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**STATEMENT BY
THE EUROPEAN UNION AT THE 856th MEETING OF THE
OSCE FORUM FOR SECURITY CO-OPERATION**

7 June 2017

On the implementation of United Nations Security Council resolution 1540

The European Union and its Member States welcome Mr. Grigory Mashkov, Mr. Terence Taylor and Mr. Valere Mantels to the Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC). We appreciate their participation in the Security Dialogue on ways of fostering the implementation of resolution 1540. We should like to thank the Russian Chairmanship of the FSC for having brought this important subject to the Forum's attention.

Resolution 1540 and its related resolutions are a mainstay in combating the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction to non-State actors and are in complete harmony with the principles underpinning the OSCE.

The EU welcomes the adoption of resolution 2325 by the United Nations Security Council on 15 December 2016. This resolution reaffirms the priorities of resolution 1540, and, in particular, calls upon States to take into account developments on the evolving nature of the risk of proliferation and rapid advances in science and technology which non-State actors can take advantage of for proliferation purposes. The proliferation of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons and their vectors poses a grave threat to international peace and security. At a time when several EU States have been hit by serious terrorist attacks we are extremely concerned by the risk of proliferation to non-State actors.

The use of chemical weapons by the armed and security forces of Syria and Islamic State (IS) since 2012, documented in the reports by the Joint Investigation Mechanism of the UN and the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons weakens the chemical non-proliferation regime and runs the risk of trivializing the use of these weapons. This is borne out by their reappearance in Asia or in the hands of IS in Syria and Iraq. The existing instruments in the Chemical Weapons Convention need to be strengthened and the prohibition of their use respected.

The EU and its Member States reaffirm their resolute support of the United Nations Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540, its Group of Experts and the specific and effective implementation of resolution 1540 so as to foster its implementation and the efforts undertaken at the national, regional and international levels. In that regard, we should like to stress the importance of national implementation reports in the

application of this resolution and of the adoption of national action plans and urge all States that have not already done so to submit or update their national reports.

It is essential that resolution 1540 be implemented in full. The EU has committed itself to this in many ways, both through its Member States and at the international level. In May 2017, the Council of the European Union adopted a new decision in support of resolution 1540 by earmarking 2.67 million euros for its implementation. We have also been financing regional centres of excellence in the nuclear, radiological, biological and chemical (NRBC) fields since 2010. With eight regional secretariats and 54 partner countries, they have been instrumental in strengthening national and regional NRBC management. The research and innovation programme Horizon 2020 serves to promote innovative solutions to protect strategic infrastructures and combat crime and terrorism. The EU and its Member States continue to support the international architecture and non-proliferation instruments such as the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention, the Chemical Weapons Convention, the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and the Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism. We support initiatives such as the G7 Global Partnership Against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction and the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism.

To contribute to and supplement these international instruments, the EU reaffirms its commitment to follow the two sets of guidelines of the Nuclear Suppliers Group for the export of nuclear and related materials. It also supports the activities of the Australia Group, which harmonizes export controls in order to prevent the proliferation of chemical and biological weapons. We firmly believe that these forums are a vital tool for helping participating States in their efforts to combat the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

As a forum for dialogue, the FSC has its own resources for supporting the implementation of resolution 1540. Some have already been put in place, such as the OSCE Contact Points, which are an integral component of the 1540 Committee network and which meet annually. We are also grateful to all participating States that, in the interests of transparency, publish and update their reports on the implementation of resolution 1540. The EU firmly believes that the OSCE has the means and the duty to participate in the promotion of the application of resolution 1540 and related resolutions.

We thank Belarus for its work as FSC Co-ordinator on Non-Proliferation Issues and for co-chairing with Spain the informal Group of Friends of Resolution 1540, which is a useful platform within the OSCE for heightening awareness and exchanging information and best practices between participating States on this important subject. Finally, we should like to thank the Russian FSC Chairmanship for having devoted a Security Dialogue to the implementation of resolution 1540 in the OSCE area.

The candidate countries the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia¹, Montenegro¹, Serbia¹ and Albania¹, the country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Free Trade Association countries and members of the European Economic Area Iceland and Liechtenstein, as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, Georgia, Andorra and San Marino, align themselves with this statement.

1 The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.