



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation Nr 747 Vienna, 26 February 2014

EU Statement on Developing SALW Control Concepts

The European Union (EU) would like to thank Lt. Col. Iain Nichols from the Federal Ministry of Defence of Germany for his informative presentation on Developing Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) Control Concepts for the Future Operating Environment. We acknowledge the consistent and proactive efforts of Germany in support of the activities of the international community in this area, including the OSCE.

The proliferation risks of illicit SALW and ammunition worldwide have reached a new dimension, particularly due to events such as that recently experienced in Northern Africa and the Middle East. The urgent need for enhanced small arms control in many parts of the world is striking. A reflection on assistance and coordination of policies for SALW control is a valuable contribution to the discussions in the FSC.

In this regard, we share the view that addressing current challenges in the fields of combatting illicit trafficking of SALW and destabilising accumulation of conventional ammunition will continue to be relevant and helpful as we develop a better comprehension of and prepare for the future operating environment.

The EU works actively in international fora, at regional and sub-regional levels and with third countries, to promote the implementation on the commitments on SALW and Stockpiles for Conventional Ammunition (SCA). We recognise the continuing importance of OSCE norms in this area as well as the need for their improved implementation and further development.

Ministerial Council Decision 8/13 adopted in Kyiv tasked the FSC to explore ways to review and, where appropriate, supplement the 2012 OSCE Document of SALW and the 2003 OSCE document on SCA and the Handbook of Best Practices on SALW. It is therefore important that we assess and review the existing commitments and documents.

We would also like to add that in line with MC Decision 8/13 we support discussions on the elaboration of measures that strengthen gender aspects in connection with SALW in the context of OSCE Plan of Action on SALW. This

should include, for example, increased representation of women in decision making levels dealing with SALW related issues in the security sector.

Finally, we would like to take this opportunity to restate our commitment to support swift entry into force and implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT); we encourage all OSCE participating States to sign and ratify the Treaty as soon as possible. We believe that the OSCE can usefully play a part in achieving the ATT's goals of preventing illicit trade in conventional arms and diversion. This might include, inter alia, the elaboration of best practices for its ratification and effective implementation along with capacity building activities.

It is planned that the Council of the EU in March will adopt an enabling decision for EU Member States to ratify the ATT, so we can expect some good news on coming closer to the 50 ratifications threshold for entry into force quite soon. Already in December last year, the EU adopted a Council Decision on EU activities in support of the implementation of the ATT by third States, with a volume of 6, 4 Mio. € for the years 2014-2016, which is a clear sign of the importance of the Treaty and our commitment to it.

The candidate countries the FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA^{*}, MONTENEGRO, ICELAND^{**} and SERBIA, the countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate countries ALBANIA and BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA, the European Free Trade Association country NORWAY, member of the European Economic Area, as well as UKRAINE, the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA and GEORGIA align themselves with this statement.

^{*} The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

^{**} Iceland continues to be a member of EFTA and the European Economic Area.