



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Annual Security Review Conference, Vienna, 24-26 June 2014

EU Statement on Ensuring Security and Stability in the OSCE Region in Light of Recent Developments with Respect to Ukraine

(Special Session)

Mr Chairman,

The EU welcomes this special and very pertinent session. We thank the two keynote speakers for their valuable presentations. We are very pleased to have the new foreign minister of Ukraine, Pavlo Klimkin, with us today at this crucial point in time for Ukraine and for the rest of Europe. Allow me to make a few points on the situation in Ukraine, the role of the OSCE and reflections on lessons learned:

First, let there be no doubt that what we have seen happening in Ukraine is a serious setback for peace and stability in Europe. We continue to strongly condemn the Russian Federation's illegal annexation of Crimea and Sevastopol, in clear breach of international law as well as fundamental OSCE principles and commitments, and we will not recognise it.

The European Union welcomes Petro Poroshenko as new President of Ukraine. It supports the peace plan as a major chance for de-escalation and commends the President's determined actions towards peace and stability in Ukraine since his inauguration, against the backdrop of increased violent activities by pro-Russia separatists in Eastern Ukraine and the daily loss of lives, in particular the recent downing of a Ukrainian military aircraft killing 49 persons near Luhansk. This is occurring despite the encouraging talks held with the participation of representatives of the Russian Federation and the OSCE Chairman-in-Office, upon President Poroshenko's initiative, as well as direct high-level contacts between Ukrainian and Russian authorities. It is now all the more important that they bring rapid and tangible results.

The EU calls on all sides to agree and honour a ceasefire immediately in order to stabilise the security situation, achieve a genuine de-escalation and create the necessary conditions for President Poroshenko's peace plan to be implemented. In this regard, the EU calls on the Russian Federation to adopt effective measures to stop the continued flow of illegal fighters, arms and equipment over the border into Ukraine, to use its influence on the separatists to stop the violence and lay down their arms, to continue withdrawing and refrain from gathering troops again near the Ukrainian border and to cancel the mandate of the Federation Council to use force on Ukrainian soil. The EU also urges the Russian Federation to use its influence to ensure the immediate release of the OSCE monitors and other kidnapped persons held hostage by the armed separatists.

The EU will continue its efforts to assist Ukraine in overcoming the crisis and to promote growth and development in the country. We welcome the choice Ukraine has made to enter into an Association Agreement with the EU and we look forward to the signing of the economic part of the Association Agreement, including the DCFTA, this Friday. The future of Ukraine is for the Ukrainian people to decide. That is unequivocal. External pressure and violent aggression must not be used to try and prevent the free choice of the Ukrainian people. We call on all parties to respect the choices of Ukraine.

Secondly, throughout this crisis the OSCE has demonstrated that it can play an important and valuable role and we commend the Chairmanship the OSCE structures for acting swiftly and promptly. Within days the Human Rights Assessment Mission was deployed and the National Dialogue project launched. The Special Monitoring Mission (SMM) had people on the ground within a few hours after the decision to establish the mission. The Project Coordinator in Ukraine responded to the new demands and the heads of the three autonomous institutions all demonstrated their strong engagement in Ukraine. ODIHR organised its biggest election observation mission in recent years. Visits and inspections were conducted within the framework of the Vienna Document. We welcome the intention of President Poroshenko to continue to draw on OSCE expertise and assistance in solving this crisis, including by promoting a

Ukrainian-led and -owned national dialogue involving all relevant stakeholders and all the regions of Ukraine.

Finally, is there a lesson learned for the future of the OSCE? This crisis has clearly shown the value of the OSCE, but it also demonstrates the vulnerability of the Organisation when one participating State blatantly violates fundamental commitments and principles. The OSCE could not prevent the crisis and we should consider any lessons we should learn from that. But it is now contributing to stability and solving the crisis. We cannot carry on as if nothing has happened. We can also not move forward without the rebuilding of trust, but as we highlighted this morning, respect for fundamental OSCE principles and commitments is a basic precondition for this to happen. There is still time for Russia to reverse current developments. We believe the crisis underlines the need for the OSCE to focus on the full implementation of OSCE commitments and principles and to strengthen our capacity to respond when these commitments are challenged.

Mr Chairman, I hope these points and reflections may contribute to our discussion and I look forward to a fruitful and open exchange of views.

The Candidate Countries the FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA*, MONTENEGRO*, ICELAND+, the Country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and Potential Candidate ALBANIA, and the EFTA countries LIECHTENSTEIN and NORWAY, members of the European Economic Area, as well as UKRAINE, GEORGIA and SAN MARINO align themselves with this statement.

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

+ Iceland continues to be a member of the EFTA and of the European Economic Area.