

**STATEMENT BY THE EUROPEAN UNION AT THE
948th MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

18 April 2013

**In response to the address by Mr. Yury Fedotov,
Director-General of the United Nations Office at Vienna and Executive
Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime**

The European Union thanks the Director-General of the United Nations Office at Vienna and the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) for his presence at this meeting of the Permanent Council. Your frequent and always well appreciated interventions in the OSCE bear witness to the solid links between the two organizations in the fight against transnational threats.

As Ambassador Fedotov just pointed out quite clearly, these threats represent a challenge to security and stability particularly but not only in the OSCE area. In the European Union alone, the Europol agency stated in its 2013 crime threat assessment that no fewer than 3,600 groups are active in Europe, showing an extraordinary ability to adapt and taking advantage of the context of globalization and the economic crisis. The crime threat is thus an ever-present reality.

The new forms of criminality, such as economic crime, alongside more traditional but still very worrying crimes, be it trafficking in drugs or human beings, should incite us to define and implement flexible counter-strategies – while respecting human rights – based on increased co-operation between international organizations.

From this point of view, as you know, the European Union encourages the co-operation, which is already very great, between the UNODC and the OSCE. This co-operation is defined formally in a joint action plan and is continuously implemented in practice in Vienna and in the field – in Central Asia, for example. In that region in particular the European Union will continue to pay attention to strengthening synergistic effects while taking account of other initiatives such as the inauguration of high-level dialogue on security issues between the European Union and the countries of Central Asia within the framework of the European Union Strategy for a New Partnership with Central Asia in the coming months.

Several decisions were adopted in 2012 permitting the OSCE to play a full role in combating transnational threats by giving a very clear definition to its framework for action. They acknowledge its regional contribution in helping to implement the United Nations instruments. The anticipated end of the International Security Assistance Force in 2014

recalled during the Security Day on 12 March 2013, and the fight against terrorism, drug trafficking, organized crime and corruption are the major areas of co-operation between our organizations. We shall ensure that the OSCE's work supplements and is integrated in the efforts undertaken within the framework of the Paris Pact or in the UNODC regional programme for Afghanistan and neighbouring countries.

We restate our confidence in the ability of the OSCE Secretariat's Transnational Threats Department to optimize internal and external co-ordination and to avoid the duplication of efforts. We hope that the OSCE's contribution will continue to be recognized by other international organizations. Thanks to its multidimensional approach, the Organization has a unique added value in combating transnational threats effectively while respecting cardinal principles, particularly respect for fundamental freedoms and human rights. The complementarity of the work in the OSCE's three dimensions is also an asset: crime can be fought by combining the security-related, economic and human approach. We therefore encourage interaction between the three OSCE committees, which we know that the three chairpersons strongly advocate.

Finally, given the fact that criminal networks are not bound by physical borders, we believe it necessary to step up our co-operation beyond the OSCE area, notably with the Partner States. For example, the situation in the Sahel or Maghreb discussed in the Justice and Home Affairs Council on 7 and 8 March 2013 in Brussels is a subject of common interest for the OSCE and the UNODC. In that context, we welcome the joint organization this September in Malaga, Spain, of a regional workshop on combating terrorism. Such projects, which bring together experts from both sides of the Mediterranean, are steps in the right direction.

In conclusion, we once again thank Mr. Fedotov for his presence among us and assure him of our willingness to further strengthen the bonds of confidence and co-operation between the UNODC and the OSCE.

The acceding country Croatia¹, the candidate countries the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia¹, Montenegro¹, Iceland² and Serbia¹, the countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate countries Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina, the European Free Trade Association countries and members of the European Economic Area Liechtenstein and Norway, as well as the Republic of Moldova, Georgia, Andorra and San Marino, align themselves with this statement.

1 Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

2 Iceland continues to be a member of the European Free Trade Association and the European Economic Area.