



## EUROPEAN UNION

### OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation Nr 755 Vienna, 28 May 2014

#### **EU Statement on Russian Unusual Military Activities and the Situation in Ukraine**

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The European Union and its Member States took note of statements by the Ukrainian delegation on the security situation in and around Ukraine and of the report on the UK-led Vienna Document inspection in Ukraine.

The EU reiterates that the successful holding of the Presidential elections in Ukraine constitutes a major step towards the objective of de-escalating tensions. In this context, we welcome the statements by the Russian Federation indicating that the election result will be respected.

Further efforts are needed in order to start restoring trust and confidence in the OSCE area against the backdrop of the illegal annexation of Crimea and Sevastopol by the Russian Federation, continuing destabilisation in Eastern Ukraine as well as the authorisation given by the Federation Council to use armed force on Ukrainian soil; the latter is not yet revoked despite the insistent calls of Ukraine, the European Union and other OSCE participating States.

Hence, lasting and reliable de-escalation of the situation in and around Ukraine can only be achieved if there is political will to fully implement relevant multilateral commitments and obligations.

In concrete terms, we found both the information related to the military exercise "Aviadarts-2014" provided by the Russian Federation at the FSC meeting last week and the refusal to answer additional questions, in particular those put forward by Ukraine in its Vienna Document Chapter III notification, unsatisfactory and not conducive to alleviating legitimate security concerns. We therefore expect the Russian Federation to demonstrate adequate level of transparency and provide satisfactory information and clarifications to this end.

In the same vein, we took note of statements by the Russian leadership with regard to the return of Russian troops, deployed in the vicinity of Ukraine's border, back to their permanent bases. Although still raising questions, this decision could be seen as a concrete step by the Russian Federation towards de-escalation of the politico-military situation in and around Ukraine if verified and fully implemented.

However, we remain deeply concerned about SALW and heavy weapons being possessed and used by illegal separatists groups to further destabilise the situation in Eastern Ukraine. In this context, we took note of statements by the Ukrainian authorities on attempts of several groups of armed militants, escorting weapons and ammunition from the territory of the Russian Federation, to illegally cross the state border of Ukraine, as well as on violations of the airspace of Ukraine. We urge the Russian Federation to take the necessary measures to prevent further incidents and violations of the state border which is crucial for de-escalating the situation on the ground in the wake of the Presidential elections.

The European Union firmly reaffirms its support for Ukraine's unity, sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity and calls upon the Russian Federation to do likewise. The European Union reiterates its strong condemnation of the illegal annexation of Crimea and Sevastopol by the Russian Federation and will not recognise it.

The candidate countries the FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA\*, MONTENEGRO and ICELAND\*\*, the countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate countries ALBANIA and BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA, the European Free Trade Association country NORWAY, member of the European Economic Area, as well as UKRAINE, the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA, GEORGIA and SAN MARINO align themselves with this statement.

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

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