



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Permanent Council No. 1287 Vienna, 29 October 2020

EU statement in response to the report by the Director of the Conflict Prevention Centre

The European Union would like to welcome Ambassador Tuula Yrjölä to the Permanent Council and thank her for her report on the activities of the Conflict Prevention Centre (CPC).

Conflict prevention and response to emerging crises are at the very heart of OSCE activities. The most recent developments in the OSCE area have underscored the need for the OSCE to play a central normative role for European security and to be the inclusive platform for dialogue and confidence building. It is important that the Organization has the ability and tools to prevent and respond to crises and conflicts.

The European Union believes that full implementation of MC Decision 3/11 is a prerequisite for strengthening the capabilities in early warning, early action, dialogue facilitation, mediation support and post-conflict rehabilitation across all three dimensions. In this context, we welcome the planned survey to collect feedback on the different phases of the Conflict Cycle, which is particularly timely in the context of the 10th anniversary of Ministerial Council Decision No. 3/11 next year.

Our discussion today takes place against the background of the ongoing conflicts, which pose a very serious threat to the security of the entire OSCE area. The EU is deeply concerned about the current military confrontation in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict zone and calls on the sides to respect the ceasefire and return to the negotiations under the auspices of the Co-Chairs of the Minsk Group.

As to the conflict in eastern Ukraine, the additional measures to strengthen the ceasefire that came into effect on 27 July have led to a substantial improvement of

the security situation along the contact line and are a considerable achievement. In this context, we commend the CPC for its support to the OSCE's engagement in Ukraine. Still, the challenging environment has this year been further aggravated by the Covid-19 pandemic. We remain concerned about the restrictions faced by the Special Monitoring Mission, in particular in the areas adjacent to the Ukraine-Russia State border outside the control of the Ukrainian government. The SMM must have safe, secure, unconditional and unimpeded access to the entire territory of Ukraine, including the areas along the Ukraine-Russia State border, in accordance with its mandate. We continue to believe that the full potential of the OSCE should be used and encourage the CPC to do all it can to maintain cooperation, flow of information, and synergies between OSCE structures, as well as, where appropriate, between OSCE and other international actors, active in Ukraine.

The resolution of these conflicts and of the protracted conflicts in the Republic of Moldova and in Georgia remains a priority for the EU. As this is a core task of the OSCE, it must stay high on the agenda of the Organization. We value the CPC's contribution to the resolution of protracted conflicts, particularly the support provided to the Special Representatives. The EU reiterates its strong support for the existing negotiation formats.

The EU welcomes the work carried out by the CPC to support field operations, especially during the recent challenging period, posed by the Covid-19 pandemic. We continue to support the strong and flexible mandates of field operations, as they play an important role in early warning and in addressing tensions and conflicts. Their work with and across host countries and with civil society is of tremendous importance for early warning, peace building, conflict prevention and mediation. We welcome the ongoing work of the OSCE field operations under the auspices of the CPC to support SSG/R activities.

We also appreciate the role and efforts of the CPC in early warning and early response, for example through the Situation/Communications Room which faced a significantly increased workload this year owing to the surge in crises in the OSCE area, and the challenges posed by the pandemic. The work carried out by the Mediation Support Unit in close co-operation and exchange with the UN, the EU and other counterparts is also highly appreciated.

We reiterate our strong commitment to the full implementation in letter and spirit of the existing principles and commitments in the politico-military dimension. We strongly support the modernisation of the Vienna Document, in order to increase military stability, transparency and predictability in the OSCE area. We are convinced that this would bring more long-term security for all participating States. We support the activities connected to SALW. We highly value the Structured Dialogue as a transparent, inclusive, state-owned, state-driven and confidence building process, without a predetermined outcome and of high relevance for the EU. We thank the CPC for its continued support provided to the Forum for Security Co-operation.

The EU considers the implementation of the 2004 OSCE Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality and of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 and related Resolutions as highly important. We therefore appreciate your commitment to gender mainstreaming, to promoting the role of women in the security sector, their full inclusion and participation in peace processes, and we welcome the activities of the CPC to advance these aims.

We recognize the importance that youth can play in the promotion of security in the OSCE area, including through regional cooperation such as the engagement of the field missions with RYCO in the Western Balkans.

We reiterate that the CPC, the autonomous institutions and field missions must be provided through the UB with the resources necessary to carry out their mandate effectively and efficiently. We agree with you Ambassador that we have a shared political and financial responsibility for collective security and for the OSCE comprehensive conflict cycle toolbox.

Mr. Chairman, we would like to thank the CPC staff and its Director for their valuable work, especially under the current challenging conditions. We continue to fully support the CPC and wish Ambassador Yrjölä and her dedicated staff every success in their future activities.

The Candidate Countries REPUBLIC of NORTH MACEDONIA*, MONTENEGRO* and ALBANIA*, and the EFTA countries ICELAND and LIECHTENSTEIN, members of the European Economic Area, as well as the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA, GEORGIA, ANDORRA and SAN MARINO align themselves with this statement.

* Republic of North Macedonia, Montenegro and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.