



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE FSC on 27 February 2019 EU Statement on Regional Cooperation to increase Transparency and Confidence

The European Union and its Member States thank the speakers for their presentations and the Swiss FSC Chairmanship for bringing the topic of regional security cooperation to the attention of this Forum. We have listened with interest to the lessons learnt from other regions on how through cooperation greater transparency and confidence can be achieved.

In this context we underline the important role of the OSCE, as a regional arrangement under Chapter VIII of the UN Charter, in advancing peace and security in Europe. The OSCE, as a multilateral forum for dialogue and negotiation, has over the years led to a number of key commitments being adopted across all three dimensions, including fundamental politico-military agreements notably the Conventional Armed Forces in Europe Treaty, the Open Skies Treaty, the Vienna Document, and the Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security.

The full implementation and further development of the OSCE politico-military toolbox by all participating States is crucial for increasing military security and stability in the OSCE region. Substantial modernisation of the VD is more necessary than ever. There are a number of concrete proposals to modernise the Vienna Document which have already gained significant support amongst OSCE participating States. These updates could reduce military risk, and increase military transparency and predictability. We also recall the ministerial commitment of all participating States at Hamburg in 2016 to work towards creating an environment conducive to reinvigorating arms control and CSBMs in Europe.

Mr. Chairman, you ask in your concept note about the lessons learnt from the implementation of the Dayton agreement. In our view, the Agreement is an outcome of consistent efforts and unwavering political will of the State Parties to re-build security in the aftermath of a terrible war and a tangible contribution to security and stability in Southeast Europe. We continue to believe that this important sub-regional

arms control regime remains a centrepiece of security in the Western Balkans. For us one of the lessons identified from the implementation of the Dayton Agreement is that upholding and building politico-military transparency and trust are essential prerequisites for achieving long term peace and stability and we are interested to learn from the distinguished speaker Mr. Kuzelka how this can be further translated in the OSCE area.

Speaking of regional cooperation, we would also like to share the EU's approach. As mentioned last week in this hall, the European Union itself was created in response to a conflict, and as a way to make such conflicts among us impossible in the future. To guide the EU's actions in the future, the EU Global Strategy was developed identifying five priorities. The first priority, to build the security of our Union, implies stepping up efforts against external threats including terrorism, hybrid threats and cyber. Two important further priorities are investing in the resilience of states and societies to our East and South, as well as applying an integrated approach to conflicts through a coherent use of all policies at the EU's disposal.

The fourth priority is to support cooperative regional orders that offer States and peoples the opportunity to better manage security concerns. The Helsinki Final Act created such order in Europe. The sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of States, the inviolability of borders and the peaceful settlement of disputes, are all key elements of the European security order. These principles must be respected by all OSCE participating states and, where they are violated or challenged must be restored. Moreover, the EU will protect its vital interests through the strengthening of a global order based on international law and generally accepted rules with effective multilateralism as its key principle and the United Nations at its core.

Finally, in line with the EU Global Strategy, the EU will engage with others. In pursuit of our goals cooperation with partner countries, regional bodies and international organisations including the OSCE, the United Nations and NATO, will be essential.

The Candidate Countries the REPUBLIC OF NORTH MACEDONIA*, MONTENEGRO*, SERBIA* and ALBANIA*, the Country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and Potential Candidate BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA, as well as UKRAINE, the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA, AZERBAIJAN, GEORGIA and SAN MARINO align themselves with this statement.

* The Republic of North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.