



EUROPEAN UNION

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EU Statement on the Report by the OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine, Ambassador Henrik Villadsen

The European Union warmly welcomes Ambassador Henrik Villadsen back to the Permanent Council. We thank you for a timely distribution of the detailed report on your mission's activities carried out in the last six months as well as for today's comprehensive presentation.

The EU reiterates its firm support for the work of the OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine. We commend you and your staff for the dedicated engagement across all three dimensions in support of Ukraine and its efforts to reform and modernize the country. The process of reforms in Ukraine is taking place against the background of the ongoing conflict in eastern Ukraine, which is a consequence of acts of aggression by the Russian Federation.

The EU welcomes the PCU's continued engagement in the area of democratization and good governance. We support your efforts to promote dialogue facilitation and value the PCU's work related to preventing, mediating and mitigating conflict as well as the focus given to the people it affects. Your engagement in support of community-based conflict assessment and mitigation activities in Donbas, which emphasize a dialogue approach, is also highly appreciated.

We equally welcome your efforts to further improve the media landscape and to strengthen the role of Ukraine's civil society. We reiterate that these matters are fundamental pillars of any open, democratic society.

Given that this is a year of elections in Ukraine, we appreciate the PCU's assistance in providing, before the presidential election, online training resources

for election commissions and supporting efforts to strengthen their transparency and engagement with voters. We commend your plans to provide similar assistance for the approaching parliamentary elections in Ukraine.

The EU continues to support your work to strengthen the rule of law and human rights education in Ukraine. We welcome the PCU's programmes facilitating law-school education, promoting knowledge on human rights among school educators, improving judicial training, judicial-decision enforcement and trial monitoring.

We further welcome the PCU's expert advice on amendments to a law on high-risk facilities, your support offered to the work on regulations regarding secure management of chemicals and training on controlling cross-boundary movement of chemicals as well as in the area of anti-money laundering and countering financing of terrorism.

The EU remains very concerned about the growing threat posed by mines and UXOs in the conflict in eastern Ukraine. Therefore we commend the PCU's support in promoting better understanding and implementation of the new Ukrainian law on mine action and providing help in training de-miners in the use of modern metal detectors.

The EU highly values the environmental monitoring in Donbas operated in cooperation with the SMM and we would like to hear more about your recommendations in this regard.

The EU highly appreciates the PCU's outreach activities as well as efforts to promote gender mainstreaming in all programming areas, policies and procedures.

We encourage the Ukrainian government to fully draw on the PCU's expertise and potential. We underline again the importance of continued close coordination between the PCU, the SMM and the OSCE autonomous institutions as well as with other international actors to achieve the greatest possible impact on the ground.

In this context, we would like to hear from Ambassador Villadsen about the potential areas of strengthening interactions between the PCU and the SMM. We

would also be thankful for learning about the PCU's activities planned for the near future.

The EU thanks Ambassador Villadsen once again for his report. We underline that the PCU's continued efforts to ensure coherence between its programme activities and OSCE's principles and commitments are highly appreciated. We wish the Project Coordinator and his team all the best in their future work.

The Candidate Countries REPUBLIC OF NORTH MACEDONIA*, MONTENEGRO* and ALBANIA*, and the EFTA countries ICELAND and LIECHTENSTEIN, members of the European Economic Area, as well as UKRAINE, the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA, GEORGIA, ANDORRA and SAN MARINO align themselves with this statement.

* Republic of North Macedonia, Montenegro and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.