



## EUROPEAN UNION

### **OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation Nr 690 Vienna, 12 September 2012**

#### **EU Statement on the Assumption of the Chairmanship of the Forum for Security Co- operation by former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia**

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The European Union (EU) and its Member States welcome the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia as the new Chair of the Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC). We wish Liechtenstein every success as a new member of the FSC Troika and thank Kyrgyzstan, which is leaving the Troika, for its efforts and commitment over the past year.

The EU and its Member States are grateful to H.E. Ambassador Zoran Dabik for setting out the new FSC Chairmanship's plans. We believe these provide a proper framework for the FSC's work during the last trimester of 2012, particularly with a view to ensuring successful preparation for the meeting of the OSCE Ministerial Council in Dublin in December.

We appreciate the excellent and very well focused work done during the second trimester of 2012 by the Latvian FSC Chairmanship and would like to pay special tribute to its successful efforts to put the FSC activities into the broader perspective of the challenges to the current security and strategic environment in the OSCE area. The small but highly efficient team of the Latvian FSC Chairmanship proved to be of paramount importance for the smooth organisation and fruitful conduct of important FSC and OSCE events such as the meeting to review the OSCE Plan of Action on SALW and the first Annual discussion on the implementation of the OSCE Code of Conduct on

Politico-Military Aspects of Security, as well as the FSC contribution to the 2012 ASRC.

It goes without saying that the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia's assumption of the Chairmanship comes at a key moment of the FSC working cycle when the preparations for the Dublin Ministerial Council meeting will have to be carried out in an efficient manner. While stating once again its full support for the FSC Chairmanship's work at this important juncture, we would like to highlight our positions in the run up to Dublin.

The EU and its Member States believe that “further impetus to the negotiations on modernizing the Vienna Document regarding increased military transparency, predictability and stability for all participating States” should be given. Lowering thresholds for notification should be part of a first substantive adaptation, as underlined by the Member States of the EU at the 22<sup>nd</sup> AIAM held on 6<sup>th</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup> March 2012 in Vienna, as well as exploring ways to include selected non-combat units in the annual exchange of military information, increasing opportunities for verification activity, managing costs in connection with these activities, expanding the range of military activities which need to be notified, modernising and updating the exchange of military information, informing partners of at least one major military activity below threshold every year, strengthening risk reduction mechanisms as well as exploring ways in which the scope of CSBMs could be enlarged. This should be done in a cost effective manner with full regard to resource restraints and with the further aim of improving our overall level of implementation. We believe that commitment shown by partners in the updating process is an important contribution to our common efforts to restore confidence and trust among all OSCE participating States.

During the Meeting to Review the OSCE Plan of Action on SALW held in May this year the EU has stated that its implementation could be strengthened and enhanced by developing concrete benchmarks to enable the measurement of its real impact. The Latvian FSC Chair's suggestion of issuing a FSC working programme on SALW as a

flexible and pragmatic way to operationalize the provisions of the Plan of Action is on the right lines and should be supported

Ever since its adoption in 2001 the EU has actively promoted the implementation of the UN Programme of Action to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in SALW in all its aspects which remains the key universal starting point for further action on SALW at national, regional and international levels. In this context we welcome the outcome of the 2012 Review Conference on the UN Programme of Action which should duly be taken into account in order to ensure the synergy and complementarity between OSCE and the UN instruments for combating illicit trade in SALW.

The full implementation of the OSCE Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security (CoC) is of great importance. Having adopted the decisions on awareness-raising and outreach, an update of the Questionnaire, a Reference Guide and an Annual Discussion on the implementation of the CoC, a better assessment and review of its implementation would be welcome. It is regrettable that the yearly information exchanges are not assessed and analyzed; obtaining more meaningful, rather than purely statistical information would be of value.

The EU and its Member States look forward to examining, within the FSC, ways of assisting in the implementation of UNSCR 1325 (2000) and related resolutions on gender and security, in particular in the context of the Code of Conduct Questionnaire. We support also the elaboration of measures that strengthen gender aspects in connection with SALW in the Plan of Action. This should include, *inter alia*, increased representation of women at all decision-making levels in security sector institutions dealing with SALW-related issues. We therefore expect that concrete objectives and tools can be elaborated in the framework of the Plan of Action.

The EU and its Member States attach high importance to the full implementation of UNSCR 1540 (2004) and subsequent resolutions 1673 (2006), 1810 (2008) and 1977 (2011). In particular, we would like to reiterate our strong support for regional and national efforts towards the implementation of UNSCR 1540, including through

information sharing, enhanced cooperation with the UN Security Council Committee established pursuant to UNSCR 1540 and with United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA), as well as provision of effective assistance to those States, that request it. In this context, we believe that due consideration should be given to ensure further sustainability of the OSCE's operational capacities facilitating implementation of UNSCR 1540 and provision of assistance to participating States, at their request.

The EU is aware that the workload of the FSC Chairmanships in 2012 is demanding. We look forward to working constructively with the FSC Troika in order to deliver tangible results and benefits.

The acceding country CROATIA<sup>\*</sup>, the candidate countries MONTENEGRO, ICELAND<sup>\*\*</sup> and SERBIA, the countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates 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, GEORGIA, ANDORRA and SAN MARINO align themselves with this statement.

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<sup>\*</sup> Croatia, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

<sup>\*\*</sup> Iceland continues to be a member of EFTA and the European Economic Area.