



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Permanent Council N°1089 Vienna, 11 February 2016

EU Statement in Response to the Chairpersons of the Three Committees

The European Union and its Member States thank the Chair of the three committees for their presentations of the ambitious work programme they have set out for this year.

We fully support the intention to focus this year's work in the **Security Committee** on the three topics outlined by Ambassador Istrate, namely: (1) preventing and countering terrorism and violent extremism and radicalisation leading to terrorism, (2) migration and (3) cyber security. We appreciate the events planned by the Chairmanship on these three priorities. We continue to support efforts to reach consensus, possibly in tomorrow's meeting of the Informal Cyber Working Group, on an additional set of confidence building measures on Cyber Security. Beyond these priority themes, other important related issues, such as border management, police cooperation and Security Sector Reform and Governance, should remain on the agenda. We should continue to address these from specific and operational angles in line with the OSCE mandates and expertise. Furthermore, there is a continued need to ensure a cross-dimensional approach in addressing transnational threats with full respect for the implementation of human dimension commitments. Finally, we support the continuation of the practice of voluntary reporting and welcome the intention to strengthen this exercise.

We welcome the comprehensive agenda for the **Economic and Environmental Committee** presented by Ambassador Papadakis. We are pleased to see important issues such as energy security, water governance, disaster risk reduction, climate change, labour migration and transport, among others, reflected in this year's programme in line with the Chairmanship's priorities. We welcome that the Chair of the Committee intends to incorporate and integrate a gender perspective in our work.

We also look forward to continuing discussions during the **2016 Economic and Environmental Forum** meetings in Berlin and Prague later this year on good migration governance and good governance in relation to business interaction, investment climate and the fight against corruption, anti-money laundering and financing of terrorism. We reiterate our emphasis on the clear security link of the second dimension within the OSCE comprehensive concept of security.

We support the planned approach by Ambassador Pehrman to the organisation of the **Human Dimension Committee** in 2016 and we are pleased to see the fundamental freedoms of expression, association and assembly, religion or belief, as well as prevention of torture and gender reflected in the programme. We also positively note the inclusion on the agenda of tolerance and non-discrimination and the rights of persons with disabilities. We welcome the planned continued use of a standing agenda and reiterate our full support for maintaining the practice of voluntary reporting. We encourage participating States to make full use of this agenda item. We believe that there is greater scope to use the committee in following up on human dimension discussions in the Permanent Council and at annual human dimension events such as the Human Dimension Implementation Meeting, including through voluntary reporting. We welcome the intention of Ambassador Pehrman to strengthen links between dialogue at the Human Dimension Committee and other OSCE human dimension discussions, also by providing a much needed platform for reporting on recommendations from the parallel civil society conference of the Belgrade Ministerial Council.

We support the idea of holding **thematic as well as joint committee meetings**. We welcome the active participation of the autonomous OSCE institutions, OSCE field operations, Partners for Cooperation, other intergovernmental organisations, and, not least, civil society including NGOs in Committee meetings. Their participation has enriched the discussions in the Committees.

Finally, allow me to express the full support of the European Union and its Member States to the important work that Ambassadors Istrate, Papadakis and Pehrman will lead within the three dimensions this year. We wish them every success in these

endeavours and we stand ready to support and contribute to the work of the three Committees.

The Candidate Countries the FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA*, MONTENEGRO*, SERBIA* and ALBANIA*, the Country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and Potential Candidate BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA, and the EFTA countries ICELAND, LIECHTENSTEIN and NORWAY, members of the European Economic Area, as well as UKRAINE, the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA, GEORGIA, ANDORRA and SAN MARINO align themselves with this statement.

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