



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Permanent Council No 994 Vienna, 10 April 2014

EU Statement on violation of OSCE principles and commitments by the Russian Federation in Ukraine

1. We would like once again to express our strong condemnation of the violation of Ukrainian sovereignty and territorial integrity by the Russian Federation and of the illegal annexation of Crimea and Sevastopol to the Russian Federation. These actions are in clear breach of international law as well as fundamental OSCE principles and commitments, and they represent a serious setback for Europe's peace and stability. The EU remains strongly committed to uphold the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognised borders.
2. We continue to commend the measured response shown by Ukraine. We reiterate the need to find a political solution to the crisis for the benefit of all Ukrainian citizens. We remain ready to engage and promote any meaningful dialogue aimed at reaching such a peaceful solution. In this context, we welcome the initiative to organise a meeting with participation of Ukraine, Russia, the EU and the US. We underline that the future of Ukraine is for the Ukrainian people to decide.

Mr Chairman,

3. The EU is deeply concerned about the situation in Crimea where human rights are being violated, tensions between communities are on the rise and media freedom is under siege. As we stated in the joint FSC-PC meeting on Monday, 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 investigations of these incidents so that those responsible for them are brought to justice.

4. We are also very worried about recent developments in Eastern Ukraine, including seizure of public buildings in Kharkiv, Donetsk and Luhansk with use of force, cases of hostage taking, and violent clashes involving pro-Russian separatists. We welcome the timely spot reports on these events by the Special Monitoring Mission, which indicate that besides these specific events, the situation is generally calm. We commend the Ukrainian authorities for pursuing their measured responses to these events.
5. We note with concern that the media freedom situation, especially regarding journalists' safety is deteriorating in Eastern parts of Ukraine as mentioned by the Media Freedom Representative in her statement on 8 April. One-sided propaganda is on the rise. We share the views of the High Commissioner on National Minorities that we are experiencing an information war, contributing to a climate of fear and confusion. We believe that people should have unimpeded access to a plurality of media sources, especially in a time of crisis.
6. The EU calls 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. Political demands should be addressed in a non-violent way through appropriate fora. Presidential elections on 25 May need to provide a legitimate and inclusive platform for citizens to express their views about Ukraine's future. In this context, we join the Representative on Freedom of the Media in welcoming the legal amendments adopted by the Verkhovna Rada on 27 March to strengthen legislation on public access to information. This will contribute to further government transparency and democracy in Ukraine.
7. The EU reiterates its warning against any further destabilisation of Ukraine, whether from the inside or the outside. We call on the Russian Federation and pro-Russian groups to de-escalate the situation. In this context, we also reiterate our strong concern about large scale military activities carried out by the Russian Federation in its Western and Central military districts. We deeply regret that the delegation of the Russian Federation decided not to attend the Joint FSC-PC

meeting last Monday. This was a missed opportunity to engage in a constructive discussion on legitimate security concerns stemming from the Russian military activities around Ukraine and to uphold efforts to de-escalate the situation in the region. This decision does not contribute to a climate of trust and confidence between participating States.

8. We firmly stand by the government of Ukraine in its efforts to stabilise the situation.

The Candidate Countries the FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA*, MONTENEGRO* and ICELAND+, the Countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and Potential Candidates ALBANIA and BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA, as well as UKRAINE, GEORGIA and SAN MARINO align themselves with this statement.

* The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Montenegro 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.