

**EUROPEAN UNION****OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation No 815
Vienna, 13 April 2016**

**EU Statement in response to H.E. Marek Ziółkowski,
Under-Secretary of State, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Poland**

The European Union and its Member States warmly welcome Under-Secretary of State Marek Ziółkowski to the FSC, and thank him for outlining the FSC Chairmanship's programme as well as his country's views on the current security situation in the OSCE area.

We agree with Under-Secretary Ziółkowski that the lack of observance of basic principles of international law and the OSCE, including the respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity and inviolability of borders of States, represents a major security challenge in the OSCE area. The Russian Federation's illegal annexation of Crimea and Sevastopol, and destabilising actions in eastern Ukraine have seriously violated these fundamental principles and continue to challenge European security. We regret that after two years of this ongoing crisis, the situation on the ground continues to be volatile and tense with serious repercussions for civilian population. We continue to urge for the full implementation of the Minsk agreements by all sides, based on OSCE's principles and commitments and full respect for Ukraine's independence, sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity, in order to reach a sustainable political solution to the crisis.

Mr. Chairman,

The recent developments along the Line of Contact in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict are of great concern. We condemn the resort to violence, and deplore the loss of life. This escalation has shown that protracted conflicts in our region pose a very serious threat to the security of the entire OSCE area. We welcome the cessation of hostilities and urge the sides to respect the ceasefire. At the same time, we underline the need to achieve tangible

progress in the resolution of the protracted conflicts in the OSCE areas which remains a top priority for us. There is no military solution to these conflicts. In this context, we welcome that the discussion on the security situation in Georgia was put on the FSC agenda as discussion on these issues is timely and pertinent.

We welcome the intention of the Polish Chairmanship to devote special attention to the OSCE confidence and security building measures, in particular to the Vienna Document 2011, especially in view of its reissuance this year. We underline in this context the continuous obligation of the OSCE participating States to respect and fully implement existing principles and commitments in the politico-military area. At the same time, given the serious changes in the security environment, updating and modernising the politico-military toolbox is an urgent task in order to increase transparency and predictability as well as for avoiding dangerous misperceptions in the OSCE area. We commend the initiatives taken by participating States to that effect, including the proposals in the area of risk reduction as mentioned by the distinguished Deputy Foreign Minister. We have appreciated the opportunity to engage in the informal discussions on specific chapters of the Vienna Document in the past few months as facilitated by the previous FSC Chairmanships and the Co-ordinator on the Vienna Document. We continue to believe that such deliberations are an important step forward on our way towards updating and modernizing the Vienna Document and a significant confidence building measure in itself. We encourage all participating States to seize this opportunity and engage constructively in this dialogue.

We support the Programme of Work of the FSC under the Polish Chairmanship. We welcome the intention of the Polish FSC Chairmanship to bring experience from the field to Vienna. We therefore look forward to the presentations on field perspectives and sharing of best practice from the work of the mission in Tajikistan as well as from the MONDEM project implemented in Montenegro.

We highly value your plans to continue the practice of devoting security dialogues to the topic of regional or sub-regional cooperation. We look forward

to hearing the presentations on the security architecture in Central and Eastern Europe as well as on the security situation in the Baltic Sea Region.

We appreciate your choice of “traditional” FSC topics put on the agenda during your Chairmanship. Discussion on UNSCR 1540 is highly relevant in view of the UN comprehensive review this year and OSCE’s contribution to it. CAC and CSBMs as well as the Code of Conduct build the backbone of our OSCE politico-military commitments and deserve our full attention also with a view to the Vienna Document reissuance later this year.

Mr. Chairman,

we would like to thank the distinguished Deputy Foreign Minister once again for his presentation and wish your country every success in conducting the FSC Chairmanship. We take this occasion to sincerely thank the outgoing Chairmanship of the Netherlands for its determination to advance the Forum's work during the last three months in a proficient and dedicated manner.

The Candidate Countries the FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA*, MONTENEGRO* and ALBANIA*, the Country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and Potential Candidate BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA, and the EFTA countries ICELAND, LIECHTENSTEIN and NORWAY, members of the European Economic Area, as well as UKRAINE, the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA, GEORGIA, ANDORRA and SAN MARINO align themselves with this statement.

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