



EUROPEAN UNION

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EU Statement on the Outcome of the Belgrade Ministerial Council

The European Union and its Member States appreciate the tireless efforts of the Norwegian FSC Chairmanship to facilitate consensus on FSC-related Ministerial Council documents. We deeply regret that the Ministerial Council concluded without a single decision in the politico-military dimension.

The Ministerial Council was for the second year overshadowed by the crisis in and around Ukraine. We acknowledge that in such a difficult security situation, the participating States were unable to reach an agreement on any of the decisions tabled by the FSC Chair.

We have engaged actively and constructively from the very beginning of the negotiations and are particularly disappointed that for the fourth consecutive year no agreement was reached on a draft decision on issues relevant to the FSC. We commend in this context the FSC Chairmanship for its attempt to overcome the division and mistrust caused by the crisis in and around Ukraine by tabling a short text on core FSC issues, such as conventional arms control and CSBMs. We welcomed this effort especially in view of the need to substantially modernise Vienna Document in line with the evolving defence and security environment and to reissue it next year. This attempt proved to be inconclusive, however, we valued this exercise and saw the negotiation process as important in its own right. Notwithstanding our failure to achieve consensus, we believe that our work on the texts in both SALW/SCA and CAC/CSBMs can be capitalised by the forthcoming FSC Chairmanship.

Despite the disappointing outcome of this Ministerial Council, we remain committed to implement fully the existing OSCE politico-military acquis in the field of arms control and CSBMs. We look forward to negotiations on updating and modernising the Vienna Document on CSBMs in 2016, including a comprehensive review of the Vienna Document Plus proposals with the aim of increasing military stability, transparency and predictability for all participating States. We welcome the High-Level Military Doctrine Seminar early next year. This military-to-military dialogue is a Confidence- and Security-Building Measure in itself and might contribute to further discussions on revitalizing Conventional Arms Control and CSBMs regimes.

We remain committed to implement fully and strengthen relevant OSCE commitments and activities to combat the illicit trafficking and destabilising accumulation of SALW and SCA. In this context, we will continue promoting recent developments in the UN framework as applies to the OSCE, including the women, peace and security agenda and the Arms Trade Treaty.

Finally, we remain firmly committed to preserving and enhancing the FSC toolbox with a view to restoring trust and confidence in the OSCE area. Redoubled efforts and strong political will are needed now more than ever in order to overcome the negative consequences of the crisis in and around Ukraine for the implementation and the value of the OSCE commitments in the field of CAC and CSBMs.

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 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.