



EUROPEAN UNION

**OSCE Special Permanent Council Nr 917
Vienna, 20 June 2012**

**EU statement in response to the Minister of Foreign Affairs of
Ukraine, H.E. Kostyantyn Gryshchenko**

The European Union warmly welcomes the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, H.E. Kostyantyn Gryshchenko, back to the Permanent Council and thanks him for presenting an outline of the priorities of the Ukrainian 2013 OSCE Chairmanship.

The EU looks forward to Ukraine taking up a leading role in our Organisation and promoting and exemplifying our common commitments across all three dimensions. The OSCE comprehensive concept of security has at its core the promotion of and respect for human rights, fundamental freedoms and the rule of law. The EU is concerned that those same values are increasingly called into question in some parts of the OSCE region.

We stand ready to work closely with the future Ukrainian Chair, including within the context of Helsinki +40 process, towards the vision of a free, democratic, common and indivisible Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian security community.

We highly welcome Ukraine's intention to promote lasting settlements of protracted conflicts in the OSCE region. Achieving tangible progress towards the resolution of these conflicts constitutes a top priority of the EU. We appreciate Ukraine's active and constructive engagement in the settlement

process of the Transnistrian conflict. Since the end of last year achievements have been reached in the formal 5+2 meetings. We look forward to progress on substance of a comprehensive settlement on the basis of full respect of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Moldova. The European Union takes this opportunity to reiterate its full support for the Minsk Group and its Co-Chairmen in the search for a negotiated political settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, which it considers vital for the future of the region. We also reiterate our firm support for the Geneva discussions and the security and stability of Georgia, based on full respect for the principles of sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders.

On a general note, we believe the OSCE should strive to fully implement UN Security Council Resolution 1325 in all its conflict-related activities.

We are pleased that Ukraine plans to give high priority to the promotion of the implementation of existing commitments in the Human Dimension. Achieving further progress in the implementation of the OSCE commitments in the Human Dimension, in particular in the area of freedom of expression in media including digital media, safety of journalists, freedom of assembly and association, and freedom of religion and belief, remains a key priority for the EU.

Turning to the Politico-Military Dimension the EU hopes that the package of decisions on transnational threats will be finalised soon, so that the Ukrainian Chairmanship can focus on their implementation. We agree that border security and management, including in the context of the OSCE engagement with Afghanistan, and countering emerging transnational threats are important topics. The EU is supportive of efforts that give further impetus to the negotiations on modernizing the Vienna Document and that focus on increased military transparency, predictability and stability for all participating

States. We will continue supporting consultations on conventional arms control.

The EU is keen to take the work in the Economic and Environmental Dimension forward. We feel that it is important not only to continue, but even strengthen our common endeavours to promote good governance in the OSCE area, as well as to promote the use of the tools of the Economic and Environmental Dimension as confidence-building measures. The EU notes that the theme proposed by Ukraine for the 21st Economic and Environmental Forum takes into consideration the linkages between energy, security and the environment, as well as good governance aspects in the energy sector.

Mr Chairperson,

Ukraine as a European country shares a common history and common values with the countries of the EU. The EU once again acknowledges Ukraine's European aspirations and welcomes its European choice. At the Cooperation Council on 15 May the EU stressed the importance of the following issues:

Ukraine's performance, notably in relation to respect for common values and the rule of law, will be of crucial importance for the speed of its political association and economic integration with the EU. In this context, we would like to recall our statements on the criminal proceedings against members of the former government, notably former Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko, as well as Valery Ivashchenko, Yuriy Lutsenko and Heorhyi Filipchuk. These cases point to a systemic problem in Ukraine needing comprehensive judicial reform. There is also a need for acceleration of reforms in other areas.

It is also of crucial importance that the upcoming Ukrainian Parliamentary elections are conducted in accordance with international standards and commitments. In this regard we welcome Ukraine's timely invitation to ODIHR to monitor these elections and we note the recommendation of the ODIHR's

Needs Assessment Mission. The EU will follow both the conditions of the electoral campaign, the voting process and its aftermath very closely.

Mr Chairperson,

We concur with H.E. Gryshchenko that the OSCE's autonomous institutions are the greatest assets of the organisation and we highly value the work of the institutions and the field operations in providing assistance to the participating States in implementing their commitments across all three dimensions. The EU is confident that Ukraine will continue to enjoy good relations with all OSCE institutions. Concerning the OSCE Project Coordinator in Ukraine, we encourage the support of governmental institutions and note with satisfaction the interests of civil society in the Project Coordinator's activities and projects.

Finally, the EU reiterates its willingness to work closely with Ukraine as a future chair and we would like, once again, to thank H.E. Kostyantyn Gryshchenko for addressing the Permanent Council today, and wish him and his country all the best for the challenging tasks ahead.

The Acceding Country Croatia*, the Candidate Countries the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*, Montenegro* and 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 San Marino, align themselves with this statement.

* Croatia, 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.