



## EUROPEAN UNION

### OSCE Annual Security Review Conference Vienna, 26 – 28 June 2012 Working session III

#### EU statement on Arms Control and Confidence- and Security-Building Measures, 27 June

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The EU and its Member States would like to thank the Chairmanship and the Latvian Chair of the FSC for having organized this session of the Annual Security Review Conference (ASRC), which provides a useful opportunity to make an assessment of OSCE work in this area and how best to take it forward in pursuing the goal of realizing the vision of a common and indivisible security community. We are especially grateful to State Secretary Janis Sarts as moderator of this third working session.

The OSCE remains a major forum for pan-European conventional arms control and for confidence-building. The interlocking and mutually reinforcing network of treaties, commitments, decisions, norms and measures the Organization deals with is a common interest shared by all OSCE participating States. This comprehensive *acquis* should contribute to chart a way towards the security community identified at the Astana Summit and be one of the building blocks in the run up to “Helsinki + 40”.

As our Heads of State or Government stated in Astana two years ago, this comprehensive *acquis* “should be revitalised, updated and modernised.” The EU and its Member States believe it should be brought into conformity with the

current military security conditions and that transparency should be one of the main principles guiding this process.

Finding a solution in order to overcome the impasse on conventional arms control remains important for European security. A modern and effective conventional arms control regime would bolster the security and stability of the whole OSCE area. The EU and its Member States support continued consultations on conventional arms control aiming at opening the way for committed and result-oriented negotiations.

The Member States of the EU have also repeatedly expressed full support to the Open Skies Treaty, on the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its existence this year, as one of the pillars of the arms control regime. We wish to see the speedy resolution of the impasse in the Open Skies Consultative Commission. We reiterate our support for the pending application of Cyprus to accede to the Treaty.

The EU and its Member States view the Vienna Document (VD) as one of the main components of the OSCE politico-military dimension. Therefore full implementation by all participating States is important. We have previously expressed our concern regarding the *de facto* suspension of the implementation of the VD 2011 by the Russian Federation. In this regard, we are pleased to note the announcement by the Russian Federation that it is now in a position to comply with the provisions of the VD 2011, more than six months after its entry into force. Continued lack of full implementation of the VD affects a number of participating States as well as the overall effectiveness of the VD. We urge these countries to engage, individually or collectively, to seek solutions that allow them to return to full compliance. The EU and its Member States offer support and assistance in pursuing such solutions.

With respect to the pertinent tasking of Ministerial Council Decision 7/11 for the year 2012, the EU and its Member States believe that “further impetus to the negotiations on modernizing the Vienna Document” should be given by

intensified discussions and thorough examination of all proposals regarding increased military predictability and stability for all pS. Lowering thresholds for notification should be part of a first substantive adaptation, as underlined by the Member States of the EU at the 22<sup>nd</sup> AIAM held on 6th – 7th March 2012 in Vienna, as well as exploring the way to include selected non-combat units in the annual exchange of military information, increasing opportunities for verification activity, expanding the range of military activities which need to be notified, modernising and updating the exchange of military information, informing partners of at least one below threshold military exercise every year, strengthening risk reduction mechanisms as well as exploring ways in which the scope of CSBMs could be enlarged. This should be done in a cost effective manner with full regard to resource restraints and with the further aim of improving our overall level of implementation. The EU and its Member States believe that commitment shown by partners in the updating process is an important contribution to our common efforts to restore confidence and trust among all OSCE participating States.

Beside the Vienna Document, the EU and its Member States would like to pay tribute to the impressive set of CSBMs built up and developed by the Forum for Security Co-operation in areas such as Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) and Stockpiles of Conventional Ammunitions (SCA), the OSCE Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security and the support to the implementation of UNSCR 1540 and UNSCR 1325. All these norms, political commitments, guidelines and best practices, complemented by OSCE's concrete project work on the ground, also contribute to the goal of a security community based on confidence and transparency. The OSCE has been at the forefront of regional cooperation on SALW, as assessed by the participants in the Meeting to Review the OSCE Plan of Action on SALW held on 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2012. In view of the upcoming review conference of the UN Programme of Action on SALW, the OSCE must continue its efforts to enhance synergies with the UN in shaping and

implementing SALW standards and projects. As for the first annual discussion on the implementation of the Code of Conduct, taking place on 11<sup>th</sup> July 2012 in Vienna, it will provide an opportunity to discuss how to promote and improve the implementation of this important tool, including its annual information exchange, as well as to examine its application in the context of the current political and military situation.

The Acceding Country Croatia\*, the Candidate Countries the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia\*, Montenegro\*, Iceland+ and Serbia\*, the Countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the EFTA country Norway, member of the European Economic Area, as well as Andorra and San Marino, align themselves with this statement.

\* Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

+ Iceland continues to be a member of the EFTA and of the European Economic Area.

