



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation Nr 783 Vienna, 18 March 2015

EU Statement on European Security

The European Union (EU) and its Member States would like to welcome Ambassador Alexander Grushko, Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to NATO, and Major-General Yevgeni Ilyin, Deputy Chief of the Main Directorate for International Military Cooperation in the Russian Ministry of Defence, to the Forum for Security Cooperation and thank them for their presentations.

From the outset, let us recall the EU High Representative's speech at the UN Security Council of 9 March where the European Union's commitment and support to multilateralism were strongly reiterated. Need for cooperation has grown proportionally to the increasing complexity of threats to unprecedented level. The new global order will thus be multilateral, the High Representative stated, or it will not be.

Against the global background of growing complexity and interdependence, 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 one of the most serious crises since the end of the Cold War.

Russia's actions in and around Ukraine, ranging from the illegal annexation of Crimea and Sevastopol to the active military support for the separatists in eastern Ukraine, have directly challenged international security with grave implications for the international legal order that protects the unity and sovereignty of all states. In the year of the 40th anniversary of the Helsinki Final Act we see with great disappointment that key Helsinki principles are being violated by Russia.

One year after the illegal and illegitimate referendum and the subsequent illegal annexation of Crimea and Sevastopol by the Russian Federation the European Union remains fully committed to Ukraine's unity, sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity within its internationally recognised borders. We do not recognise the illegal annexation of Crimea and Sevastopol by Russia and once again condemn this violation of international law. The European Union reaffirms its deep concern at the continuous Russian military build-up in the Crimean peninsula.

It is therefore more important than ever that Russia recommit itself to the principles in the Helsinki Final Act, the Charter of Paris and the Astana vision of a free, democratic, common and indivisible Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian security community stretching from Vancouver to Vladivostok, rooted in agreed principles, shared commitments and common goals. Recent developments in the OSCE region underline the validity of the OSCE concept of comprehensive and co-operative security. We need to revert to our common commitment to ensure full respect for, and implementation of, these core principles and commitments that we have undertaken in the politico-military dimension, the economic and environmental dimension, and the human dimension, notably in the areas of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

We repeat our call for the full implementation of all aspects of the Minsk Agreements by all signatories as the only way forward towards a sustainable political solution based on full respect for Ukraine's independence, sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity within its internationally recognised borders. Full respect for the ceasefire regime and a verified withdrawal of heavy weapons are essential steps in the implementation of the Minsk Agreements. We once again call for the immediate withdrawal of all foreign armed formations, military equipment, as well as mercenaries from the territory of Ukraine under OSCE monitoring as well as disarmament of all illegal groups. We underline Russia's responsibility in this regard.

We recall that the Minsk Protocol called for a substantial and effective OSCE monitoring of the Ukrainian-Russian state border. In this context, we regret that Russia once again has not agreed to the necessary expansion of the Border Observation Mission at two Russian border checkpoints. We reiterate that re-establishing Ukrainian control over its state border with Russia remains essential.

The provisions concerning the political process included in the Minsk Agreements are also important parts in their entire implementation.

We take note of the presentation of the new Russian Military Doctrine and remain open to discuss it further, for instance at a possible High-Level Military Doctrine Seminar.

Furthermore, we emphasise the importance of strengthening and modernising the obligations and commitments in the field of conventional arms control and CSBMs. These instruments should be brought into conformity with the current military and security conditions. We consider therefore that a modern, functional conventional arms control regime that provides stability and predictability would bolster the security of the whole OSCE area. In relation to this topic, the Member States of the European Union noted with regret the decision by the Russian Federation to “suspend their participation in the Joint Consultative Group per 11 March 2015”. This is another step by the Russian Federation that undermines the viability and validity of the existing conventional arms control and CSBMs regimes in the OSCE area.

In conclusion, we reiterate our firm belief 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. We still count on Russia's political willingness to engage in constructive dialogue on European security.

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.