



## EUROPEAN UNION

### **21<sup>st</sup> Meeting of the OSCE Ministerial Council Basel, 5 December 2014**

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#### **EU Statement on “Fight against Terrorism: Common Challenges within and beyond the OSCE area” at Plenary Session II**

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The European Union and its Member States thank the Ministers of Turkey, Malta, and Thailand for their fruitful insights to open the debate on one of the most relevant security topics of today: the fight against terrorism. The relevance of the topic has again been underlined by the OSCE at this Ministerial Council, where we are about to adopt declarations on Foreign Terrorist Fighters and on Kidnapping for Ransom.

The resilience of terrorist groups, and their ability to regenerate and take new forms, must not be underestimated. There is no better example than ISIL/Da'esh and its predecessor organisations: In 2010, most of Al Qaida's top leaders had been killed or captured. At present, ISIL/Da'esh controls great swathes of Iraq and Syria, has huge assets at its disposal, and is attempting to extend its influence to South Asia, North Africa, and elsewhere. The threat emanating from terrorists organisations such as Al Qaeda and its splinter groups also remains real and potent.

Excellences, Ladies and Gentlemen, combatting terrorism and violent extremism that leads to terrorism requires a long-term and comprehensive approach by the whole international community. We recall that the EU and its Member States welcomed the adoption of UNSCRs 2170 and 2178, which have both helped sharpen the focus of the international Counter Terrorism framework in some important thematic areas, in particular with regard to foreign terrorist fighters, where a EU strategy is being developed.

We strongly support action under UNSCR 2170 to tackle the sources of ISIL/Da'esh's wealth and weapons. We also welcome the 1267 Monitoring Team report and its recommendations. The EU and its Member States are ready to continue supporting capacity building to counter the financing of terrorism.

The EU co-operates closely with the UN on counter terrorism. One of the main areas of our cooperation is in the field of Countering Violent Extremism, which is also a crucial component of the OSCEs work on counter terrorism.

As outlined in the 2005 EU Counter Terrorism Strategy, the EU pursues an integrated approach to counter terrorism, combining prevention, protection, pursuit of and the response to terrorist threats and attacks.

In addition, the EU recently adopted a revised Strategy to Combat Radicalisation and Recruitment to Terrorism. In this context, we have

also opened a dialogue with Internet companies on how to confront radicalisation online and have agreed upon establishing joint training activities for law enforcement, industry and civil society.

We are further developing a package of measures to help build the capacity of third countries most affected by the terrorist threat.

We support, for example, several counter terrorism initiatives in South East Asia, including by funding a 2-year capacity building programme for ASEAN countries. We are further developing a programme of activities focussed on Syria, Iraq and countries in the Middle East and North Africa affected by the Syria crisis and ISIL/Da'esh. In this regard, work focussed on counter-radicalisation and counter terrorism strategic communication are priorities for action, alongside improving the effectiveness of border and aviation security. Additionally, we are launching a regional initiative on Countering Violent Extremism in the Sahel/Maghreb.

Excellences, Ladies and Gentlemen, the Global Counter Terrorism Forum (GCTF), of which the EU is a member, is one of the most important new initiatives in the global fight against terrorism. Together with Turkey, we co-chair the Global Counter Terrorism Forum's Working Group on the Horn of Africa, where we currently conduct a mapping exercise of the region. We fully support the International Institute of Justice and the Rule of Law in Malta, established in the framework of the GCTF. This institute has an important role to play in

providing rule of law based training to justice sector stakeholders on how to address terrorism and related transnational criminal activities.

Counter terrorism activities cannot be seen in isolation from other work. We are working to mainstream Counter Terrorism and Countering Violent Extremism into all relevant EU activities and we call on all OSCE participating States and Partners for Co-operation to do the same.

As a regional organisation under Chapter VIII of the UN Charter, the OSCE plays an important role in countering transnational threats on the basis of its comprehensive concept of security and in full respect of OSCE commitments. The OSCE works to strengthen cooperation among, and capacities of, its participating States and Partners. We recall that all OSCE participating States are committed to implement all measures addressing transnational threats in full accordance with their commitments in the fields of democracy, human rights, fundamental freedoms and the rule of law, as well as their obligations under international law.

In conclusion, let me thank all speakers one more time for their interesting remarks. We believe that this was an excellent opportunity to exchange views on the important topic of counter terrorism and we welcome the strong involvement of Partners in this debate. We would like to remind that the European Union is committed to pursuing and strengthening cooperation with our Partners, including through the

OSCE, wherever the Organisation can be of assistance with its comprehensive approach to security.

The Candidate Countries FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA\*, MONTENEGRO\*, ICELAND+, SERBIA\* and ALBANIA\*, the Country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and Potential Candidate BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA, and the EFTA country NORWAY, member 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.

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