



## EUROPEAN UNION

### **52<sup>nd</sup> Joint Meeting of the Forum for Security Co-operation and the Permanent Council Vienna, 9 October 2013**

#### **EU Statement on "Challenges linked to Afghanistan after 2014"**

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The European Union (EU) would like to thank Yury Fedotov, Director-General and Executive Director of the UNODC, Ján Kubiš, UN Special Representative for Afghanistan, and Marcel Peško, Director of the Office of the OSCE Secretary General, for their presentations. We are delighted to address the Joint FSC-PC meeting and to discuss the opportunities and challenges linked to Afghanistan after 2014. All the contributions today showed that, despite Afghanistan's remarkable achievements over the past 10 years, there still remain many challenges and threats. The EU stands ready to assist the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan in its efforts to transform the country into secure and democratic member of the international community, whilst recognising the full responsibility and ownership of the Afghan Government in this long-term transformation process.

Firstly, let us reflect on the challenge that lies at the heart of the activities of the OSCE, that is security. Since the middle of June Afghan security forces have entered into the last phase of the transition process and have now assumed responsibility for security throughout the country. The EU condemns and remains concerned about the unscrupulous attacks and on-going violence that is being committed against Afghan civilians, security personnel, public institutions, and International Organisations by insurgent groups aiming at disrupting the population's confidence in the Government and its security forces. The EU recognises the increased competence and effectiveness of the Afghan National Security Forces. Through EUPOL, the EU supports Afghan efforts to strengthen civilian policing. The EU will continue to further promote the rule of law in the decade following the transition. The success and sustainability of the transition will also depend on the fulfilment of the commitments in the Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework. Without clear progress in political and economic governance, including in human rights, and the rights of women particularly, Afghanistan will not benefit from the full extent of the exceptional funding

commitments made by the international community. And more importantly, it will not create the confidence that investing in Afghanistan is worthwhile.

The OSCE aims, within its mandate and in line with MC Decisions 4/07 and 4/11, to complement the efforts of the wider international community under UN leadership and to assist Afghanistan in a meaningful way through its different cross-dimensional activities stemming from its comprehensive concept of security. Therefore, the EU fully supports the CiO's initiative to include a draft declaration on Afghanistan for Ministerial agreement at Kyiv. The EU recognises the OSCE's unique role, which it plays for example by means of its field presences located in participating States bordering Afghanistan. These are engaged in a number of important activities in combating transnational threats, including in border security, anti-terrorism, police training, illegal migration and illegal drugs, fighting trafficking in human beings, as well as in addressing security threats linked to Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) and anti-personnel mines. The EU values the activities of the Border Management Staff College in Dushanbe and the OSCE Academy in Bishkek, which provide capacity building to Afghan officers, customs officials, border police and students.

A clear manifestation of our commitment beyond 2014 is the Cooperation Agreement on Partnership and Development. This framework for future cooperation between Afghanistan and the EU will create a coherent and legally binding basis for cooperation. We hope that the Agreement will be concluded soon. The EU is one of the major international donors and annually gives more than 1 billion EUR, including MS contributions, for development and humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan. This Agreement will allow the EU to provide its assistance in a more coherent and effective manner.

The EU understands that peace and stability in Afghanistan must be seen in the broader regional context. The situation in Afghanistan affects the security not only in neighbouring Central Asian countries, but also in regions far beyond Asia. Regional cooperation, and initiatives such as the Istanbul Process on Regional Security and Cooperation for a Secure and Stable Afghanistan, welcomed and supported amongst others by the OSCE, plays an important role in promoting regional stability and inclusive sustainable development in the Central Asian region. The EU supports the implementation of three out of the six CBMs: disaster management, trade, commerce and investment opportunities, and counter-narcotics, complementing the OSCE's support for implementation of the counter-terrorism and education, as well as counter-narcotics CBMs.

We have followed with great interest the on-going election preparations in Afghanistan. The EU stands ready to support UNAMA in the fulfilment of its mandate, which was requested by the Afghan Government, to support election preparations. As far as the longstanding OSCE election observation and monitoring experience are concerned, the EU notes the possibility of deploying, at

the request of Afghanistan, an Election Support Team by ODIHR for the elections. The outcome of the Presidential and Provincial Council elections in April 2014 and of the Parliamentary elections in 2015 will be important markers of the progress made in consolidating democracy and the rule of law. The EU welcomes the approval of the electoral legal framework by Afghan authorities and stands ready to fully engage with the preparations for the elections in the coming months. The EU believes that the elections must be inclusive, transparent and credible in order to be broadly accepted as legitimate by the people of Afghanistan. In this context, the EU reiterates the importance of maximising women's participation in the electoral process.

In conclusion, the EU supports the Afghan Government and its citizens in their continuing process of social and political transformation. Once again, we reassure our partners of our commitment to playing our full part in contributing to the development of Afghanistan. The EU will continue to work with Afghanistan to promote security, reinforce democratic structures – including through inclusive and transparent elections – and foster human rights and the rule of law.

The candidate countries the FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA\*, MONTENEGRO and SERBIA, the countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate countries ALBANIA and BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA, as well as the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA and ARMENIA 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.