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EU Statement on "SECUP in Bosnia and Herzegovina: Status and Perspectives"

The European Union (EU) warmly welcomes H.E. Mr. Zekerijah Osmić, Minister of Defence of Bosnia and Herzegovina, to the Forum for Security Co-operation and thanks him for his informative and topical speech. We also thank Mr. Zoran Šajinović for the presentation on his country's efforts in mitigating the risks posed by the accumulation of large amounts of obsolete ammunition, explosive devices and weapons.

We commend Bosnia and Herzegovina's consistent efforts to live up to its OSCE commitments, in particular in the politico-military area, as well as to promote and strengthen the cooperation among the countries of its region in the field of security and defence.

We would also like to reiterate the European Union's continued solidarity and help for the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as of Serbia and Croatia, in their efforts to overcome the disastrous consequences of the recent floods. In this context, we would like to underscore the important role the Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina have played and are still playing to rescue and assist the civilian population affected by the floods and landslides. Furthermore, we are aware of the ongoing review of SALW and SCA projects activities in order to assess the need for their adaptation to the particular security challenges posed by the floods.

The European Union highly appreciates the systematic efforts and sustainable results achieved by the government of Bosnia and Herzegovina in the framework of its Strategy for Small Arms and Light Weapons Control. Such a comprehensive approach, developed in close cooperation with the UNDP and the OSCE, allows for increased efficiency of SALW-related activities in Bosnia and Herzegovina and their enhanced coherence with relevant efforts and initiatives at regional and global level.

We welcome the successful launching of the Project for Security Upgrade of Ammunition and Weapons Storage Sites in Bosnia and Herzegovina (SECUP) and thank you, Minister, for sharing with us your views on its implementation and perspectives. We concur with your assessment of the Project's added value and

contribution to reducing proliferation risks and improving the Bosnia and Herzegovina's national capacities in the field of Physical Security and Stockpile Management.

The European Union has a longstanding commitment to combatting the risks related to illicit trafficking and destabilising accumulation of SALW and conventional ammunition in Bosnia and Herzegovina where financial support is provided under Council Decision 2013/730/CFSP in support of SEESAC and the EU's Instrument for Stability. In particular, further 3, 9 million euros have been allocated, in March 2013, from the Instrument for Stability for the implementation of the Explosive Ordnance and Remnants of War Destruction Project – "EXPLODE".

We would like to take this occasion to commend the close cooperation between the authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the international community, in particular the UNDP, the OSCE, and the EU, with regard to SALW control and stockpile management. We are also pleased to underline the OSCE's prominent role in providing assistance to participating States in the destruction of SALW and conventional ammunition and in improving stockpile management and security practices.

In conclusion, we would like to thank you once again, Minister Osmic, and to wish you and your team every success in your important professional endeavours.

The candidate countries the FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA*, MONTENEGRO, ICELAND** and SERBIA, the country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate country ALBANIA, the European Free Trade Association country NORWAY, member of the European Economic Area, as well as UKRAINE, the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA, ARMENIA, GEORGIA and MONACO align themselves with this statement.

* 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.