



EUROPEAN UNION

**OSCE Permanent Council N° 1179
Vienna, 15 March 2018**

EU Statement on the nerve agent attack in Salisbury, Wiltshire

Mr. Chairperson,

We have been following the case of Sergey Skripal and his daughter Yulia closely from the very beginning. The use of a military-grade chemical agent ('Novichok') on UK soil in the murder attempt of Mr Skripal is shocking, threatening civilians and endangering the public. This was an indiscriminate and reckless act putting the lives of innocent civilians at risk. We condemn this in the strongest terms and hope for the successful recovery of the victims.

The use of chemical weapons is prohibited under international law. The Chemical Weapons Convention prohibits the development, production, stockpiling and use of chemical weapons and requires their destruction. States Parties to the Convention have the obligation to uphold and enforce its fundamental tenets.

We have full confidence in the UK investigation so that responsibilities are established quickly and the perpetrators of this reckless act held accountable. We stand in solidarity with the UK in pursuit of justice in this case and are ready to offer support if requested.

The European Union takes very seriously the UK Government's assessment that it is highly likely that the Russian Federation is responsible. We support the call for a full and complete disclosure by the Russian Federation to the OPCW of the "Novichok" programme. In this respect, we call on the Russian Federation to respond swiftly to the British Government's legitimate questions and to co-operate with the competent international agencies.

The European Union reaffirms once again that the use of chemical weapons, including the use of any toxic chemicals as weapons, by anyone, be it a State

or a non-State actor, anywhere, and under any circumstances is abhorrent and must be systematically and rigorously condemned.

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 UKRAINE and GEORGIA align themselves with this statement.

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