



EUROPEAN UNION

ENGLISH only

**56th Joint FSC PC Meeting
Vienna, 30 April 2014**

**EU Statement on the Unusual Military Activities of the Russian Federation and
the Situation in Ukraine**

The European Union and its Member States welcome the convening by the Swiss and Moldovan Chairmanships of this Joint FSC PC meeting to discuss concerns deriving from the on-going unusual and unscheduled military activities of the Russian Federation along the borders with Ukraine. We fully support the Ukraine's request to activate the risk reduction mechanism as foreseen in paragraph 16 of the Vienna Document to dispel serious security concerns, thus providing, also, to the Russian Federation an opportunity to engage in a meaningful dialogue and constructive consultations. The continued and consistent refusal of the Russian Federation to engage in such a dialogue within the framework of the Joint FSC PC meetings could be only seen as a failure to co-operate in a responsible manner and in good faith on the basis of its OSCE politico-military commitments.

We fully share the concerns that have prompted Ukraine to once again make use of the Vienna Document relevant provisions, in particular the re-launch announced by the Russian Minister of Defence on 24th April of intensive military exercises, involving ground and air forces, in sensitive areas adjoining Ukraine. The destabilising consequences of such an act over the volatile security situation in Eastern Ukraine are further amplified by factors such as the authorisation given by the Federation Council to use armed force in Ukraine and the illegal annexation of the Ukrainian region of Crimea by the Russian Federation.

The decision by the Russian Federation to step up its military activities at the borders with Ukraine has been taken despite our repeated appeals, including within this forum, to refrain from any action that is disposed to further fuel tensions and undermine confidence and trust. We recall the Geneva Joint Statement commitment that all sides must refrain from any violence, intimidation or provocative actions. In

the same context, all parties to the Joint Geneva Statement must ensure that its terms are fully implemented, including by using their leverage on illegal groups to stop violence and provocation and to make them hand in their arms. We reiterate our call for restraint and for an end to provocations and aggression that could have far-reaching and dangerous implications. There is an urgent need to avoid further destabilisation in Eastern Ukraine.

We demand the Russian Federation to call back its troops from the borders with Ukraine and immediately withdraw the mandate of the Federation Council to use military force on the Ukrainian soil.

Concurrently, the Russian Federation must create all the necessary conditions in order to immediately restore trust and confidence in the politico-military field, which have been severely damaged by its illegal annexation of Crimea and Sevastopol. In this respect, we call once again upon the Russian Federation to make full use of the existing Conventional Arms Control and CSBM arrangements and commitments in the OSCE area, not only in letter but especially in spirit.

In particular, the Russian Federation is invited to consider and apply the broad range of confidence- and security-building measures foreseen in the Vienna Document as well as in other instruments such as Stabilising Measures for Localised Situations. This includes exercising strict restraint in carrying out military activities in the border areas with Ukraine; sharing verifiable information about on-going and planned military activities in those areas; and hosting voluntary visits and inspections under the relevant provisions of the Vienna Document to confirm information such as that released on 28th April by the Ministry of Defence of the Russian Federation on withdrawal of troops to their permanent bases. In the same vein, we encourage all participating States to show vigilance and make full use of all relevant OSCE politico-military instruments and to further support continued Vienna Document activities to this end.

The efforts of the OSCE and the international community in support of Ukrainian stability and security have been seriously challenged by the abduction of the international military inspectors and their Ukrainian escort team, all of them operating under the OSCE Vienna Document mandate, by illegal armed groups in the vicinity of

Sloviansk. The inspectors and their escort team must be released immediately and unconditionally. We commend the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission for its rapid deployment to Sloviansk and its mediation efforts and welcome the release of one of the inspectors on medical grounds. We urge the Russian Federation to use its influence on the separatists and assist with the release of the inspectors and the Ukrainian escort team. Furthermore, we seek urgent information on the Ukrainian team leader, who has not been seen since the team was abducted.

The European Union reiterates its strong support for Ukraine's unity, sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity within its internationally recognised borders, and calls upon the Russian Federation to do so as well. We also reiterate our strong condemnation of the illegal annexation of Crimea and Sevastopol by the Russian Federation and will not recognise it.

We once again urge the Russian Federation to extend its full support to the immediate release of the international inspectors and the Ukrainian escort team, and to immediately commence meaningful and constructive dialogue on unusual Russian military activities and use all appropriate politico-military tools in order to alleviate worries and contribute to substantially de-escalate tensions.

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.