



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation 956th Plenary Meeting. Security Dialogue: Vienna Document

Vienna, 30 September 2020

Madame Chair, let me first allow to express on behalf of the European Union and its Member States our sincerest condolences to the delegation of Ukraine for the tragic military plane crash near Kharkiv last Friday. Our thoughts are with the families and friends of those who lost their lives.

The European Union and its Member States would like to thank the Chairmanship, as well as the coordinator and key-note speakers, for this useful opportunity to discuss and assess implementation and modernisation of the Vienna Document 2011.

We regret that this Security Dialogue takes place against the background of the ongoing conflicts, which pose a very serious threat to the security of the entire OSCE area. The resolution of the existing conflicts in the OSCE area, including the conflict in eastern Ukraine and the illegal annexation of the Crimean peninsula, remains a priority for the EU and our positions on these conflicts are well known. This reminds us of, and underscores, the crucial value of the Confidence and Security Building Measures, particularly those enshrined in the Vienna Document 2011. These need to be implemented fully and in good faith, and modernised, so that challenges to the current European security environment are better met by increased transparency and predictability.

OSCE's comprehensive and co-operative concept of security with emphasis on Conventional Arms Control, Confidence and Security Building Measures, disarmament and non-proliferation, constitutes an important element of our common security. When respected and abided by, these fundamental and enduring commitments provide systemic and preventive means to enhance predictability and transparency. In so doing, they can contribute to reducing military risks and misperceptions, lead to a better understanding of threat perceptions and build trust among participating States.

Important agreements in this area, including the Vienna Document, the Treaty on Open Skies and the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe have provided us with important security gains for many years. Conventional Arms Control and Confidence and Security Building Measures remain crucial instruments. We support full adherence to these instruments as well as efforts to solve outstanding issues pertaining to compliance with and implementation of these instruments, which are complementary.

We remain committed to the full implementation in letter and spirit of existing commitments in the politico-military dimension and appeal to all participating States to faithfully implement them. We continue to support the substantial modernisation of the Vienna Document. We are equally committed to the further development of Conventional Arms Control, Confidence and Security Building Measures and other instruments in the politico-military toolbox. We stand ready to work towards creating an environment conducive to reinvigorating Conventional Arms Control and Confidence and Security Building Measures in Europe.

We consider that there is a need for the full resumption of the Vienna Document activities, immediately when public health situation allows it. In the framework of the Covid-19 pandemic, we managed to co-ordinate the suspension of these activities and now need to further collaborate to resume their implementation.

We continue to believe that it is vital to modernise our OSCE politico-military toolbox, most notably the Vienna Document, in order to increase military stability, transparency and predictability. We are convinced that this would bring greater long-term security for all participating States. At relevant OSCE meetings, the EU and its Member States have been clear and consistent in calling for a substantial

modernisation of the Vienna Document. We welcome and support all proposals on various Vienna Document chapters aimed at strengthening its provisions and adapting it to the current security environment. In this context, we see the Joint Proposal for a VD Plus Draft Decision as an opportunity to launch a constructive negotiation. We view this proposal in a positive light. It reflects common concerns about growing unpredictability and mistrust in the European security environment and the urgent need to reverse this trend. We understand that this proposal is intended to create a positive momentum for modernisation of the Vienna Document and the confidence we place in the OSCE as the key platform for mutual dialogue on security issues. This new proposal together with other proposals will be a basis for negotiation that all participating States will be able to engage in, thereby rebuilding trust and confidence.

We urge all participating States to engage actively and constructively in these important discussions to increase military transparency and reduce risk by working with us to modernise the Vienna Document. In this respect, we strongly encourage Russia to reconsider its current position. The upcoming Ministerial Council in Tirana will be an opportunity to commemorate the 30 years of the Vienna Document, taking stock and hopefully providing further impulses to the process of its modernisation.

The Candidate Countries REPUBLIC of NORTH MACEDONIA*, MONTENEGRO* and ALBANIA*, 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.

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