



EUROPEAN UNION

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EU Statement on the Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security

The Member States of the European Union wish to thank the FSC Chairmanship Montenegro for placing on its agenda the OSCE Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security. We welcome and thank also today's speakers for their interesting and insightful presentations.

We have declared on many occasions our consistent support for and firm commitment to the Code of Conduct as well as our determination to further promote its full implementation by, inter alia, enhancing awareness and outreach and through a focused review during the annual discussion on its implementation. Indeed, we look forward to the 4th annual discussion on the implementation of the Code to be held on 8 July, which should serve to evaluate the Code's effectiveness and reconfirm its relevance in the current security environment.

Full respect and implementation, both in letter and in spirit, of the OSCE politico-military commitments, including the OSCE Code of Conduct, are still of vital importance in order to de-escalate the situation and to promote peaceful solution of the crisis in and around Ukraine.

As the Code enters the 21st year since its adoption it has lost neither its relevance, nor the very important role it plays in defining principles and commitments for inter-state and intra-state behaviour, including for the role of armed forces in democratic societies. Thus, the Code has become a model for other regional organisations through the values and the principles enshrined in it.

In this context, we appreciate the efforts of the previous FSC Chairmanship Mongolia for hosting the conference on the Code of Conduct this March in Ulaanbaatar which we believe was an important event in the promotion of the Code of Conduct in the Central Asian region.

We highly value as well the activities of RACVIAC for promoting the implementation of the Code of Conduct at sub-regional level, particularly the first ever peer-to-peer discussion on its implementation which was held last year among the countries of South East Europe.

Although Security Sector Governance/Reform (SSG/R) obviously transcends issues related to the OSCE's first dimension, we recognise it as an essential part of conflict prevention and crisis management activities, a field where the OSCE plays an important and valuable role. We therefore support the cross-dimensional approach by the OSCE to SSG/R.

The European Union itself is very active in the field of SSG/R, the main objectives of which are in line with our core values: promotion and respect of rule of law, human rights, and democracy. We have a long-standing experience in supporting SSG/R programmes in post-conflict, transitioning and developing countries in many areas around the world including in the OSCE area.

We are of the opinion that the OSCE can play a role and has comparative advantages in this field. Building synergies and avoiding duplication with other relevant actors is however more than advisable. Bearing also in mind that relevant OSCE commitments in this area already exist and most of them contain clear indications for enhancing coordination of efforts both internally and with other relevant international stakeholders. The key issue remains the implementation of existing commitments, rather than the creation of new ones.

In this regard we would like to convey our gratitude to the Serbian CiO for having organised a few days ago the OSCE-wide Conference on SSG/R in Belgrade with the objective of raising awareness about the ongoing OSCE activities in this field.

We thank once again the speakers for their substantial contribution to today's discussion.

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 countries LIECHTENSTEIN and NORWAY, members of the European Economic Area, as well as UKRAINE, the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA, GEORGIA, ANDORRA, SAN MARINO, and MONACO 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.