA, the EFTA countries ICELAND and LIECHTENSTEIN, members of the European Economic Area, as well as the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA, GEORGIA and ANDORRA align themselves with this statement.

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