



EUROPEAN UNION

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**OSCE Permanent Council N° 1166
Vienna, 30 November 2017**

**EU Statement in response to Lt. Col. Helmut Napiontek,
OSCE Representative to the Latvian-Russian Joint
Commission on Military Pensioners**

The European Union welcomes the OSCE Representative to the Latvian-Russian Joint Commission on Military Pensioners, Lieutenant Colonel Helmut Napiontek to the Permanent Council.

We thank you for your latest annual report in which you indicate that very few issues remain on the agenda.

We note that the number of eligible personnel falling under the special provisions of the 1994 Bilateral Agreement has dropped from 22.320 in 1994 to 7.701 as of 1 October 2017. We share your assessment that the most encouraging trend is the fact that no more military pensioners have made individual complaints since 2008.

We note that one unresolved issue is an increased Russian reimbursement for medical care expenses for military pensioners, in which the Representative only plays a marginal role, as you have underlined. We trust that the sides will continue working to find a mutually acceptable solution.

As you also reported in 2016, we recall your assessment that there are no new fundamental issues concerning the work of the Representative. At the same time you note that it is impossible to rule out individual complaints from military pensioners which could warrant OSCE involvement. We can share your conclusion that the function of a Representative should continue to exist on a stand-by basis, acting only if requested. In this regard, we note that no changes are foreseen in the budget request for 2018.

We take note of your wish to conclude your engagement as OSCE Representative to the Latvian-Russian Joint Commission on Military Pensioners.

We wish to thank you very much for the professional way in which you discharged your mandate throughout the last fifteen years, to the benefit of the parties to the Bilateral Agreement and of all the persons concerned. We appreciated your work and personal engagement very much and wish you all the best.

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

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