



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation No 808 Vienna, 20 January 2016

EU Statement in response to Mr. Wim Geerts, Director-General for Political Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of the Netherlands

The European Union and its Member States warmly welcome Director-General Wim Geerts to the FSC, and thank him for outlining the FSC Chairmanship's programme as well as his country's views on the current security situation in the OSCE area, including on EU international security concerns for the coming period.

The Netherlands assumes the FSC Chairmanship at a critical point in time while we continue to be confronted with the most serious security crisis in Europe in decades. The Russian Federation's illegal annexation of Crimea and Sevastopol and its destabilising actions in eastern Ukraine have seriously violated international law as well as the basic OSCE principles and commitments. We still believe that the full implementation of the Minsk agreements by all parties, based on OSCE's principles and commitments and full respect for Ukraine's independence, sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity, is the only acceptable and sustainable political solution to the crisis.

This year is of particular importance for the FSC, as the 2011 Vienna Document, our key politico-military agreement on Confidence and Security-Building Measures, is due to be reissued. We look forward to the upcoming negotiations on updating and modernizing the Vienna Document, including a comprehensive review of the Vienna Document Plus proposals, with the aim of increasing military stability, transparency and predictability for all participating States. There is no doubt that a commitment to strengthen the Vienna Document requires political will. We are however convinced that a more robust document will yield long-term security gains for all participating States outweighing the political reservations that have frozen the current dialogue.

In this context, we look forward to one of the major events of your FSC Chairmanship, namely the High-Level Military Doctrine Seminar on 16-17 February. The seminar is an important opportunity for dialogue that might contribute to further discussions on revitalizing Conventional Arms Control and Confidence and Security Building Measures regimes. We are convinced that European security requires respect for and adherence to international law and

OSCE principles and commitments. Without compromising these fundamental principles, we should explore ways to regain mutual trust and understanding.

Madame Chair, Director-General

We highly appreciate the balanced and comprehensive agenda of your FSC Chairmanship. We welcome your intention to focus the Security dialogue discussions on issues of great importance that deserve our support.

We look forward to our deliberations on the OSCE's role with regard to the implementation of UNSCR 1325, the Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security and International Humanitarian Law as well as on the OSCE Study on Arms Transfers and Arms Transfer Controls Reporting Instruments. We are also keen to learn more about bilateral and sub-regional cooperation of the Netherlands.

Madame Chair,

We would like to thank Director-General Geerts for his presentation and wish the Netherlands every success in conducting the FSC Chairmanship. We take this occasion to sincerely thank the outgoing Norwegian Chairmanship for its determination to advance the Forum's work during the last trimester of 2015 and for having steered the negotiations at the Belgrade Ministerial Council meeting in a proficient and dedicated manner.

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 and LIECHTENSTEIN, members of the European Economic Area, as well as UKRAINE, GEORGIA, ANDORRA and SAN MARINO align themselves with this statement.

* The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Albania continues to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.