



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation Nr 780 Vienna, 18 February 2015

EU Statement on European Security

The European Union (EU) and its Member States would like to warmly welcome Mr Robert Bell, Senior Representative of the Secretary of Defence in Europe, to the Forum for Security Cooperation and thank him for the insightful presentation of the US' views on European security.

There is no doubt that the European security is inseparably linked to the overall strategic landscape the only elements of which we can be sure of being, as stated by the EU High Representative a few days ago in Munich, complexity, conflictuality, interdependence. Europe's security environment is evolving significantly, rapidly and dramatically. The crises around us, such as those in our immediate and wider neighbourhood are becoming more complex and more intense.

In this light, the security in Europe, which is based on the fundamental principles of the 1975 Helsinki Final Act and solidified on subsequent OSCE documents and commitments, is facing today the most serious crisis after the end of the "Cold War". Trust and confidence have been profoundly challenged and undermined by Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea and Sevastopol and its destabilising actions in eastern Ukraine.

The adherence to and full implementation of all Helsinki principles and OSCE commitments in good faith, by all participating States and without exceptions, remain valid as the cornerstone of European security. Political will and result-orientated and cooperative actions are needed to reverse the negative trend of eroding trust that can be overcome only by restoring respect for the basic principles of the OSCE and by genuine, open dialogue.

In this context, we welcome all efforts to restore peace and security in and around Ukraine on the basis of the respect for Ukraine's unity, sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence. The agreement reached in Minsk on 12 February is a very important step in the right direction. However, its full implementation is even more important for restoring sustainable peace and stability on the ground.

European Union's response to the security challenges in Europe has been measured and firm, using a large toolbox of instruments ranging from political, economic, financial and technical support to action under EU's Common Security and Defence Policy.

However, little can be achieved alone. Close and systematic cooperation with the United Nations and other relevant international and regional organisations, in particular the OSCE, is the key to provide effective and sustainable responses to the rapidly evolving both in number and complexity security challenges we are facing today.

Especially, the strong transatlantic relationship remains of fundamental importance. The practical cooperation between EU and NATO has expanded significantly in the past few years, within the agreed framework of their strategic partnership and respecting the decision making autonomy of each organisation.

The cooperation with partner countries and their support for the EU crisis management efforts also remains of primary importance for us. In 2014, fifteen partner countries, among which twelve OSCE participating States, participated and deployed personnel in ten CSDP missions and operations.

Mr Chairman, the current security situation in Europe has underlined once again the value of the OSCE concept of comprehensive security. It has clearly shown that there can be no lasting security and stability without full respect for and strict implementation of all OSCE commitments across the three dimensions of security.

In this respect, we reiterate our strong belief that enduring commitments underlined by all participating States in Astana and Vilnius to revitalise, update and modernise the conventional arms control and confidence- and security-building regimes, in particular the Vienna Document, for ensuring stability, transparency and predictability

should be pursued in a priority manner with the overall objective of enhancing the OSCE's conflict prevention and crisis management capabilities as well as the implementation of existing CSBMs. We support and will welcome revitalising the dialogue in this respect within both the OSCE and other relevant fora.

We remain convinced 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 cooperative security

In conclusion, we thank once again the speaker as well as the FSC Chairmanship for having scheduled this important and timely discussion under the Security Dialogue agenda item.

The candidate countries the FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA*, MONTENEGRO, ICELAND** and ALBANIA, the country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA, and the EFTA country NORWAY, member of the European Economic Area, as well as UKRAINE, the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA, GEORGIA 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.

** Iceland continues to be a member of EFTA and the European Economic Area.