



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation Nr 820

Vienna, 18 May 2016

EU Statement on Conventional Arms Control and Confidence and Security Building Measures

The European Union and its Member States would like to thank the Polish FSC Chairmanship for organizing this Security Dialogue on the topic of Conventional Arms Control and Confidence and Security Building Measures (CSBMs). We warmly welcome the distinguished speakers, Ambassador Benno Laggner, and Ambassador Grzegorz Poznański, to the FSC and thank them for their insightful briefings on this important issue.

We believe that it is important to fully implement and update and modernise the existing OSCE commitments in the politico-military area. We have reiterated on every possible occasion that such a task should be pursued in a priority manner, with the aim of improving the overall level of implementation of arms control and confidence and security building measures. A selective approach to the implementation of arms control and CSBMs commitments undermines trust and confidence within the OSCE. Thus, we underline the need to restore full implementation of our commitments by all participating States and find solutions together.

In this regard we need a genuine involvement of all participating States. The 20th anniversary of the 1996 Lisbon Framework for Arms Control this year may serve as a reminder of the commitments we have all signed up to. In the Lisbon document, the OSCE participating States committed themselves to fully implement and further develop arms control agreements, because it is essential to strengthen military and political security in the OSCE area. Furthermore the document speaks about the key role of the FSC in promoting co-operative responses to challenges and risks that can be dealt with through arms control measures and full implementation of arms control at all times, including times of crisis. The key principles mentioned as a guide for further negotiations are sufficiency, transparency, verification and limitations. In this

context, we very much welcome today's discussion and the views expressed by our distinguished guests.

The commitment to strengthen the Vienna Document with the aim of increasing military stability, transparency and predictability for all participating states requires political will. Furthermore, we are confident that a more robust document will bring long-term security gains for all participating States. This is why we have been - and continuously are - supporting discussions aimed at identifying ways to improve the Vienna Document. In this respect, we welcome that proposals have been put forward by several OSCE participating States, including EU Member States, on various Chapters of the Vienna Document. Some of these proposals enjoy broad support among OSCE participating States, including EU Member States, such as the proposal on lowering thresholds for prior notifications of certain military activities.

In view of the current European security situation – which has been discussed several times, also in this Forum - the Chapter III proposals on “Risk Reduction” are further examples of efforts to dispel concerns and hence strengthen confidence between OSCE participating States. We recall in this context the proposals on both para 16 and 17 of Chapter III, aiming at reducing risk, decrease odds of miscalculation and diminish actions that could give rise to tension.

We remain ready to engage actively in discussions on proposals for other Chapters of the VD in order to adapt the OSCE politico-military toolbox to today's and future politico-military realities with the aim of increasing military stability, transparency and predictability for all pS.

We welcome the efforts by the consecutive FSC Chairmanships of Norway, the Netherlands and Poland as well by the VD Co-ordinator, Mr. Pierre von Arx, to reinvigorate dialogue on different VD Chapters. We regret that despite these tireless efforts, little progress has been achieved so far. We encourage therefore all pS to seize every opportunity for a genuine dialogue based on good faith and political will, as the Vienna Document is about confidence and trust among all 57.

We look forward to the re-issuance of the Vienna Document later this year, incorporating VD Plus decisions taken since the last update in 2011.

In conclusion, we underline our firm belief that lasting security in and for Europe can only be achieved through a collaborative effort of all participating States and a genuine commitment to the instruments of comprehensive and cooperative security.

The Candidate Countries the FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA*, MONTENEGRO*, SERBIA* 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, Serbia and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.