



EUROPEAN UNION
OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation N°879
Vienna, 14 March 2018

**EU Statement on the Closing of the Session under Slovak
Chairmanship**

Mr. Chairman, the European Union and its Member States would like to thank you and your able team for the excellent cooperation, the choice of topics and your innovative approach.

We commend your efforts to reinvigorate the discussion at the WG A on the Vienna Document, our main politico-military agreement on confidence and security building measures. Focused discussions on concrete VD+ proposals reminded us again of the need to update and modernise the Vienna Document, given the developments in military sphere, as well as the changed security environment. We thank all delegations that contributed actively to these discussions and encourage their continuation. We are convinced that an update of the Vienna Document would provide for more military transparency and predictability, thus avoiding risk of miscalculation and enhancing trust and confidence among participating States. In our view, this would be beneficial for all participating States and outweigh political reservations to engage in negotiations on the VD modernisation. We welcome the incoming Slovenian FSC Chairmanship's intention to continue discussion of Vienna Document modernisation proposals at WGA.

We appreciate your choice of topics for discussion. We would like to use the opportunity to highlight some of them, which we deem particularly important and successful.

The two sessions on Small Arms and Light Weapons and Stockpiles of Conventional Ammunition (SALW/SCA) were highly pertinent, given the important work of the OSCE in this field. The adoption of the OSCE best practice guide on SALW deactivation, as well as the discussion on the upcoming Third Review Conference of the UN PoA and the OSCE's contribution to the process, should be further stressed in this context as important achievements of your tenure. We also congratulate you on the successful joint session of the FSC and the PC on the topic of

SSG/R, enabling us to consider the issue from a cross-dimensional perspective. This is fully in line with the EU comprehensive approach to SSG/R and, as the discussion has shown, key to its success.

Before concluding, we would like to use the opportunity to thank you and your excellent team for the great cooperation. We wish you every success, including with a view to your upcoming OSCE Chairmanship next year. You can count on our support. We look forward to working with the incoming Slovenian FSC Chair in the next trimester.

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 countries ICELAND, LIECHTENSTEIN and NORWAY, members of the European Economic Area, as well as UKRAINE, the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA, GEORGIA, ANDORRA and SAN MARINO 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.