



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Annual Security Review Conference

Vienna, 28 June 2017

Working session I:

“Early warning, conflict prevention, crisis management, conflict resolution and post-conflict rehabilitation: Lessons learned and the way ahead”

European Union Statement

The European Union thanks the Austrian Chairmanship for convening this session and the speakers for their mind provoking presentations.

Conflict prevention and response to emerging crises lies at the very heart of OSCE activities. Whereas the OSCE plays a central normative role for European security and is the inclusive platform for dialogue and confidence building, it is important that the organisation has the ability and tools to prevent and respond to crises and conflicts. We should do all we can to ensure that its conflict prevention and resolution capacities are sufficiently equipped to deal with the challenges we currently face in the OSCE region.

Last year, the EU and many others supported the German Chairmanship’s efforts to strengthen OSCE capabilities across the conflict cycle, based on lessons learned. While we regret that no consensus on a Decision could be reached in Hamburg, we welcome the Chairmanship’s report as a strong basis to continue the work ahead.

Let us first reiterate that full implementation of MC Decision 3/11 on the Elements of the Conflict Cycle is a prerequisite for strengthening the role of the OSCE in early warning, conflict prevention, crisis management, conflict resolution and post-conflict rehabilitation across the three dimensions. We welcome the work undertaken by the Conflict Prevention Centre (CPC), the autonomous institutions and other executive structures in close co-operation with other international actors to implement MC

Decision 3/11. We stress again that the CPC, field missions and autonomous institutions must be provided with sufficient resources through the Unified Budget to carry out their mandates.

We strongly believe that many key efforts are only possible due to the strong and flexible mandates of the three autonomous institutions. These need to be preserved. We applaud the institutions for their continued engagement in providing early warning. ODIHR and RFoM provide early warning in the human dimension, raising issues such as serious human rights violations that threaten our common security. The HCNM is and should remain a core, cross- dimensional conflict prevention instrument for the whole OSCE area, providing early warning and seeking early action with regard to tensions involving persons belonging to national minorities.

OSCE field missions could play a greater role in early warning and in addressing conflict situations, hence their mandates must be preserved. Their work with and across host countries and with civil society is of tremendous importance. We continue to see the value of a meaningful cross-dimensional OSCE presence in, among others, Armenia, Azerbaijan and throughout Georgia. The OSCE Mission in the Republic of Moldova must have full and unrestricted access to the entire territory of the country, including the Transdnestrrian region in order to completely fulfil its mandate.

Madam Chair, the crisis in and around Ukraine has shown that the OSCE's early warning, rapid reaction, crisis management and dialogue facilitation are important in enabling our organisation to play an important role in conflict resolution. In this context we highly appreciate the significant contributions of the CPC in organising and supporting OSCE engagement in Ukraine in an impartial, flexible and professional manner and we especially commend its role in supporting the Special Monitoring Mission (SMM). We underline the need for the sides to the conflict to ensure a safe and conducive environment for the SMM to fulfil its mandate and recall that the SMM must have full, safe and unhindered access throughout Ukraine, including to the Ukraine-Russia state border.

The resolution of the protracted conflicts in the Republic of Moldova, in Georgia, and of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict remains a priority for the EU. We will discuss this at the next session.

We would like to recall the importance for the OSCE and participating States to continue implementation of the 2004 OSCE Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality, including by mainstreaming gender throughout the whole of the conflict cycle. In light of current conflicts, UN Security Council Resolution 1325 and related Resolutions, are as important as ever today, to ensure all civilians are better protected in conflicts and that women fully and meaningfully participate in all aspects of peace and security decision-making and action. Evidence shows that this is necessary to bring about longer-lasting and more sustainable, inclusive, peace. In this context we thank the Austrian Chairmanship for organizing the Second Gender Equality Review Conference earlier this month. It offered an excellent opportunity to discuss - inter alia- how to mainstream gender in the security sector, which is so central in the conflict cycle, and we look forward to engaging on next steps.

Given today's focus on lessons learned, allow us to highlight that the EU has just presented a new strategy for resilience building. It aims at moving from crisis containment to a more structural and long-term approach to conflict prevention. It advocates an approach that fosters human security, is conflict sensitive and ensures that women's key role in peace building and state building as well as civil society is fully acknowledged and supported. Adherence to human rights is considered as crucial in assessing, preventing and resolving conflicts. Post-conflict stabilisation is essentially also conflict prevention. In this context, the EU will strengthen cooperation with mediation support capacities of international and regional organisations, including with the OSCE. It will also step up its efforts on transitional justice as part of an integrated approach.

We want to prevent fragile situations from turning into new wars, new humanitarian catastrophes, or new refugee crises by building resilience. The strategy will help us co-ordinate different tools: from humanitarian aid to incentives for private investments, from climate action to military missions. It is a forward-looking, truly integrated approach to external conflicts and crises - in our view the only one that

can work, in the complex world of today. We look forward to continuing our work with and within the OSCE to this end. Thank you.

The Candidate Countries the FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA*, MONTENEGRO* and ALBANIA*, the Country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and Potential Candidate BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA, and the EFTA countries ICELAND and NORWAY, members of the European Economic Area, as well as UKRAINE, the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA and SAN MARINO align themselves with this statement.

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