



## EUROPEAN UNION

### OSCE Joint Session of the Forum for Security Co-operation and Permanent Council N°66 Vienna, 18 October 2017

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#### EU Statement on Support to the National Authorities in the Migration Crisis by the Security Forces

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1. The European Union (EU) and its Member States would like to thank the Serbian FSC Chairmanship and the Austrian Chairmanship in Office for convening today's Joint Session to consider this highly topical and relevant issue. We warmly welcome our speakers, Mr Rebić, Mr Manzione and Brigadier Hubegger, and thank them for their presentations. Large movements of migrants and refugees present many challenges, some of which are stretching the capacity of National Authorities and resources to meet. Hence, under certain circumstances there is a role for Security Forces, within an appropriate legal and democratically governed framework and with full respect for fundamental human rights.

2. The complex challenges resulting from large movements of migrants and refugees are cross-dimensional in nature, and hence are highly relevant to the OSCE. Recent conferences on Security Sector Governance and Reform and the upcoming Mediterranean Conference on Large Movements of Migrants and Refugees, amplify the point.

3. The EU is pursuing a holistic approach whereby migration issues are fully embedded in relations with countries of origin, transit and destination. This includes addressing root causes, such as promoting socio-economic development, and using CSDP operations to help counter migrant smuggling and human trafficking. Concrete actions by the EU include efforts within the Partnership Framework with third countries on migration, the renewed mandate of EUNAVFOR MED Operation SOPHIA, and also the work of FRONTEX. Alongside focusing on the causes and control of migration, the EU is also dealing with the humanitarian aspects and has helped save the lives of hundreds of thousands of people. We are also working closely with a number of affected countries to help manage refugee flows and support the needs of the refugee communities they host.

4. Our concept of European Integrated Border Management (IBM) covers the security aspects of migration and the facilitation of robust, legitimate processes, using specially trained staff and technology. IBM ensures well-structured inter-agency cooperation, effective risk management and respect for human rights. The establishment of a European Border and Coast Guard in October 2016 institutionalised the shared responsibility of the EU Member States and of the European Border and Coast Guard Agency for the implementation of IBM. The IBM concept, adapted to the prevailing sub-regional environment, is one of the topics being developed with the Eastern Partnership, which includes six OSCE participating States.

5. Since November 2016 EUNAVFOR MED Operation SOPHIA has been operating a Joint Working Arrangement with UNODC, aimed at fostering cooperation against migrant smuggling, trafficking in human beings and illicit arms trafficking. In conjunction with NGOs, EU agencies and Member States, Operation SOPHIA, along with the SEAHORSE project, is providing invaluable capacity-building to the Libyan Navy and Coastguard, training the Libyan authorities to better manage their territorial waters and control irregular migration. On land, the EU's Border Assistance Mission in Libya is advising the National Authorities on initiatives to underpin territorial security.

6. Military and civilian cooperation may be necessary in the context of crisis border management; States may opt to assign auxiliary tasks to other national authorities, including the armed forces, for the purpose of assisting the competent border authorities in maintaining efficient border control. Those authorities carrying out such auxiliary tasks must be bound by the same international legal obligations, including safeguarding the rights of refugees and persons requesting international protection, as well as upholding the principle of non-refoulement.

7. Madame Chairperson, today is EU Anti-trafficking day. Trafficking in human beings is a grave human rights violation, a serious form of organised crime and a transnational security threat. Trafficking networks take advantage of migration routes, targeting the most vulnerable, for example women and girls trafficked for the purpose of sexual exploitation. The EU has developed a comprehensive legal and policy framework to address this heinous crime, including policy instruments such as the European Agenda on Migration and the European Agenda on Security. The EU continues to promote high standards globally, upholding the principles within the November 2000 United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its supplementing Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children.

8. In conclusion Madame Chairperson, the EU recognises that migration issues require sustained and collaborative effort. This is a global challenge that can only be effectively addressed by the international community as a whole. As recognised in the Hamburg Ministerial Council Decision on the OSCE's Role in the Governance of Large Movements of Migrants and Refugees, OSCE Institutions and Field Missions have a part to play to complement the activities of other relevant organisations and agencies, in support of participating States. We must work together in a balanced and human rights-compliant approach, building on the OSCE's comprehensive concept of security to deal with the root causes of large movements of migrants and refugees, and further develop the capacities of the relevant authorities, including security forces where appropriate. The EU stands ready to work with partners in exploring ways for the OSCE to tackle these phenomena.

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 countries ICELAND and NORWAY, members of the European Economic Area, as well as Ukraine, the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA 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.