



EUROPEAN UNION

54th Joint FSC PC Meeting Vienna, 7 April 2014

EU Statement on the Unusual Military Activities of the Russian Federation and the Situation in Ukraine

The European Union and its Member States welcome the convening by the Swiss and Maltese Chairmanships of this Joint FSC PC meeting at the request of Ukraine and the United States of America with the aim to discuss concerns about unusual military activities of the Russian Federation along the borders with Ukraine and to consider recommendations to stabilise the situation. We regret the fact that the Russian Federation has decided not to attend this meeting. This does not contribute to a de-escalation of the situation.

We have on numerous occasions, including at the last Joint FSC PC meeting on 4 March, expressed our continuous concern about large scale military activities carried out by the Russian Federation in its Western and Central Military Districts. We have urged the Russian Federation to provide detailed and comprehensive information on the redeployment of troops in these areas in order to dispel legitimate security concerns and ensure tangible and verifiable de-escalation of the situation around Ukraine.

Ukraine and other participating States, including EU Member States, have done their best to use all relevant provisions of the Vienna Document and the Open Skies Treaty, as well as the FSC Security Dialogue, in order to clarify the military situation on both sides of the border between Ukraine and the Russian Federation. Due to these efforts and the full transparency shown by Ukraine OSCE participating States were able to observe and inspect military units and activities throughout its territory with the exception of Crimea to which they have been denied access by armed personnel.

In this respect, we took note of the information provided so far by the Russian Federation here in Vienna and in Moscow. Unfortunately, this information remains unsatisfactory as falling short of our expectations to address in a comprehensive manner strong security concerns by answering questions as to the objectives, the nature and the strength of the military units deployed in the sensitive areas adjoining Ukraine.

We are therefore compelled to call once again on the Russian Federation to make full use, not only in letter but also in spirit, of the existing CSBM and CAC instruments in view of re-establishing security, trust and confidence in the region, severely affected by its illegal annexation of Crimea and Sevastopol. Hosting voluntary visits and inspections under the relevant provisions of the Vienna Document, exercising strict restraint in carrying out military activities in the bordering areas with Ukraine and sharing information about on-going and planned military activities in those areas, even if they do not fall under the provisions of the Vienna Document, would be important steps in this direction.

In the same vein, we encourage all participating States to show vigilance and make full use of all relevant OSCE politico-military instruments and to further support continued Vienna Document activities to this end.

We remain preoccupied of the seizure of the Ukrainian military bases and warships in Crimea by acts of armed assaults. We call on the Russian Federation to continue returning seized military equipment to Ukraine fully without exceptions and damages. We deplore the killing of a Ukrainian military officer in Crimea. We have also taken note of the aggression against other Ukrainian officials in Crimea. We strongly urge for fair and transparent investigation of these incidents so that those responsible for them are brought to justice.

Furthermore, we express our deep concern that pro-Russian separatist movements have taken control by force of government buildings in several cities in the Eastern part of Ukraine. We welcome the spot report by the Special Monitoring Mission and factual descriptions of the incidents in Donetsk, Luhansk and Kharkiv. We express our concern about media reports that many journalists were forced to leave the areas.

We call for restraint and for an end to provocations and aggression that could have far-reaching and dangerous implications, and for all participating States to use their influence constructively to this end. There is continued need to avoid further destabilisation in Eastern Ukraine. We expect OSCE monitors to continue to follow these developments closely and to report on their observations. We also express our concern about the reported incident of intimidation against the Special Monitoring Mission in Kharkiv.

We reiterate that the Russian violation of Ukrainian sovereignty and territorial integrity in regard to Crimea and Sevastopol is illegal and illegitimate and in breach of international law as well as fundamental OSCE principles and commitments. These actions cannot but undermine the required trust between

participating States of the OSCE. We strongly condemn the illegal annexation of Crimea and Sevastopol by the Russian Federation. The European Union remains committed to uphold the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognised borders.

We once again urge the Russian Federation to engage in dialogue, and allow the use of all our tools to alleviate worries and de-escalate the tensions.

The candidate countries the FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA*, MONTENEGRO and ICELAND**, the countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate countries ALBANIA and BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA, the European Free Trade Association countries LIECHTENSTEIN and NORWAY, members of the European Economic Area, as well as GEORGIA 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.