



EUROPEAN UNION
OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation N°874
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EU Statement on International projects in the field of Small Arms and Light Weapons and Stockpiles of Conventional Ammunition

The European Union and its Member States warmly welcome the speakers to the Forum for Security Co-operation and thank them for their insights.

Mr. Chairperson, we highly appreciate that you put this topic on the FSC's agenda. The discussion today is an important follow up to the MC decision 10/2017 which includes important tasking for this Forum: We fully subscribe to the need to make further steps to improve the efficiency and outcomes of OSCE SALW and SCA projects to ensure the maximum possible value in dealing with the challenges associated with SALW and SCA. We consider holding periodic meetings to review practical assistance projects on SALW and SCA an important tool to this end and encourage continuation of the practice of organizing such meetings. In this context, we have listened with interest to the presentations of the distinguished speakers on the activities of their respective entities in the OSCE region. We would be interested to hear from them how they work together with the OSCE in the area of SALW and SCA projects and where such cooperation could further be intensified.

Mr. Chairperson, The EU and its Member States attach great importance to enhancing peace and security in the OSCE area by reducing the threat posed by the illicit trafficking and excessive accumulation of SALW and conventional ammunition. This is demonstrated also through support and contribution to the OSCE's assistance projects. We would like to use the opportunity and draw attention of this distinguished Forum to the current projects in the OSCE area supported financially from the EU budget. This includes in particular the project on reducing the risk of illicit trafficking and excessive accumulation of SALW and conventional ammunition in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Georgia implemented by the OSCE (CD 2017/1424/CFSP) as well as the project in support of disarmament and arms control activities in South-East Europe

implemented by SEESAC (CD 2016/2356/CFSP). Furthermore, EU Member States contribute individually to many other projects in the OSCE area implemented by the OSCE or other agencies.

Such support is in line with our commitment to fully implement the OSCE Documents on SALW and SCA, the OSCE Plan of Action on SALW and the UN Programme of Action. In this context we look forward to discussing the OSCE's contribution to the Third Review conference on the UN Program of Action on 21 February, and thank you Mr. Chairperson, for including this pertinent issue in the agenda of your FSC Chairmanship. The EU and its Member States furthermore remain committed to continuing its support to the fight against the illicit trade in SALW, in line with the EU SALW Strategy which is currently under review.

Mr. Chairperson, the MC decision 10/2017 tasks this Forum to continue exchanging views and share best practice on the impact of excessive and destabilizing accumulation and uncontrolled spread of SALW and SCA on women and children as well as on gender aspects of OSCE assistance projects in the field of SALW and SCA. We encourage such dialogue in this Forum in line with the tasking by our ministers. Also, we would be interested whether our guests could share their experience with the integration of the gender perspective into SALW and SCA projects, including possible benefits of mainstreaming gender perspective.

Finally, we would like to thank all pS who contribute to SALW and SCA assistance projects in the OSCE area for their generous support. SALW and SCA projects are important work of the OSCE/FSC and change the situation for people on the ground hence represent a genuine contribution to peace and security in our region.

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, LIECHTENSTEIN, members 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, Serbia and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.