



EUROPEAN UNION

**OSCE Permanent Council Nr 1136
Vienna, 9 March 2017**

**EU statement on developments in the former Yugoslav
Republic of Macedonia**

The EU is committed to the EU accession process of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and of the entire region.

At the same time the EU strongly believes that the values and principles it enshrines should be fully respected, including respecting the outcome of elections and the constitutional procedures.

In this regard, the European Union expresses deep concern about recent developments in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

We recall that the early parliamentary elections on 11 December 2016 were a first step towards reaching a solution to the long-lasting political crisis and enable the country to pursue the common objective of European integration. The EU expects the swift formation of a new government that commits strongly to European reforms and to implementing all parts of the Pržino Agreement and the Urgent Reform Priorities.

In this regard, we urge all leaders of the country to respect the outcome of the recent elections and acknowledge parliamentary majorities. We expect all political leaders and institutions to let the democratic process run its course – in the interest of the country's citizens. This entails that the President, in line with the Constitution, entrusts the mandate to form a government to the candidate from the party or parties which have a majority in the Assembly.

We are concerned about the escalation of negative rhetoric targeting civil society organisations and the international community.

We urge everyone to refrain from fuelling any form of inter-ethnic tensions, negative rhetoric or incitement to violence. We expect the political leaders in the country to display a consensual approach to the benefit of the democracy and stability of the country and the whole region.

The Candidate Countries MONTENEGRO* and ALBANIA*, the Country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and Potential Candidate BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA, and the EFTA country NORWAY, member of the European Economic Area, as well as UKRAINE, align themselves with this statement.

* Montenegro and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.