



## EUROPEAN UNION

### OSCE Permanent Council No 1120 Vienna, 24 November 2016

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#### EU Statement in Response to the Presentations by the Chairs of the Three Committees

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The European Union and its Member States thank the Chairs of the three committees for their presentations.

We wish to express our appreciation for the able chairmanship by Ambassador Istrate of the Security Committee. Our priority remains the implementation of the OSCE's transnational threats related decisions through a comprehensive approach and in close co-operation with other international stakeholders. The OSCE area was again shaken by numerous terrorist attacks this year. We thus welcome the attention given in the Security Committee to preventing and countering terrorism in follow-up to commitments made at the Ministerial Councils in Belgrade and Basel, including through voluntary reporting – which should indeed become a valuable established practice.

We welcome this year's discussions on non-military and political aspects of current and emerging security threats and activities undertaken across the OSCE area to address common challenges, such as those related to terrorism and violent extremism, illegal migration and cyber – including through enhanced co-operation in border management, policing and security sector governance/reform. We furthermore reached an important milestone earlier this year when agreeing on another set of confidence building measures prepared by the Informal Working Group established pursuant to PC Decision 1039. In our view, the draft initiatives tabled early by the OSCE Chairmanship cover the right priorities. We stand ready to engage and contribute so that our Ministers can endorse tangible deliverables on these important non-military security issues in Hamburg as part of the overall outcome.

We commend Ambassador Žugić on his able chairing of the Economic and Environmental committee. The discussions in the committee this year have covered a range of interesting topics.

We welcome the substantial discussions held during this year's Economic and Environmental Forum cycle and in the 2016 Economic and Environmental Implementation Meeting, both dedicated to the important topic of good governance. We welcome the intention of the Chairmanship to further deepen our commitments on good governance with the tabling of a draft Ministerial Council decision on good governance and connectivity. Good governance and connectivity through transport and trade facilitation are important topics. With clear links to stability and security they are also highly relevant for the OSCE and the cooperation between OSCE participating States. Agreeing on such a decision would be a step forward in our efforts to strengthen good governance and connectivity in the OSCE area.

We would like to thank Ambassador Pehrman for her able chairmanship of the Human Dimension Committee this year. As in previous years, the topics addressed in the Committee in 2016 have covered a broad range of human rights issues. We are glad to see that fundamental freedoms, prevention of torture, gender, tolerance and non-discrimination issues, and rights of persons with disabilities featured on the agenda. We hope to see the work done in the Committee reflected in good Decisions adopted at the Hamburg Ministerial Meeting.

We would like to thank those participating States that used the Human Dimension Committee to share best practices and report on the implementation of the OSCE commitments and we encourage all participating States to make further use of this framework. We continue to believe that there is greater scope in using the Committee to follow-up on the discussions and recommendations expressed during the Human Dimension events, in particular the HDIM.

The European Union appreciates the continued thematic approach to the discussions in the three Committees. We reiterate our view that we welcome the engagement of OSCE autonomous Institutions, OSCE field operations and, not least civil society including NGOs further in such discussions in the Committees. Their participation enriches the discussions in the Committees.

Finally, allow me to express the full support of the European Union and its Member States to the important work of Ambassadors Istrate, Žugić, and Pehrman. We wish them every success in their future endeavours.

The Candidate Countries the FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA\*, MONTENEGRO\*, SERBIA\* and ALBANIA\*, the Country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and Potential Candidate BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA, and the EFTA countries ICELAND and LIECHTENSTEIN, members of the European Economic Area, as well as the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA, GEORGIA, ANDORRA and SAN MARINO 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.