



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation Nr 710 Vienna, 20 February 2013

EU Statement on Presentation by the Ministry of Defence of Kazakhstan

The European Union (EU) welcomes Colonel Aubakirov to the FSC and thanks him for his presentation on Kazakhstan's defence policy and the role of the armed forces. Our gratitude goes also to the FSC Chairmanship for having organised this Security Dialogue which offers another opportunity to exchange views on defence and security policies of the OSCE participating States.

The EU and Kazakhstan are negotiating a new enhanced Partnership and Cooperation Agreement to further develop relations and strengthen our cooperation. On a regional level the EU Foreign Affairs Council has expressed its readiness to strengthening dialogue and cooperation on security matters of common concern, in the context of the EU Central Asia Strategy.

In this context, we have noted the ongoing efforts to modernise Kazakhstan's armed forces. We appreciate efforts aiming to increase security and stability at the regional and global level.

Central Asia has a particular importance due to its proximity to Afghanistan, and we value the priority that Kazakhstan accords to promoting a stable Afghanistan, and its efforts to facilitate international efforts in this regard by, inter alia, hosting in April 2013 the ministerial meeting of the Heart of Asia process.

Kazakhstan's OSCE Chairmanship in 2010 and its FSC Chairmanship in 2011 in the run-up to the Vilnius Ministerial Council helped to

strengthen the OSCE's instruments in the politico-military dimension. We also note positively Kazakhstan's cooperation with the OSCE Centre in Astana on various politico-military instruments and activities. We encourage the relevant bodies in Astana to continue this valuable cooperation.

Let me thank Colonel Aubakirov again for his presentation as well as the Chair for organizing it.

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 candidate countries ALBANIA and BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA, the European Free Trade Association country NORWAY, member of the European Economic Area, as well as the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA 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 EFTA and the European Economic Area.