



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Permanent Council Nr 1049 Vienna, 30 April 2015

EU statement in response to the Secretary General of GUAM, Ambassador Valeri Chechelashvili

The EU warmly welcomes the Secretary General of the Organisation for Democracy and Economic Development – GUAM, Ambassador Valeri Chechelashvili, to the Permanent Council and thanks him for his presentation.

We are supportive of non-exclusive regional cooperation initiatives that can contribute to improving stability and security at the regional level. Since the last visit of the Secretary General of GUAM, European security has been jeopardised following Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea and Sevastopol, in clear violation of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity, and its deliberate destabilisation of the situation in eastern Ukraine. Russia's violations of fundamental OSCE principles, and its international commitments, represent a significant challenge to the Astana Summit vision of a security community rooted in agreed principles, shared commitments and common goals and have wider implications on the security of the entire region.

The Eastern Partnership provides the framework for the EU's cooperation with the countries of GUAM. The Eastern Partnership remains our priority aimed at developing closer and stronger EU relations with our sovereign, independent eastern partners.

The resolution of the protracted conflicts in the Republic of Moldova, Georgia and of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict is a top priority for the European Union and enhanced efforts should be made at all levels to stir political will in order to make tangible progress for conflict resolution based on the principles and norms of international law and in the framework of existing agreed formats.

Developing a democratic, stable and prosperous neighbourhood, based on a commitment to core values, including the rule of law, protection of human rights and

gender equality, is a strategic priority and fundamental interest for the EU. We are committed to driving forward the Eastern Partnership agenda and to continuing to work together on subjects of common interest.

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, as well as UKRAINE and the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA 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.