



EUROPEAN UNION
OSCE FSC on 13 February 2019
EU Statement on the Vienna Document 2011: Better Imple-
mentation and Application of Existing Tools

The European Union (EU) and its Member States would like to thank the Swiss Chairmanship, as well as the key-note speakers, for this important opportunity to discuss the Vienna Document.

We reiterate our strong commitment to full implementation in letter and spirit of the existing principles and commitments in the politico-military dimension, which is essential for enhancing military transparency, predictability and political stability in the OSCE area. Important agreements in this area, including the Vienna Document, the Open Skies Treaty, and the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe have provided us with important security gains for many years. We support efforts to solve outstanding issues pertaining to the implementation of these instruments. We reiterate our enduring support for the pending application of the Republic of Cyprus to accede to the Open Skies Treaty.

We remain strong supporters of a substantial modernisation of the Vienna Document. We continue to believe that it is vital to modernise the Vienna Document, in order to increase military stability, transparency and predictability. We are convinced that this would bring more long-term security for all participating States. We welcome the impetus given under the Swiss Chairmanship to discuss proposals on various Vienna Document chapters during dedicated sessions at the WG A aimed at strengthening its provisions and adapting it to the current security environment. We would like to highlight proposals put forward by EU MS. These include 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, which a vast majority of participating States argues would reduce risks and tensions, and the French Proposal, co-sponsored by all EU Member States, on lowering thresholds for prior notification of certain

military activities. We call on Russia to reconsider its political stance with regard to the VD modernisation and call on all pS to engage actively and constructively in these important discussions to increase military transparency and reduce risk by working with us on updating the Vienna Document.

We would also like to underline in this regards the valuable work undertaken in the IWG Structured Dialogue on the future challenges and risks to security in the OSCE area, and we look forward to further discussions on the recommendations in the Structured Dialogue's Annual Report on possible ways forward. We want to recall the ministerial commitment of all participating States in Hamburg 2016 to work towards creating an environment conducive to reinvigorating arms control and CSBMs in Europe. Strong commitment to full implementation and further development of arms control agreements is essential for enhancing military and political stability within the OSCE area. We are looking forward to cooperating with the newly appointed IWG Chair, Ambassador Jeroen Boender.

We and a number of other participating States have repeatedly highlighted the clear violations of the rules based international order of which OSCE politico-military instruments form a key part. We remain especially concerned about latest such violations in the context of the crisis in and around Ukraine. We reiterate that it is essential to restore full respect for international law and fundamental OSCE principles by all participating States.

We share concerns about large scale and snap military exercises, the risk of unintended escalation stemming from hazardous incidents of a military nature, military activities in the vicinity of international borders without adequate CSBMs, as well as a selective approach to the implementation of OSCE's politico-military commitments.

We encourage steps toward ensuring greater transparency, including by updating the contact lists, executing the inspections and evaluations effectively, updating MWES-catalogues, developing best practice guides for completing Military exchanges of information and setting a voluntary CPC data validation check on AEMI and GEMI, among other suggestions made in the last Heads of Verification Meeting.

We urge all participating States to demonstrate constructiveness in the implementation and further development of Conventional Arms Control and CSBMs through active engagement, and to take constructive steps to increase military transparency and reduce risk by working with us on a substantial modernization of the Vienna Document. As assessed in the 2018 Summary Report on Recent Trends in the Implementation of the VD and other measures issued by the CPC, in general the compliance with the VD11 in 2018 remained at a relatively high level. With this background we look forward to continuing our deliberations on the better implementation of the Vienna Document at this year's AIAM and we welcome the initiative of the Slovak OSCE Chairmanship, the Swiss FSC Chair and Austria to host a side event on Vienna Document Plus Proposals in its margins.

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 the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA, GEORGIA, 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.