



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Permanent Council Nr 1026 Vienna, 20 November 2014

EU Statement in Response to the Address by the Special Representative of the Chairperson-in-Office, H.E. Ambassador Heidi Tagliavini

The EU warmly welcomes H.E. Ambassador Heidi Tagliavini back to the Permanent Council. We thank her for her comprehensive and candid address. We reiterate our strong support to the ongoing efforts of the OSCE and the Chairmanship-in-Office in Ukraine, including through Ambassador Tagliavini's engagement in the Trilateral Contact Group.

We are alarmed by the recent heavy shelling in parts of eastern Ukraine and by reports about convoys moving from Russia into the areas de facto controlled by Russian-supported separatists with substantial amounts of heavy weapons, tanks and troops without insignia. The separatists are continuing to destabilise the situation, trying to gain strategic advantages and consolidate control as reported by the Special Monitoring Mission (SMM). We share Ambassador Tagliavini's concern about a worsening of the situation.

On 17 November, the EU Foreign Affairs Council reiterated the EU's support for the Minsk Protocol and Memorandum, as a step towards a sustainable political solution of the crisis, which needs to be based on respect for Ukraine's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity. It urged all parties to fully implement the Minsk agreements without further delay. It once again underlined the Russian Federation's responsibility in this context. It called in particular for a halt to the continuous violations of the ceasefire, a withdrawal of illegal and foreign forces, mercenaries and military equipment, as well as for securing the Ukrainian-Russian state border with permanent monitoring by the OSCE.

We reiterate that we consider the so-called "presidential and parliamentary elections"

in parts of Donetsk and Luhansk Oblasts on 2 November as illegal and illegitimate and will not recognise them. They are in breach of the letter and the spirit of the Minsk Protocol. We call on Russia to assume its responsibility in this regard. All sides should work towards early local elections in these parts of Donetsk and Luhansk Oblasts in accordance with Ukrainian law, as foreseen in the Minsk Protocol, as the only legal and legitimate means of renewing the democratic mandate of the local authorities.

Mr Chairman, to ensure implementation of commitments undertaken by the parties under the Minsk agreements, we underline the need for intensification of talks in the framework of the Trilateral Contact Group, with the support of Ambassador Tagliavini, and call on all concerned participants, the Russian Federation in particular, to engage actively and constructively. We agree with Ambassador Tagliavini that all signatories must keep their commitments and do so in good faith.

We appreciate Ambassador Tagliavini's attempts at furthering the implementation and strengthening of the arrangements agreed in Minsk, including the provisions related to the cease-fire.

We welcome Ambassador Tagliavini's remarks about an inclusive political dialogue in Ukraine. We believe that on the basis of the outcome of the 26 October parliamentary elections a broad national consensus should be sought in view of intensifying much needed political and economic reforms in Ukraine, including constitutional reform, decentralisation, reform of the judiciary, law enforcement, fight against corruption and ensuring the rights of persons belonging to national minorities. A renewed inclusive, country-wide national dialogue on reforms will be important to consolidate Ukraine's unity and internal cohesion.

In concluding, we express our appreciation of Ambassador Tagliavini's tireless efforts in working towards a sustainable political solution with full respect for OSCE principles and commitments. We wish her success in her endeavours and once again express our strong support for her work.

The Candidate Countries the FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA*, MONTENEGRO*, ICELAND+ 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, the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA, GEORGIA and SAN MARINO align themselves with this statement.

* The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro 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.