



EUROPEAN UNION

**OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation N°828
Vienna, 14 September 2016**

**EU Statement in response to H.E. Dr. Augusto Santos Silva,
Minister of Foreign Affairs of Portugal**

The European Union and its Member States warmly welcome H.E. Dr. Augusto Santos Silva, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Portugal, to the Forum for Security Co-operation and thank him for outlining the priorities of the Portuguese FSC Chairmanship, as well as for presenting views of his country on the current security challenges in the OSCE area.

We would also like to use the opportunity to once again thank the Polish FSC Chairmanship for its able leadership during the past trimester.

While Portugal assumes the FSC Chairmanship we continue to be confronted with a blatant violation of international law and basic OSCE principles by the Russian Federation following its illegal annexation of Crimea and destabilizing actions in eastern Ukraine. We agree with Mr. Minister that a sustainable political solution to the crisis can only be reached through full implementation of the Minsk agreements and urge all sides to comply with the commitments they have signed up to.

Conventional Arms Control and Confidence- and Security-Building Measures are vital pillars of our security community. We therefore welcome your intention to put a special focus on the Lisbon Framework for Arms Control - to mark its 20th anniversary and to remind us of our collective commitment to fully implement and further develop Arms Control agreements as well as of the key role of the FSC in promoting co-operative security in the OSCE area. The Security Days event on 3 October, organized by the Secretary General, provides us with another opportunity to exchange views on the important issues of military confidence building, risk reduction and arms control in Europe and their modernisation.

The reissuance of the Vienna Document remains one of the most important – and most challenging – tasks for the FSC in 2016. As stated on many occasions, we are convinced of the need to substantially update and modernize the Vienna Document in order to adapt it to the current security environment and technical developments in the military sphere. Innovations, such as modern weapons systems and new military strategies, require adequate transparency and confidence building measures so that the Vienna Document can continue to serve its purpose of dispelling concerns and strengthening confidence between OSCE participating States. We are grateful for the numerous proposals for VD+ decisions to this end and tireless efforts of many around this table. We will continue to engage actively and constructively in the ongoing negotiations and encourage all participating States, including Russia, to a similar approach. Results can only be achieved if we all work together and display the necessary political will. We firmly believe that a strengthened Vienna Document would be beneficial for all participating States and significantly contribute to security and stability in the OSCE area.

We would like to thank you Mr. Minister for presenting a balanced and comprehensive agenda of the Portuguese FSC Chairmanship, which we fully support. We appreciate the opportunity to have a follow-up discussion to the successful HLMDS held earlier this year. We look forward to the discussion on SALW deactivation – an issue currently also very much in the focus of the European Union. We appreciate your intention to keep women, peace and security high on the FSC's agenda as well as to continue the practice of bringing regional security policy and defence cooperation issues to the FSC's attention, this time focusing on defence cooperation in the Mediterranean.

Madame Chair, Portugal will lead us as we approach the MC in Hamburg, which adds another challenging task to the busy agenda of your Chairmanship. Achieving consensus on FSC-related decisions proved to be a challenging endeavour in the past few years. It is therefore important that we work together to generate the necessary momentum to pave the way for tangible results in Hamburg. You can count on our support to this end. We look forward to working with you and wish you and your team every success.

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