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**STATEMENT BY
THE EUROPEAN UNION AT THE 1146th PLENARY MEETING OF THE
OSCE FORUM FOR SECURITY CO-OPERATION**

23 September 2026

On small arms and light weapons

Mr. Chairperson,

The European Union and its Member States thank you for organizing this Security Dialogue and the panellists for their very interesting presentations on enhancing security and confidence through assistance projects related to the control of small arms and light weapons (SALW). In line with its 2018 Strategy aimed at combating the illicit trade in SALW and their ammunition, the European Union remains fully committed to preventing and curbing the illicit trade in SALW and their ammunition worldwide, through support for the implementation of international instruments such as the United Nations Programme of Action, the Global Framework for Through-life Conventional Ammunition Management, and the Arms Trade Treaty.

The efforts undertaken by the European Union and its Member States are driven by a recognition of the seriousness and scale of the threats and challenges posed by the diversion, trafficking and unauthorized use of SALW, which contribute to instability and armed violence, thwart sustainable development and crisis management efforts, further destabilize entire regions, the States therein and their societies, fuel armed violence and organized crime, and amplify the impact of terrorist attacks. The European Union continues to be engaged in global and regional actions to prevent the illegal trafficking of arms and ammunition.

We continue to support the Western Balkan States in their efforts to tackle the SALW trafficking-related consequences of the armed conflict that ended 30 years ago. This is a stark reminder of the longevity of such threats in the absence of effective preventive measures. The South-East Europe region is at the heart of the European Union's neighbourhood policy. The European Union continues to support the activities of the South Eastern and Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SEESAC) and the OSCE in the Western Balkans and the Republic of Moldova. At present, the European Union is providing more than 3.7 million euros in support of OSCE projects.

We are working closely with Ukraine to help it prevent and counter SALW trafficking-related threats stemming from Russia's full-scale war of aggression against Ukraine. These efforts are currently benefiting from EU funding worth 5 million euros. We praise the efforts of Ukraine in this field and strongly condemn Russia's illegal war of aggression against Ukraine, which constitutes a flagrant violation of international law, including the Charter of the United Nations, and of fundamental OSCE principles and commitments.

The European Union has committed itself to continuing to assist Ukraine in strengthening its capacity to monitor stockpiles and the acquisition and possession of firearms and SALW, to investigate and

prosecute offences relating to their illicit possession and trafficking, to contribute to international co-operation and assistance in this field, and to support the designation, development, training and equipping of appropriate State agencies, with a view to achieving the effective control and disposal of firearms and SALW. The European Union and Ukraine are also committed to actively exposing and countering the manipulation of information in this area.

We welcome the significant contribution made by the OSCE, along with several international organizations and donors, in areas crucial to the effectiveness of States' policies (such as police canine (K-9) capabilities, SALW deactivation, destruction of surpluses and stockpile management, public awareness and support for weapons-collection activities). The OSCE has enjoyed great success with regard to SALW, but these efforts need to be continued and intensified in order to take into account the new challenges arising from the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine, but also from the situation in South-East Europe and in Central Asia.

The illicit circulation of SALW is a threat to the security of all of us, and that is why we support continuation of the assistance projects implemented by the Conflict Prevention Centre and the field operations. In addition, we support the efforts and the commitment of many OSCE participating States when it comes to developing and revising OSCE normative frameworks, practical guides and assistance mechanisms, or adapting these to current circumstances.

Thank you.

Albania, Andorra, Georgia, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Norway, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine align themselves with this statement.