



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation Nr 750 Vienna, 26 March 2014

EU Statement on the Situation in Ukraine

The European Union (EU) and its Member States took note of the report of the observation team dispatched to Ukraine by numerous OSCE participating States under paragraph 18 of the Vienna Document which covers the third and final period of its activities from 16 to 20 March 2014.

First and foremost, we would like to commend all the participants in the visit and the Ukrainian escort team for their outstanding professional work carried out throughout the visit in an extremely complex and at times threatening environment. We also extend our appreciation to the Ukrainian authorities for having launched this mission to make full use of the OSCE politico-military instruments amidst a severe political crisis.

In doing so, Ukraine demonstrated a spirit of cooperation and genuine political will to de-escalate tensions on the ground in a multilateral confidence-building framework agreed by all participating States. Such an objective can be achieved only if all sides, and in particular the Russian Federation, are able to show the same level of transparency and openness as Ukraine, in particular by hosting voluntary visits under the Vienna Document. We urge the Russian Federation to reciprocate and also show highest level of openness and transparency.

Unfortunately, the group of visitors could not dispel concerns resulting from increased Russian military activities in the Ukrainian region of Crimea as the team was consistently denied access to the peninsula by armed personnel.

We reiterate that the European Union remains committed to uphold the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine. The European Union does not recognise the illegal referendum in Crimea, which is in clear violation of the Ukrainian Constitution. It strongly condemns the illegal annexation of Crimea and Sevastopol to the Russian Federation and will not recognise it.

The European Council urged, at its meeting on 20 March 2014, that an agreement be promptly reached on an OSCE mission to be deployed in Ukraine as soon as possible, in order to help stabilise the situation. In this context, we welcome Decision No1117 adopted on 21 March 2014 by the Permanent Council on the Deployment of an OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine.

Finally, we encourage all participating States to make full use of all OSCE politico-military instruments and stand ready to support continued Vienna Document activities to this end.

The candidate countries the FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA^{*}, MONTENEGRO and ICELAND^{**}, the countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate countries ALBANIA and BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA, the European Free Trade Association countries LIECHTENSTEIN and NORWAY, members of the European Economic Area, as well as UKRAINE, GEORGIA and SAN MARINO align themselves with this statement.

^{*} The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

^{**} Iceland continues to be a member of EFTA and the European Economic Area.