



EUROPEAN UNION

**OSCE Permanent Council N° 1174
Vienna, 1 February 2018**

EU Reply to the Report by the Secretary General

The EU and its Member States thank the Secretary General for the information provided on the signature of the contract for long range UAVs and its conditions. We look forward to an informal briefing in the next few days that would provide more information on the terms of the contract and an opportunity for participating States to ask questions.

The use of technical equipment including satellites, drones, radar equipment is explicitly mentioned in the “Package of measures for the Implementation of the Minsk agreements” of 12 February 2015 as it can enable the SMM to carry out its mandate more effectively by increasing its situational awareness and coverage, including monitoring of remote areas and during night time. Of course, technology complements human monitoring and cannot replace it; however, it can help our monitors to fulfil their mandate and certain type of technology can in some cases improve monitor safety.

Adequate operational rules have to frame the operation of long-range UAVs in order for them to produce optimal operational results. As stated by the Permanent Council when adopting the 2017-2018 SMM budget last year, long-range UAVs will be deployed subject to a permissive security environment. We thus reiterate our call on the sides to secure full, safe and unhindered access for the SMM and the safety of its technical equipment throughout Ukraine including along the Ukrainian-Russian border in compliance with their obligations under the Minsk agreements.