



**EUROPEAN UNION**

**OSCE Annual Security Review Conference**

**Vienna, 28 June 2017**

**Working Session II**

**“Conflict and crisis situations in the OSCE area: building security and confidence”**

**European Union Statement**

Yesterday we discussed the conflict in and around Ukraine and earlier today we had wider discussions on the conflict cycle. We welcome this important opportunity to discuss in more depth other conflict situations in the OSCE area. Preserving the principle of indivisibility of security in the Euro-Atlantic region should remain essential. In doing so, we should follow a comprehensive approach, which is aimed at enhancing security for all states in the OSCE area, including regions affected by conflicts, including protracted conflicts. The OSCE provides a useful and important platform for dialogue, rebuilding trust and restoring security based on OSCE principles and commitments.

Protracted conflicts in our region pose a very serious threat to the security of the entire OSCE area. The status quo is detrimental to security. The resolution of the existing conflicts in the OSCE area remains a priority for the EU and our positions on these conflicts are well known. The EU remains committed in its support to the territorial integrity, independence and sovereignty of all OSCE participating States. The EU supports the existing formats of negotiations and calls on all actors involved to demonstrate commitment to conflict settlement. The EU will continue to promote and support confidence building measures to assist the resolution of these conflicts, in co-operation with the OSCE and other relevant interlocutors.

The European Union reaffirms its full support for the Minsk Group and for the work carried out by its Co-Chairmen and by the Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office, aimed at assisting the sides to reach a negotiated and peaceful long-lasting resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

The EU recalls the reiterated commitment of the Presidents of Armenia and Azerbaijan to the ceasefire and the peaceful settlement of the conflict. The European Union is concerned over violations of the ceasefire, resulting in casualties on the Line of Contact and the international border and deplores the loss of life, in particular reports of civilian casualties and deaths. We support the implementation of the agreements reached during the 2016 summits of Vienna and St Petersburg. We call on the parties to refrain from any use of force, respect the ceasefire and resume as soon as possible the negotiations towards a peaceful resolution of the conflict.

Against the backdrop of a difficult economic situation and tensions in the wider neighbourhood, the EU encourages Ukraine and Russia to continue their support to the Transdniestrian settlement process in the “5+2” format and the resolution of the conflict in the Republic of Moldova.

We support a lasting comprehensive settlement of the Transdniestrian conflict, based on the respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Moldova, within its internationally recognized borders, with a special status for the Transdniestrian region. We call on the parties to reach agreements on the eight issues that they themselves have defined as priorities. We appeal to all participants to resume as soon as possible the “5+2” talks on the basis of a constructive and results-oriented approach towards a peaceful resolution of the conflict and to address all three baskets, including in the political, institutional and security aspects of the third basket. The withdrawal of the remaining forces of the Russian army from the Republic of Moldova is also an important issue that needs to be resolved.

We commend the Austrian OSCE Chairmanship-in-Office and its Special Representative, Ambassador Wolf-Dietrich Heim, for their efforts to this end.

The European Union reiterates the view that the Geneva International Discussions continue to be a crucial forum to address and resolve the challenges stemming from the conflict in Georgia.

The European Union reiterates its firm support for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Georgia within its internationally recognised borders and underlines its deep concern about the continuing Russian military and security-related presence,

infrastructure reinforcements, ongoing 'borderisation' and closure of the crossing points in and along the Georgian breakaway regions.

In this context, we continue to believe that a clear non-use of force commitment by Russia is necessary. The EU calls on Russia to fulfil its obligations under the ceasefire agreement of 12 August 2008 and its subsequent implementing measures of 8 September 2008 and to grant EUMM access to the breakaway regions.

The decision by the de facto Abkhaz authorities to drop charges against the suspect of the killing of a Georgian civilian on 19 May 2016 at the Khurcha-Nabakevi crossing point on the Administrative Boundary Line with the breakaway region of Abkhazia, is worrying, and prevents justice taking its rightful course. Impunity of serious crimes negatively impacts perceptions of security on the ground. Work on this case and other issues related to security on the ground must continue.

Thank you.

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