



## EUROPEAN UNION

### OSCE Permanent Council No. 1299 Vienna, 21 January 2021

#### **EU Statement in response to the inaugural remarks by the new OSCE Secretary General Ms Helga Schmid**

The European Union warmly welcomes to the Permanent Council the new Secretary General of the OSCE, Ms Helga Schmid, and thanks her for her inaugural remarks.

Madame Secretary General, you assume this important position at a difficult time for European security. The Covid-19 pandemic is not only affecting our societies but also our work for comprehensive security in the OSCE area.

The challenges to European security, however diverse, stem mainly from lack of respect for our common principles and joint commitments enshrined in the Helsinki Final Act and the Charter of Paris for a New Europe which constitute the foundation of the European security order. Restoring respect for these principles and commitments and upholding them as our shared responsibility is the compass that must inspire and guide our work.

We share your belief in multilateralism as it is, together with the belief in a rules and rights based international order, a cornerstone of EU external policy.

Madame Secretary General, you can rest assured that the EU stands ready to support you, the Chairpersonship and the Troika in your work to assist the participating States in implementing our common commitments. We are certain that you will do your utmost to promote the principles the OSCE stands for. We welcome your intention to be transparent, balanced, responsive and accountable including in your capacity as the OSCE Chief Administrative Officer with a proactive approach to managing the Organization.

We welcome your objective to use the potential of the OSCE to bridge differences through dialogue and cooperation. We also appreciate your intention to make the

work of the OSCE across the spectrum of its comprehensive approach to security better known on the international arena and within the OSCE participating States.

We also welcome your stated willingness to work closely with the Swedish Chairpersonship-in-Office on their priority issues such as defending the European security order, upholding comprehensive security whereby political, economic and environmental security, human rights, democracy and the rule of law are interrelated and interconnected, contributing to conflict resolution and advancing gender equality.

In addition, we note that this year marks the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Ministerial Council Decision 3/11 on strengthening the OSCE's capabilities across the conflict cycle. As this Decision is a milestone in our Organization's ability to prevent and respond to conflicts in the OSCE region, we trust that you will look into ways to take stock of its implementation and put forward suggestions to better implement the mandate given to the Secretary General in this respect.

A sound administrative and financial management of the OSCE is of high importance. We would like to thank you in advance for your efforts in your management role as OSCE Chief Administrative Officer.

In conclusion, we would like also to express our full support for you in your new role and we wish you every success in your work.

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

\* Republic of North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.