



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation N°846 Vienna, 22 February 2017

EU Statement on Politico-military activities undertaken by the OSCE Missions

The European Union and its Member States warmly welcome the speakers, CPC Deputy Director Mr. Lonsdale, Head of OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina Ambassador Moore and the Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine Ambassador Verba, to the Forum for Security Co-operation and thank them for their interesting presentations.

We commend the Romanian FSC Chair for including the work of the OSCE field missions in the politico-military dimension on the FSC agenda. We see the OSCE field presences as an important asset of our Organisation and highly value their work across all three dimensions.

We highly appreciate the activities of the OSCE Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina and commend its contribution to improvement in a number of areas. In the politico-military context, we would particularly highlight the security sector including the disposal of surplus weapons and surplus and obsolete ammunition and stockpile management and oversight of defence, security and intelligence. We in particular congratulate the Mission and the host country on the completion of the SECUP project which has significantly contributed to prevention of theft, proliferation and misuse of the stored assets and we welcome the follow on project SAFE UP. In this context, we would like to encourage the Mission to continue to pay attention to areas where substantial challenges for the authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina still remain, including reform of the security sector, addressing the issue of foreign terrorist fighters and combating extremism and terrorism.

Mr. Chairman, the EU has close links with the countries of the Western Balkans and we welcome Bosnia and Herzegovina's European aspirations. We would like to recall last year's General Affairs Council's conclusions reiterating its unequivocal

commitment to Bosnia and Herzegovina's EU perspective as a single, united and sovereign country and encouraging all authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina to increase the focus on sustainable reforms and overcoming divisive rhetoric rooted in the past as well as actively promoting reconciliation. The EU's commitment to the European perspective of the countries of the region is demonstrated also by the generous support provided by the EU and its MS to various projects, including in the politico-military dimension – be it through UNDP/SEESAC or the OSCE – as already mentioned in this hall a few weeks ago when discussing the security in South-Eastern Europe. Furthermore, the EU has been closely cooperating with countries in the Western Balkans to curb the flows of Illicit Small Arms and Light weapons. This cooperation led to the adoption of an Action Plan on the illicit trafficking of firearms between the EU and the South East European Region for the years 2015-2019.

We equally commend the PCU and its staff for their important work in support of Ukraine's reform process and support their activities to this end, including through funding of projects by the EU and its Member States. In this context, we would draw the attention of the Forum to an ongoing EU-funded project implemented by the PCU which aim to increase Ukraine's capacity for the demining of transportation infrastructure. The activities within the project include building stakeholder consensus on the framework for mine action in Ukraine, as well as training for the relevant authorities on the implementation of IMSMA standards, and procurement of equipment. Also on Mine Action, the EU supports the destruction of stockpiled landmines via the NSPA (NATO Support and Procurement Agency) and has been supporting humanitarian demining in Eastern Ukraine. Furthermore, we are working on a Council Decision in support of OSCE projects on chemical safety and security in Ukraine, which should be seen in the context of UNSCR 1540 implementation.

Finally, we thank once again the speakers as well as the FSC Chairmanship for providing us with the opportunity to exchange views on this interesting topic.

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 country ICELAND, member of the European Economic Area, as well as UKRAINE, the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA and GEORGIA 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.