



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Permanent Council Nr 1015 Vienna, 4 September 2014

EU Statement in Response to the Report by the Personal Representative of the OSCE CiO for Article IV of Annex 1B of the Dayton Peace Accords, Major General M. Torres

The European Union and its Member States would like to warmly welcome Major General Michele Torres back to the Permanent Council, in his capacity as Personal Representative of the Chairperson-in-Office for Article IV of Annex 1B of the Dayton Peace Accords. We thank him for his presentation which comes at a historic moment for the Agreement.

Indeed, under General Torres's mandate the second phase of the ownership process has been successfully fulfilled, thus paving the way for the full transfer of ownership to the State Parties at the Basel Ministerial Council, as agreed during the last Dayton Article IV Review Conference in July this year. In this context, we would be ready to consider positively a possible Ministerial Council draft declaration on the completion of the Agreement's ownership process, as suggested by the Swiss OSCE Chairperson-in-Office.

This important achievement is the outcome of the consistent efforts and unwavering political will of the State Parties, ably assisted by the CiO Personal Representative, to re-build security in the aftermath of a terrible war. Upholding and building politico-military transparency and trust were, and are essential prerequisites for achieving long term peace and stability.

In practical terms, this meant setting up and operating an efficient and robust verifiable sub-regional arms control regime, which built upon the impressive reduction of more than ten thousand pieces of heavy armaments, including four thousand of which were processed on a voluntary basis after the completion of the formal reduction process in 1997.

We continue to strongly believe that this important arms control regime remains not only a cornerstone of the security in Southeast Europe but also a positive model to be emulated in other sub-regions in the Euro-Atlantic area. The need for military transparency and trust based on the full use of appropriate multilateral instruments is, unfortunately, once again exemplified by the on-going crisis in and around Ukraine.

In this respect, we agree with General Torres that in the longer term, engaging in structured regional politico-military cooperation is fundamental to both upholding OSCE commitments and furthering Euro-Atlantic and European integration agendas of the Article IV Agreement State Parties.

We encourage the State Parties to continue making best use of the Article IV Agreement after the termination of the role and the functions of the Personal Representative with the support, when appropriate, of the OSCE Secretariat.

Let us conclude, Mr Chairman, by expressing once again our sincere gratitude to General Torres and his team for their excellent work and tangible contribution to security and stability in Southeast Europe and the implementation of an exemplary sub-regional conventional arms control regime.

The Candidate Countries the FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA*, MONTENEGRO*, ICELAND+, SERBIA* and ALBANIA*, the Country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and Potential Candidate BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA, and the EFTA countries LIECHTENSTEIN and NORWAY, members of the European Economic Area, as well as UKRAINE, 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.

+ Iceland continues to be a member of the EFTA and of the European Economic Area.