



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation N°864 Vienna, 11 October 2017

EU Statement on Conventional Arms Control and Confidence and Security Building Measures

1. The European Union (EU) and its Member States would like to thank the Serbian FSC Chairmanship, as well as today's speakers Lieutenant Colonel Vlastimir Milovanović, Lieutenant Colonel Peter Benei, and Major Zsolt Pastorek, for this useful opportunity to discuss and assess the Conventional Arms Control and Confidence and Security-Building Measures commitments and activities in the OSCE area. We remain of the view that it is critical to rebuild trust and restore cooperative security in Europe, to reverse the negative trends affecting these important politico-military instruments, and to further develop conventional arms control and CSBMs.
2. The OSCE's comprehensive and co-operative concept of security with emphasis on Arms Control and CSBMs, underpins our common security. The objective of these commitments is to provide the systematic and preventive means to enhance military stability, predictability and transparency, thereby reducing threat perceptions and building trust among participating States. In the context of a rules-based security order, these instruments constitute an indispensable component of comprehensive and sustainable security for all.
3. The various agreements in this realm, including the Vienna Document, the Open Skies Treaty, and the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe, have provided us with important security benefits for many years. Despite the current difficulties with aspects of these instruments, we support efforts to restore and safeguard a fully functioning, binding, sustainable and verifiable conventional arms control architecture, based on the norms and principles of indivisible and cooperative security. We also reiterate our enduring support for the pending application of the Republic of Cyprus to accede to the Treaty on Open Skies.

4. Given the changes in the political and security environment, as well as technological and doctrinal developments in the military sphere, we commend the efforts of the Austrian OSCE Chairmanship to provide an informal platform for discussing possible areas for enhancing stability and security in our region. In this regard, we look forward to the 3rd Breakout Workshop on CSBMs from 18-20 October 2017, which provides a useful opportunity to discuss and promote confidence and security building by further enhancing the transparency of military activities and doctrines, improving information exchange instruments and developing incident prevention and response mechanisms. We also commend the efforts of the chairman of the IWG on Structured Dialogue in facilitating that valuable format. We recall the Third Session of the Structured Dialogue meeting of 5 September, geared towards improving mechanisms to address compliance issues, as well as the Fourth Session of 10 October, where we discussed mil-to-mil contacts and communications, and we will support these efforts. We also look forward to the forthcoming expert workshop on force postures and military exercises.

5. We deem it important to modernise our OSCE politico-military toolbox, including through a substantial update of all possible chapters of the Vienna Document. Proposals on “Risk Reduction”, for example, aim to dispel concerns and hence strengthen much-needed confidence among OSCE participating States. We recall in this context the proposals of EU Member States on both para 16 and 17 of Chapter III, aiming at reducing the risk of miscalculation and thereby diminishing actions that could give rise to tension.

6. In conclusion, we underline our readiness to work with partners to establish the political will and cooperation required from all participating States, with a genuine commitment to - the full implementation and further development of - CAC and CSBMs.

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 ICELAND, member of the European Economic Area, as well as ANDORRA, align themselves with this statement.

* The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.