



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Permanent Council Nr 964 Vienna, 5 September 2013

EU Statement in response to the report by the CIO Personal Representative for the Article IV of Annex 1B of the Dayton Peace Accords, Major General Michele TORRES

On behalf of the European Union and its Member States I wish to warmly welcome Major General Michele Torres, in his capacity as the Personal Representative of the Chairperson-in-Office for Article IV of Annex 1B of the Dayton Peace Accords, and thank him for his comprehensive annual report.

Once again we congratulate the four Parties to the agreement on Sub-Regional Arms Control for their effective implementation of this important regime, which evidently contributes significantly to stability and security. We commend and applaud the spirit of cooperation among the Parties that is manifest in the high degree of transparency and trust in the sub-region, at both the political and technical level. The successful operation of Article IV continues to be an exemplar of Arms Control and its associated benefits.

We note the significant progress in the ongoing Transfer of Ownership process and fully support the path to autonomous operation of the agreement by the four Parties. This process, among many other areas of reform and related security sector activities, reflects positively on the Parties, demonstrating their determination to share a secure future and gain access to the opportunities that such stability offers.

We urge the Parties, ably assisted by General Torres, to maintain this momentum and complete the necessary practical and political tasks ahead of them by the end of 2014. In particular, the need for timely consensus on the legal and political amendments to the agreement should be a focus.

Croatia's accession to the EU on 1 July 2013 as well as the April agreement between Belgrade and Pristina to normalise their bilateral relations are important steps to an enhanced stability in the region. It is expected that the increasing normalisation of relations between the countries in the region will bring positive ripple effects, including in contexts such as Dayton Article IV.

Over the course of 2013, at the initiative of the Chairmanship-in-Office, Secretary General and several participating States, there have been several discussions on Arms Control in various forums, which we welcome. There is clearly a desire among participating States to engage in such strategic, generic dialogue and, therefore, we feel that the success of Article IV provides a source of inspiration and lessons in the field of Arms Control and CSBMs. We continue to believe that the appropriate principles and mechanisms from Dayton Article IV have broader value to the OSCE community and that these could be usefully incorporated into our work in Vienna. Major General Torres' annual report and accumulated experience are good reference points for our future dialogue on these issues.

Once again, I wish to thank Major General Torres for his briefing and express our appreciation to him and his staff for their dedication and expertise. We wish them every success with the challenges ahead.

Mr Chairman, I would like to conclude this intervention by posing some questions:

- General, could you elaborate on what the key lessons of Dayton Article IV are that would be of most interest to the wider OSCE Community?
 - Could you elaborate further on the relationship between the OSCE and the Parties following the closure of your office, in terms of communications, division of responsibilities and the political and practical relationship?
 - Finally, could you explain a little more about the political and legal amendments required to complete the Transfer of Ownership process and outline the timeframe over which these important steps should occur?
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The Candidate Countries the former Yugoslav Republic of MACEDONIA* and ICELAND+, the Country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate ALBANIA, and the EFTA country NORWAY, member of the European Economic Area, as well as ANDORRA and SAN MARINO, align themselves with this statement.

* The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia 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.
