



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Permanent Council No 1149 Vienna, 8 June 2017

EU statement in response to the Address by the Secretary General of the Organization for Democracy and Economic Development – GUAM, Mr. Altai Efendiev

The European Union warmly welcomes the Secretary General of the Organisation for Democracy and Economic Development – GUAM, Mr. Altai Efendiev, to the Permanent Council and thanks him for his presentation.

We are supportive of non-exclusive regional cooperation initiatives that can contribute to improving stability and security at the regional level. The EU's framework for cooperation with the GUAM countries is the Eastern Partnership, is based on a shared commitment to the principles of international law and to fundamental values, including democracy, the rule of law and the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, as well as to market economy, sustainable development and good governance. Our cooperation aims at stabilisation and strengthening the state and societal resilience in the region.

At the same time, we continue to witness grave violations of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity. Russia's violation of international law, its illegal annexation of Crimea and Sevastopol, and its destabilising actions in eastern Ukraine, on top of protracted conflicts in the wider Black Sea region, challenge the European security order at its core. The EU remains firm in its support to the sovereignty, territorial integrity, unity and independence of Ukraine within its internationally recognised borders.

Also the resolution of the protracted conflicts - in the Republic of Moldova, Georgia and of the Nagorno Karabakh conflict - is a top priority for the European Union and enhanced efforts should be made at all levels to stir political will in order to make tangible progress for conflict resolution based on the principles

and norms of the OSCE and of international law. We furthermore encourage progress towards the resolution of the conflicts within the existing agreed formats, namely the 5+2 Process, the Geneva International Discussions and the OSCE Minsk Group. The status quo is highly detrimental to the security of the whole OSCE area.

As stated in the EU's Global Strategy for the Union's Foreign and Security Policy which was adopted last year, it is in the interest of our citizens to invest in the resilience of states and societies in our neighbourhood. We are committed to driving forward the Eastern Partnership agenda and, where appropriate, to cooperate with regional organisations.

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 as well as UKRAINE, the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA and GEORGIA align themselves with this statement.

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