



**EUROPEAN UNION**

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**EU Statement in Response to the Presentations by the  
Chairs of the Security Committee and the Human  
Dimension Committee**

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The European Union thanks the Chairs of the Security and of the Human Dimension Committees for their leadership in taking work forward in the first and third Dimensions and for reporting on their activities for this year.

We thank Ambassador Gonzalez Roman and her able team for providing a platform for the exchange of best practice on the implementation of the OSCE's Ministerial commitments as well as on OSCE-specific tools and expertise relating to preventing and countering transnational threats. The priorities of the Italian Chairmanship of countering illicit trafficking of cultural heritage and addressing the challenges posed by the return of Foreign Terrorist Fighters were vividly discussed and very well prepared throughout the year. We therefore very much regret that consensus was not found on these important topics at the Ministerial Council last week. We trust this work to continue next year. The Committee also addressed new topics, such as soft target protection and new offensive capacities. We supported your operational focus and the mainstreaming of human rights and gender as we are convinced that our efforts to prevent and counter transnational threats will only be effective if we uphold human rights and the rule of law.

We would like to thank Ambassador MacLeod and her able team for the impressive work done as Chair of the Human Dimension Committee during the past two years. We express our gratitude to the entire UK Human Dimension team for the remarkable achievement at the Milan Ministerial Council. We commend the inclusive and interactive approach you have given to the Human Dimension Committee meetings, which has contributed

to the involvement of a broad range of stakeholders and to more engaging discussions. We also appreciate the practice - in fact in both Committees - of providing concept papers to steer the discussions and we can only encourage the future Chairs of the Committees to follow this example. We welcome, in particular, the focus on the fundamental freedoms of expression, association and assembly, religion or belief, as well as on democracy and gender issues.

The Human Dimension Committee makes an important contribution in following up on human dimension discussions in the Permanent Council and at annual Human Dimension events, such as HDIM. The Human Dimension should remain at the forefront of our work and we trust that the great work done in the Committee will be continued in the years to come, thus contributing to further strengthening our commitments.

Finally, a few comments that relate to all Committees. First, we have appreciated the involvement of a broad range of stakeholders in the work of the Committees during last year, particularly by inviting speakers – women and men - from civil society, the private sector, autonomous institutions and field missions, as well as from other international organisations. Secondly, we also valued the joined Committees' meetings on transnational organised crimes which damage the environment, on combatting trafficking of human beings and on women, peace and security and combating violence against women. Finally, we appreciated the continued practice of voluntary reporting in the Human Dimension Committee and the Security Committee and for more structured sharing of experiences. We thank those participating States that made efforts and presented voluntary reports and encourage others to make use of this agenda item and share their experience next year. We recommend the compendium of good practices in the Security Committee to be regularly updated and distributed to participating States. We thank also the Secretariat for the support it has provided to the work of the Committees, not least last week in Milan but throughout the year, and for regularly reporting on its activities.

In concluding, I wish to express the full support of the European Union and its Member States to the important work that Ambassadors Gonzalez Roman and MacLeod have conducted this year. We stand ready to support and contribute to the work of the Committees next year.

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 and LIECHTENSTEIN, members of the European Economic Area, as well as the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA, GEORGIA, ANDORRA, 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.