



EUROPEAN UNION

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EU Statement on Central Asia

The European Union (EU) warmly welcomes Ambassador Miroslav Jenča, Special Representative of the UN Secretary General for Central Asia, and thanks him for the insightful presentation on the regional security challenges in Central Asia.

The EU and Central Asian countries have a shared interest in security in the Central Asian region. The basis of our work is the EU-Central Asia Strategy for a New Partnership, adopted by the European Council in 2007. In June this year, the inaugural round of the EU-Central Asia High Level Security Dialogue took place in Brussels between the EU and the countries of Central Asia. This Dialogue provides a new vehicle for addressing political and security issues of shared concern, including terrorism, extremism, drug trafficking, and CBRN risks.

There is a good level of cooperation between the EU and the UN in Central Asia and it is perhaps worth highlighting our support for the next phase of the UN project to implement the UN Global Counter Terrorism Strategy in the region.

Central Asia is a direct neighbour of Afghanistan. In this context, the EU would like to reiterate its ongoing support to the Istanbul Process on Regional Security and Cooperation for a Secure and Stable Afghanistan. In particular, we support the implementation of three of the six CBMs that have emerged from this Process aimed at increasing cooperation and inclusive sustainable development in Afghanistan and the Central Asian region.

The EU therefore underlines the importance of fostering regional cooperation and increased co-ordination of activities of relevant international actors with regard to the post-2014 developments in Afghanistan. The 11th Central Asia Border Security Initiative (CABSI) conference recently held in Ashgabat, in which all Central Asian countries, Afghanistan, the EU and other major donors participated, is a good example of such co-ordination.

The EU shares the view that the OSCE is playing an important role in Central Asia. In particular, we appreciate its field presences as a unique asset in promoting the implementation of OSCE principles and commitments and ensuring security and stability. These are engaged in a number of important activities in combating transnational threats, including in border security, anti-terrorism, police training, illegal migration and illegal drugs, as well as in fighting trafficking in human beings. We also appreciate the valuable work of the Border Management Staff College in Dushanbe, which provides a significant contribution to regional security. There is a good level of cooperation between the EU and the OSCE in the region as witnessed, for example, with the joint support for the Community Security Initiative in the Kyrgyz Republic.

Addressing security threats stemming from the illicit spread and destabilising accumulation of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) and Conventional Ammunition (CA) is also high on the agenda of the OSCE activities in Central Asia. In this respect we would like to express our satisfaction that the comprehensive OSCE project to enhance the capacity of the Kyrgyz Republic to effectively manage SALW and CA stockpiles has entered its operational phase. We believe this is an important and worthwhile project and look forward to discussing it at the FSC Security Dialogue next week.

We would like to once again thank Ambassador Jenča and wish him and his team every success in fulfilling their important task.

The candidate countries the FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA*, MONTENEGRO, ICELAND** and SERBIA, the countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate countries ALBANIA and BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA, the European Free Trade Association country NORWAY, member of the European Economic Area, as well as the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA align themselves with this statement.

* 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 EFTA and the European Economic Area.