



EUROPEAN UNION

**OSCE Permanent Council No. 1226
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EU Statement in Response to the Presentation by the Chair of the Security Committee

The European Union warmly thanks the new Chair of the Security Committee for presenting the work programme for this year. Allow me to still pay tribute to Ambassador González Román for her work throughout last year. Today, we warmly welcome her successor Ambassador Cuesta Civís and thank him for accepting to take on the important responsibility of chairing the Security Committee, ensuring also continuity of the work.

The Security Committee offers the valuable and adequate 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 proposed programme for the Committee builds on current commitments and work done during previous Chairmanships. It is in line with the Slovak Chairmanship's priorities and the work programme of the Transnational Threats Department. We support a continuation of an operational focus and appreciate the topics you have selected for the remaining meetings this year.

Respect for human rights should continue to be part and parcel of the work of the Security Committee. 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. Particularly our work to prevent VERLT will benefit from a solid human rights-based approach.

As gender equality remains a key priority for the European Union, we welcome the intention of the Chair to mainstream gender throughout the substantive work of the Committee as well as in the composition of panels. We appreciate that women in the security sector will be a cross-cutting issue and that the meeting in June will be dedicated to gender mainstreaming in law enforcement and criminal justice sectors in the OSCE region.

As you rightly indicated, Ambassador, in our collective efforts, we must avoid addressing threats in silos, and pursue a comprehensive approach to security. Developing effective State institutions, rule of law mechanisms, functioning police, borders, customs as well as fair judiciaries will lead to multiple benefits in preventing and countering transnational threats such as terrorism, organised crime, and trafficking. In other words, a well-functioning security sector with democratic oversight is key, thus we welcome that Security Sector Governance and Reform will be on the agenda of the foreseen meeting of the three Committees in July.

We agree with you, Ambassador, that voluntary reporting by participating States on the implementation of terrorism-related commitments is valuable and should continue. We encourage participating States to make full use of occasions to share best practice to further enrich our exchanges and we value their subsequent collection in the related synopsis of best practices by the Secretariat. From our part, we will of course also seek to contribute. This relates also to our common work to reduce the risk of conflict stemming from the use of Information Communication Technologies, including through the meaningful implementation of the agreed confidence building measures to enhance cyber security.

We strongly support the foreseen active involvement of a broad range of stakeholders in the work of the Committee and related events, as speakers from civil

society, autonomous institutions and field missions can only enrich our exchanges. We know that the youth and security agenda is also a priority to you, which we share. We would welcome a continuation of the working methods, including the circulation of concept notes ahead of the meetings, as these are conducive to a fruitful interaction.

In concluding, I wish to express the full support of the European Union and its Member States to the important work that Ambassador Cuesta Civís and his able team will conduct this year in steering the Security Committee and related events. We wish him every success and we look forward to continuing to work together.

The Candidate Countries NORTH MACEDONIA*, MONTENEGRO*, SERBIA* and ALBANIA*, the Country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and Potential Candidate BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA, the EFTA countries ICELAND and LIECHTENSTEIN, members of the European Economic Area, as well as UKRAINE, the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA, GEORGIA, ANDORRA and SAN MARINO align themselves with this statement.

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