

**EUROPEAN UNION****OSCE Permanent Council Nr 961
Vienna, 18 July 2013**

**EU statement in response to the address by Secretary General of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation,
Mr. Dmitry Mezentsev**

The European Union welcomes Mr. Dmitry Mezentsev to the Permanent Council today and thanks him for his presentation on the priorities and activities of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO).

The EU values result-oriented co-operation between the OSCE and other relevant international organisations, based on universal norms, values and principles, and as stipulated in the 1999 Platform for Co-operative Security. Such co-operation must contribute to the OSCE's concept of comprehensive security and be aimed at furthering the implementation of our collective OSCE commitments.

We took note of the priority given by the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation to the promotion of mutual trust and confidence between states, and to counteracting terrorism and criminal activity of a transnational character. The EU agrees on the importance of combating transnational threats, including in Central Asia and Afghanistan.

In this context, we note that working contacts have been established between appropriate structures of the OSCE and the SCO, in particular on counter-terrorism matters, in line with 2001 Bucharest Plan of Action for Combating Terrorism.

The EU supports measures aimed at increasing security, co-operation and inclusive sustainable development in and around the Central Asia region. To that end, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and the strengthening of regional co-operation in all spheres, including economy, energy, transport and environmental protection, remain critical.

Protection and promotion of human rights, fundamental freedoms, democracy and the rule of law lie at the heart of the OSCE's concept of comprehensive security. In this context, we would be interested to hear more on possible collaboration with the OSCE in furthering one of the main goals and tasks enshrined in the SCO Charter "to promote human rights and fundamental freedoms in accordance with the international obligations of the member States and their national legislation".

In concluding, the EU thanks again Mr. Mezentsev for his address and wishes him every success in his future work.

The Candidate Countries the former Yugoslav Republic of MACEDONIA*, MONTENEGRO*, ICELAND+ and SERBIA*, the Countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates ALBANIA and BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA, and the EFTA countries LIECHTENSTEIN and NORWAY, members of the European Economic Area, as well as the Republic of MOLDOVA, 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 the EFTA and of the European Economic Area.