



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Permanent Council Nr 1001 Vienna, 22 May 2014

EU Statement on the Presidential Elections in Ukraine

Three days before the Presidential elections in Ukraine, the EU once again expresses its strong support for holding free and fair elections. These elections will provide a unique opportunity for all Ukrainian citizens from all regions and political constituencies to express their views about Ukraine's future, freely, peacefully and democratically. They will allow the Ukrainian people to choose their own future. We regret that voting cannot take place on the illegally annexed Crimean peninsula, but welcome that citizens from this area can vote in other parts of Ukraine. We call for their right to participate in the election process to be fully respected and facilitated. We welcome the good progress made in organising these elections as reported by ODIHR.

Attempts by anyone to hamper the election process, to delegitimise the holding of these elections or to prejudge the outcome are unacceptable. We note with concern reports about occupation of election commission premises and intimidation of members of District Election Commissions by armed groups in some parts of Donetsk and Luhansk regions. We recall that the EU will pay particular attention to all parties' attitude and behaviour towards the holding of free and fair elections when deciding about possible future measures.

We recognise the important role of the ODIHR and OSCE/PA election observers and appreciate the excellent work by the long-term observers and experts in preparing for what will be one of the largest ever ODIHR Election Observation Missions. We rely on their impartial observations and on the conclusions of the independent ODIHR Election Observation Mission. We once again underline that

safety and access for the many observers before and during the elections will be of crucial importance.

The Candidate Countries the FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA*, MONTENEGRO*, ICELAND+, the Countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and Potential Candidates ALBANIA and BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA, and the EFTA country LIECHTENSTEIN, member of the European Economic Area, as well as UKRAINE, the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA, GEORGIA, MONACO and SAN MARINO align themselves with this statement.

* The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Montenegro 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.