



EUROPEAN UNION

**OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation N°875
Vienna, 31 January 2018**

**EU Statement on the Importance of Transparency and
reliability of military information**

The European Union and its Member States warmly welcome the speakers to the FSC and thank them for their interesting presentations.

We welcome this security dialogue on Importance of transparency and reliability of military information and take the opportunity to emphasise the importance of strengthening, fully implementing and modernizing conventional arms control and CSBMs. These instruments need closer link to the current military and security conditions. We believe that a modern, functional conventional arms control regime, based on our agreed principles and commitments, increases the transparency and predictability of armed forces which is vital for security and stability in Europe.

We would like to reiterate our readiness to pursue a pragmatic approach in the process of substantial modernisation of the Vienna Document on CSBMs with the aim of ensuring its continued relevance, and increasing military stability, transparency and predictability and reducing risk for all participating States.

Military information is an important and integral part of confidence and security building measures. Reliable information and transparency on military forces, defence planning, activities and doctrines, as well as the use of the information exchange instruments are important measures to build confidence and restore trust among pS.

We welcome proposals on various chapters including Chapter III proposals on “Risk Reduction”. These are examples of efforts to dispel concerns and hence strengthen confidence between OSCE participating States. We recall in this context the proposals made by EU member states on both para 16 and 17 of Chapter III, aiming at reducing risk, and reducing risk of miscalculation and thereby diminishing actions

that could give rise to tension. We welcome the initiative by Slovakia, as current FSC Chair, to devote more time at Working Group A to examining the wealth of promising Vienna Document modernization proposals already before us, and urge all participating States to engage constructively in the discussions around these proposals.

We welcome the work of the Structured Dialogue in 2017 and look forward to seeing its mapping process contribute substantially to military transparency, predictability and deeper understanding of threat perceptions in Europe.

Mr. Chairperson, turning now to the issue of hybrid threats, the European Union and its Member States acknowledge that we are facing multifaceted security challenges. Threats are increasingly taking non-conventional forms, some using the digital space with complex cyber-attacks. They may be aimed to undermine actively the sovereign integrity of nations and the international order on which we depend for example through the coercive application of pressure including misinformation campaigns, and media manipulation. In this context, the European Commission and the High Representative, adopted in April 2016 the Joint Framework on countering hybrid threats. The Framework outlines actions for coordinated response at EU level to improve the resilience of Member States to respond to common threats.

Significant progress has been made since the adoption of the Framework in areas, such as awareness and information exchange, as well as protecting critical infrastructure and in countering violent extremism and radicalisation. More remains to be done, as the nature of hybrid threats continues to evolve. EU action in building resilience will continue, as the nature of hybrid threats evolves. The EU will also build on and deepen its already fruitful cooperation with NATO.

In conclusion, we would like once again to underline that lasting security requires political will and cooperative effort from all participating States with a genuine commitment to - and full implementation of - the comprehensive and cooperative Confidence and Security Building Measures.

The Candidate Countries the FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA*, MONTENEGRO*, SERBIA* 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, ANDORRA and SAN MARINO align themselves with this statement.

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