



## EUROPEAN UNION

### OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation Nr 746 Vienna, 19 February 2014

#### **EU Statement on Illicit Trafficking of Armaments in the Mediterranean Region**

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The European Union (EU) would like to warmly welcome at the Forum for Security Cooperation Dr Abdul Razak Al-Grady, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Libya, and thank him for having addressed the topical theme of Illicit Trafficking in the Mediterranean Region.

As already stated in this Forum, we welcome the attention given by the Maltese Chairmanship to security challenges in the Mediterranean region. We are committed to pursuing and strengthening co-operation with our Mediterranean neighbours on security matters, including through the OSCE, wherever the Organisation can be of assistance with its comprehensive approach to security. In particular, we see merit in further developing the dialogue with our Mediterranean partners in order to raise awareness about OSCE norms and to exchange good practices in the field of combatting illicit trafficking and destabilising accumulation of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) and conventional ammunition.

In this context, we appreciate the Libyan interest for the OSCE and to what the Organisation could bring to the country in all three dimensions of security and warmly welcome the Libya's request to be granted the status of Partner for Cooperation.

We would like to also reiterate, Minister, the European Union's commitment to enhance its cooperation with and assistance to the Libyan government to improve Libya's capacity to manage the security of all its borders and to combat illicit trafficking of armaments and goods, as well as human smuggling and trafficking. In this respect, we underscore the importance of an enhanced regional cooperation and call for the implementation of the recommendations of the 14 November 2013 Rabat Conference by providing the resources required to fulfil its border security obligations.

One important element of the EU's comprehensive answer towards the Libyan needs is the EU Border Assistance Mission. The objectives of EUBAM Libya are to support the Libyan authorities to develop capacity for enhancing the security of Libya's land, sea and air borders in the short term and to develop a broader Integrated Border Management awareness as a long-term objective. The Mission is a key part of the EU's efforts to aid the Libyan transition of state consolidation and economic development.

We would like to congratulate the Libyan authorities for the work achieved up to now regarding the destruction of its chemical arsenal. This has been accomplished in good coordination with the international community. Further work remains to be done, for instance, regarding the remainder of the declared chemicals, and the very important stockpile of conventional arms and ammunition still present in Libya which is posing a serious threat to the security of the Libyan citizens and those in neighbouring countries.

Convinced that a comprehensive international response would best address the nature of this threat, the EU supports the efforts of the Libyan government and the United Nations to secure all stockpiles of arms, in particular MANPADS, in line with UNSCR 2017 (2011) and emphasises the need to continue with their destruction, as appropriate. The EU reaffirms its willingness, in coordination with the UN, to increase assistance to the Libyan government in this area.

A unified government, strong institutions with a clear division of responsibilities and effective executive power are a precondition for effective cooperation. Therefore, we would like to take this occasion to highlight the political significance of the Constitutional Drafting Assembly elections set to take place tomorrow, 20 February 2014, and subsequent drafting process which we see as most important benchmarks in the transition process in Libya.

We would like to thank you once again, Minister, and to wish you every success in your important professional endeavours.

The candidate countries the FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA\*, MONTENEGRO, ICELAND\*\* and SERBIA, 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, the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA and GEORGIA align themselves with this statement.

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\* 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.