



## EUROPEAN UNION

### **OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation N°918 Vienna, 19 June 2019**

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### **EU Statement on Small Arms and Light Weapons / Stockpiles of Conventional Ammunition**

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The European Union and its Member States warmly welcome the speakers to the Forum for Security Co-operation and thank them for their presentations. We commend the Tajik FSC Chairmanship for including the topic of SALW/SCA on the agenda of this Forum and we appreciate the opportunity to discuss the topic from a regional perspective of Central Asia.

Mr. Chairman, the EU and its Member States attach great importance to enhancing peace and security in the OSCE area by reducing the threat posed by illicit trafficking and excessive accumulation of SALW and conventional ammunition. We remain committed to full implementation of the OSCE Documents on SALW and SCA, the OSCE Plan of Action on SALW, and the UN Programme of Action, which provides both a valid and effective strategy to fight the illicit trade in SALW, and a global forum to share and develop further actions at national, regional, and international levels. The OSCE has a number of measures aimed at addressing illicit trafficking of SALW, including through air transport.

Since the adoption of the EU Strategy to combat illicit accumulation and trafficking of SALW and their ammunition in 2005, the EU has invested considerably in cooperation and assistance to third countries with a view to combatting the illicit trade in SALW. In light of developments since 2005, on 19 November 2018 the Council of the EU adopted a new EU Strategy against illicit firearms, small arms and light weapons and their ammunition replacing the 2005 Strategy. These developments include the increasingly complex security context, including the threat of terrorism

inside the EU, and developments in SALW design and technology affecting the capacity of governments to address the threat.

The main objective of the revised EU Strategy remains the full and effective implementation of the UN PoA and the ITI at national regional and global levels. The Strategy therefore puts forward measures to improve implementation of the UN PoA at national and regional levels in the EU. It also proposes cooperation and assistance in other regions of the world and at global level. This support will include collection and destruction of surplus SALW and ammunition, physical security and stockpile management for SALW and ammunition, capacity development for marking, record keeping and tracing, capacity development for arms export control, capacity development for law enforcement in countering illicit trafficking, support for embargo monitoring and tracing of diverted weapons.

In this context, the EU and its MS fund various projects in cooperation with the OSCE or other implementing partners working in the OSCE region. Examples include the EU funding for projects in Georgia and the Republic of North Macedonia to strengthen security in the regions of South-Eastern Europe and the South Caucasus by reducing the threat from the uncontrolled proliferation of SALW and conventional ammunition, and the Council Decision in support of the South-Eastern and Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SEESAC) for the implementation of the Franco-German Regional Roadmap on combating illicit arms trafficking in the Western Balkans. Further joint EU-OSCE SALW/SCA projects are currently under consideration.

In addition, the EU has financially supported a programme in Kyrgyzstan aimed at enhancing the capacity of Kyrgyzstan for more effective SALW and CA management and control. Also, with regard to mine action, through the EU's Council Decision of 13 November 2012 aimed to enhance the pursuit of the aims of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, resources were provided to Tajikistan in carrying out a comprehensive national mid-term appraisal of efforts to implement the mine clearance aspects of the Cartagena Action Plan, as well as for taking stock of the fulfilment of the victim assistance commitments under the Action Plan.

This support is fully in line with the principles which guide the new Strategy, namely to promote cooperation and partnerships at all levels, to take responsibility in relation to priority regions, and to promote a global rules-based cooperative order with

multilateralism as its key principle. In this context, we highly value the work of OSCE's field missions in Central Asia and we would like to ask the speakers to elaborate on how the OSCE can further support the needs of their countries.

We look forward to continuing our deliberations on this important topic at the OSCE meeting to review the implementation of OSCE assistance projects in the field of SALW/SCA in October this year organised by the Slovak OSCE CiO in cooperation with the incoming Czech FSC Chairmanship.

Mr. Chairman, we thank you for the opportunity to exchange views on this important topic. Thank you for your attention.

The Candidate Countries The REPUBLIC of NORTH MACEDONIA\*, MONTENEGRO\*, SERBIA\* and ALBANIA\*, the Country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and Potential Candidate BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA, and the EFTA country LIECHTENSTEIN, member of the European Economic Area, as well as UKRAINE, the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA and GEORGIA align themselves with this statement.

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