



## EUROPEAN UNION

### **Joint FSC-PC Meeting: Structured Dialogue Vienna, 3 November 2021**

The European Union and its Member States would like to thank the Austrian FSC Chair and the Swedish Chairpersonship for bringing the topic of the Structured Dialogue to the joint meeting of the Permanent Council and the Forum for Security Cooperation. We highly value and actively support the Structured Dialogue, which we are ready to develop further in accordance with the Hamburg Declaration, as a transparent, inclusive, state-owned and -driven confidence building process, without a predetermined outcome and of high relevance for the EU.

We would like to thank the Spanish Chair of the Informal Working Group, Ambassador Valdes and your team, for the report on the activities conducted in 2021, and for your able stewardship of the Structured Dialogue, including Military Expert Level Workshops, during the past two years. We have highly valued the open and inclusive manner in which Spain has chaired our discussions in the Structured Dialogue. The Spanish team has put considerable efforts into finding new ways to take the Structured Dialogue forward, under the motto "Understanding for Security". We have welcomed the continued focus of the Spanish Chair on key politico-military issues of security, as well as on current and future challenges to security in the OSCE area. This has provided us with a valuable opportunity to discuss the full and faithful implementation of existing OSCE principles and commitments.

We continue to view the Structured Dialogue as a meaningful platform for in-depth exchanges on politico-military issues as well as on security threats and challenges of most concern to OSCE participating States, including new strategic challenges discussed in the IWG. We reiterate our openness to engage in the dialogue and hope that all participating States are ready to do the same in the spirit of mutual

understanding and respect. It is important to continue best practice discussions on risk reduction measures, enhancing transparency and on practical tools and mechanisms for incident prevention and management to minimise risks and reduce escalatory potential, also with respect to military exercises. In this regard, we particularly value the constructive and open exchanges on such questions at the Military Expert Level Workshops.

However, we are deeply concerned by the gradual and persistent deterioration of the security environment in the OSCE area due to recurrent violations of international law as well as breaches of OSCE principles and commitments. This trend must be reversed without delay. The EU remains ready to contribute to restoring trust and increasing mutual confidence among the participating States. To that end, we promote full implementation of the existing commitments in the politico-military area, including the Vienna Document, the Treaty on Open Skies and the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe. In keeping pace with the changes in the security environment, as well as technological and doctrinal developments in the military sphere, we continue to support a substantial update and modernisation of the Vienna Document. We will continue to uphold, support, and further strengthen arms control and CSBM architecture in Europe and work together towards creating an environment conducive to reinvigorating Conventional Arms Control and CSBMs, as we all agreed in the Hamburg Declaration. It is important that pS engage in genuine dialogue towards greater mutual understanding of the current and future challenges and risks to security.

In order to start rebuilding trust and confidence among participating States, transparency is key. Confidence and Security-Building Measures were designed to prevent conflicts by reducing risks through increased transparency and military-to-military contacts. All participating States should fully implement agreed CSBMs, provide comprehensive, adequate and accurate information about their military forces, activities and exercises, should engage in a cooperative manner and provide answers to legitimate requests for explanation and clarification of unusual military activities. Transparency is even more important in these times, as verification activities in the field of arms control and CSBMs have been, and to some extents still are, on hold due to the pandemic. We welcome that a number of participating States have already resumed verification activities, accompanied by appropriate protective measures. We

hope that this will encourage all participating States to resume verification activities without unnecessary delay.

We continue our commitment to engaging actively in the Structured Dialogue, which we consider a confidence building measure in itself. Finally, we would like to once again reiterate our sincere appreciation for the work of the Spanish Chair of the Informal Working Group.

The Candidate Countries the 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, 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 Republic of North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.