



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation Nr 754 Vienna, 14 May 2014

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

The European Union and its Member States took note of the report on the Benelux-led Vienna Document inspection and of statements by Ukraine giving a comprehensive picture of the politico-military aspects of the alarming security situation in and around Ukraine, including unusual Russian military activities along the borders with Ukraine, and in the Ukrainian region of Crimea and Sevastopol.

Just two days ago, on 12 May, the EU Council firmly reaffirmed its support for Ukraine's unity, sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity and called upon the Russian Federation to do likewise. The EU will not recognise 11 May's nor any future illegitimate and illegal "referenda".

The European Union reiterates its demand to the Russian Federation to withdraw its troops from the Ukrainian border and immediately revoke the mandate of the Federation Council to use force on Ukrainian soil.

It is high time for the Russian Federation to allow verification of the announced, including by President Putin, withdrawal of Russian troops from the areas bordering Ukraine by, inter alia, offering additional Vienna Document visits and inspections.

In this context, we keep urging the Russian Federation to provide for highest standards of military transparency in order to restore trust and confidence in the OSCE area which have been severely damaged by its illegal annexation of the Ukrainian region of Crimea and Sevastopol.

Maximising genuine security dialogue and cooperation within the FSC, as well as joint FSC-PC meetings, requires all participating States, and in particular the Russian Federation to adhere to the spirit as well the letter of all relevant politico-military commitments and obligations.

We still see as priority areas in this respect commitments related to refraining from the threat or use of force, exercising strict restraint in carrying out military activities in the areas bordering Ukraine and providing verifiable information about on-going and planned military activities in those areas, even if they do not fall under the provisions of the Vienna Document.

Furthermore, we are concerned about SALW and heavy weapons being possessed and used by illegal armed groups in Ukraine. We would like therefore to remind all participating States of their existing commitments laid down, inter alia in the OSCE Document on SALW and the OSCE Principles Governing Conventional Arms Transfers, to combat illicit trafficking of SALW and exercise due restraint in the transfer of conventional arms and related technology with a view to preventing the destabilising accumulation and uncontrolled spread of arms.

We encourage all participating States to make full use of all relevant OSCE politico-military instruments and to further support continued Vienna Document activities which are an important means to enhance military transparency as well as a strong confidence- and security-building measure by its self.

The European Union reconfirms its full commitment to the Geneva Joint Statement of 17 April and reiterates that it must be fully implemented. We welcome the efforts undertaken so far by the Ukrainian authorities to implement the Geneva Agreement and call on the Russian Federation to take effective steps to fulfil their commitments made in Geneva. It is urgent that the Russian Federation calls upon the armed separatists to lay down their weapons and to vacate the buildings they illegally occupy.

In the same vein, on 12 May the EU Council encouraged Ukraine to immediately develop a national disarmament programme together with OSCE specialists targeting all illegally armed groups throughout the country and to end all illegal occupation of public buildings and squares.

To conclude, the European Union reiterates its strong condemnation of the illegal annexation of Crimea and Sevastopol by the Russian Federation and will not recognise it.

The candidate countries the FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA* and MONTENEGRO, the countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate countries ALBANIA and BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA, the European Free Trade Association country NORWAY, member 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.