



EUROPEAN UNION

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EU statement on transfer of weapons by Bosnia and Herzegovina to Armenia

Mr Chairperson

The European Union notes with concern the information on the intended export of mortars by Bosnia and Herzegovina to Armenia, presented in the report by the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina circulated under reference number SEC.FR/43/11 dated 31 January 2011 (Mission Bi-weekly Report No. 2/2011).

The EU thanks the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Secretariat for keeping participating States informed of these developments. The EU reminds the participating States of the commitments they have undertaken in relation to the “embargo on all deliveries of weapons and munitions to forces engaged in combat in the Nagorno Karabakh area” as well as the Principles Governing Conventional Arms Transfers.

Mr Chairperson

The intended export raises further concern in the light of a similar transfer of weapons authorized in recent months by Bosnia and Herzegovina to other forces

engaged in combat in Nagorno Karabakh, according to the report of the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina circulated under reference number SEC.FR/516/10 dated 24 September 2010 (Mission Bi-weekly Report No 13/2010). On 13 October 2010, the EU expressed in this same Forum equal concerns related to a transfer of weapons from Bosnia and Herzegovina to Azerbaijan.

In addition to the commitments undertaken in the OSCE context, Bosnia and Herzegovina aligns itself since 2009 with the EU Council Common Position 2008/944/CFSP of 8 December 2008, defining common rules governing control of exports of military technology and equipment. Among the transfer criteria embedded in the EU Common Position are the respect of *"international obligations of Member States and their commitments to enforce United Nations, European Union and Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe arms embargoes"*, and the consideration of the consequences that possible arms transfers would have in terms of *"provoking or prolonging armed conflicts or aggravate existing tensions or conflicts in the country of final destination"*.

The European Union is currently in the process of establishing a technical dialogue with third countries aligning to its Common Position, aiming at establishing precise consultation and information exchange procedures between the EU and aligning countries. Such an initiative would help clarify the implications that alignment to the EU Commons Position entails for aligning third countries. Ultimately, such a consultative approach should favour a preventive rather than reactive solution to future similar cases.

Thank you, Mr Chairperson

Alignments

The candidate countries CROATIA*, the FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA* and ICELAND**, the country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate country SERBIA align themselves with this statement.

*Croatia and 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 the European Economic Area.