



EUROPEAN UNION
OSCE Joint FSC/PC
Vienna, 5 July 2017

EU Statement - Structured Dialogue

The European Union and its Member States would like to thank the Austrian Chairmanship as well as the FSC Chair for focussing this joint FSC/PC meeting on the Structured Dialogue, a process we have all signed up to at the Ministerial Council in Hamburg. This meeting follows on last week's Special Session at the Annual Security Review Conference, which we appreciated. Referring to the EU statement made on that occasion, we would like to highlight and perhaps elaborate some elements today.

We would first like to reiterate that we highly appreciate your efforts as the Chair of the Informal Working Group, Ambassador Pohl. We fully concur with your approach to ensure a transparent, inclusive process owned and driven by participating States, and without a predetermined outcome. We thank you and your team for the thorough preparations thus far and for the interim report circulated ahead of today's meeting.

On the process itself, we believe that the topics for discussion in the IWG framework - namely threat perceptions, military doctrines and military force postures - were well chosen. The informal setting of some of the meetings, the participation of capital representatives as well as academic input, encouraged a more open and meaningful dialogue and provided an opportunity for a deeper exchange of views. In-depth discussions need to continue with a focus on most pertinent areas and challenges identified by participating States.

On substance, the meetings revealed indeed both convergences and divergences among participating States, which will require further exploration. Regarding convergences: we face broadly similar challenges, although some of them go beyond the Structured Dialogue as mandated by the Ministerial Council. There also seems to be a broadly shared acknowledgement of the need to try and minimise risks emanating from the current security situation. To this end, we value the suggestion to

try to identify and agree building blocks to enhance multilateral strategic stability, such as: improved risk-reduction mechanisms, fact-finding and transparency measures, better communication channels, including military ones, and enhanced military-to-military contacts where appropriate.

Many around this table also expressed concern about large-scale and snap military exercises and military deployments in the vicinity of international borders without adequate transparency, as well as hazardous and dangerous military incidents, and a selective approach to the implementation of OSCE's politico-military commitments. We value the proposal for an in-depth mapping of relevant military trends, postures and exercises.

Coming to the divergences, we share serious concerns over Russia's ongoing aggression against Ukraine and we reiterate our strong condemnation of the illegal annexation of Crimea and Sevastopol. It is essential to restore full respect for international law and fundamental OSCE principles to which the EU and its Member States remain fully committed.

It seems to us that further deliberations should focus on "Challenges to a rules-based European security order" (cluster one) and on "Interstate tension of politico-military nature" (cluster three). We note that the IWG Structured Dialogue could become a useful platform for in-depth exchanges on these issues and we should continue in this endeavour while focusing on risk reduction, and on increasing transparency and predictability. We look forward to further discussions on threat perceptions, including those resulting from conflicts, given their relevance.

At the same time, we emphasise the need to work towards creating an environment conducive to reinvigorating Conventional Arms Control and CSBMs. We reiterate a strong commitment to full implementation of the existing commitments in the politico-military area. We remain strong supporters of the Vienna Document modernisation and will further promote full implementation and a substantial update of this key OSCE politico-military agreement to enhance multilateral strategic stability, ensure military predictability and rebuild confidence. We therefore highly value the efforts of the Austrian OSCE Chairmanship to keep the Vienna Document/CSBMs high on our agenda. We also encourage participating States to continue to voluntarily brief the FSC on upcoming military exercises to enhance transparency and predictability.

All in all, we are encouraged by the support for and commitment to this process expressed by participating States at the ASRC. As this dialogue takes place in the context of a loss of trust and confidence in the OSCE area, we value this dialogue in order to foster a greater understanding on the current and future challenges and risks to security in the OSCE area.

We would thus like to encourage you, Ambassador Pohl, to continue in your important task and we assure you once again of our full support. For now, we look forward to continuing discussions today, and at the informal meeting of OSCE Ministers in Mauerbach and in September.

The Candidate Countries the FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA*, MONTENEGRO* and ALBANIA*, the Country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and Potential Candidate BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA, and the EFTA country LIECHTENSTEIN, member of the European Economic Area, as well as UKRAINE, the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA, GEORGIA, ANDORRA 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.