



## **EUROPEAN UNION**

### **OSCE Annual Security Review Conference Vienna, 23 – 25 June 2015**

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#### **EU Statement on the OSCE and its Neighbourhood**

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The European Union and its Member States welcome that a working session of the ASRC is dedicated to the OSCE and its neighbourhood. In 1975, participating States attributed in the Helsinki Final Act a special role to the Mediterranean and from the early 1990s on to our Asian neighbourhood. Recent and ongoing international developments provide ample evidence that the security of the OSCE area is inextricably linked to that of adjacent areas. We therefore reiterate our strong commitment to the OSCE partners for cooperation.

We support efforts made to implement Ministerial Council Declarations on Cooperation with Mediterranean and Asian partners, with a view to addressing common transnational threats and challenges in a manner consistent with the OSCE's comprehensive approach to security.

Our neighbours and we are confronted with challenges such as terrorism, violent extremism and radicalisation leading to terrorism, irregular migration, organised crime and smuggling and trafficking in human beings.

In regards to irregular migration, we have decided to reinforce internal solidarity and responsibility. We will mobilise all efforts at our disposal to quickly save lives and provide protection for people in need, be they at sea, in the EU or in third countries. For this reason, we are intensifying our cooperation with countries of origin and transit and with countries hosting refugees, not only to support asylum and migration capacities, but also to fight trafficking networks and tackle the root causes that force people to escape and migrate: poverty, wars, persecutions, violations of human rights and natural disasters. We reiterate our call for collective action and therefore welcome the increased attention to these challenges in the OSCE.

We discussed the threat stemming from terrorism earlier today. We need to put more emphasis on the prevention of terrorism, in particular countering radicalisation, on

recruitment, equipment and financing of terrorism, and address underlying factors such as conflict, poverty, proliferation of arms, and state fragility that provide opportunities for terrorist groups to flourish. We believe that the OSCE can play a role in this regard, in particular in addressing the root causes of violent extremism and radicalisation that lead to terrorism, through its cross-dimensional approach.

We also highlight the continued importance of Afghanistan for the OSCE area. The security of Afghanistan is indivisible from sustainable security in the whole region, in particular Central Asia. We have made exceptional commitments to Afghanistan over the past 13 years and we remain committed for the long-term. Our cross-dimensional strategy, running until 2016, focuses on promoting peace, security and regional stability, reinforcing democracy, encouraging economic and human development and fostering the rule of law and human rights. We welcome the active cooperation of Afghanistan with the OSCE, such as the participation of Afghan officials in training courses at the OSCE Border Management Staff College in Dushanbe, in other OSCE activities in Central Asia and of Afghan students in the OSCE Bishkek Academy.

At the beginning of this month, we had the opportunity for a fruitful exchange on areas of cooperation with our Asian Partners during the OSCE Asian Conference in Seoul. We are also looking forward to discussing common challenges with our Mediterranean Partners this October in Jordan.

The Candidate Countries TURKEY, the FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA\*, MONTENEGRO\*, ICELAND+ and ALBANIA\*, the Country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and Potential Candidate BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA, and the EFTA country NORWAY, member of the European Economic Area, as well as UKRAINE, the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA, ANDORRA, SAN MARINO and MONACO 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.