



## EUROPEAN UNION

### OSCE Permanent Council No. 1253 Vienna, 19 December 2019

#### **EU Statement in response to the Presentations by the Chairpersons of the Three Committees**

1. The European Union thanks the Chairs of the Security, the Economic and Environmental and the Human Dimension Committees for their leadership in taking work forward in the three Dimensions and for reporting on their activities for this year.
2. We would like to thank Ambassador Luis Cuesta Civís and his able team for the very impressive work done by Spain as Chair of the Security Committee during the past two years, under his Chairmanship and the one of his predecessor, Ambassador González Roman. The Security Committee makes a critical contribution to the work of the OSCE, as a forum for discussing non-military security issues and the implementation of OSCE commitments relating to preventing and countering transnational threats.
3. We commend the inclusive approach with which you have conducted the meetings of the Security Committee, allowing for frank, constructive and respectful exchanges between participating States. We welcome the broad range of topics covered throughout the year in Security Committee meetings, including illicit trafficking, preventing and countering terrorism with a focus on border security and terrorist financing, and the security aspects related to information and communication technologies. Another added value of the meetings of the Security Committee is the voluntary reports on the

implementation of OSCE commitments. We encourage participating States to make full use of these voluntary reports to foster the exchange of information and best practices. The European Union also particularly appreciated your efforts to mainstream human rights and gender equality throughout the discussions, including through a dedicated meeting on "Mainstreaming Gender in Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice Sectors" and a joint Security Committee-Human Dimension Committee meeting on "Preventing and Combatting Violence Against Women". The Security Committee retreat organised in October was also particularly appreciated and constituted an excellent opportunity for an exchange of views on draft deliverables.

4. Let me express the full appreciation of the European Union for the great work undertaken by Ambassador Luis Cuesta Civís and his team. We stand ready to support and contribute to the work of the Security Committee next year.
5. The European Union thanks Ambassador Sarybay and his able team for their continued dedicated work as Chair of the Economic and Environmental Committee. We appreciate your efforts throughout the past three years to maximise the potential and balance within the second dimension.
6. In line with the priorities of the Slovak Chairmanship, the discussions in the second dimension have covered a broad range of security-related topics with particular focus on energy, digital innovation and the environment. In the Committee meetings, we have appreciated the exchanges with a wide range of stakeholders including the private sector and civil society representatives and, most notably, OSCE field operations.
7. We commend the work of the EEC on the issues related to the environment and we trust that the engagement on this important topic will continue next year, including with the contribution of the Group of Friends of the Environment.

8. We would like to thank Ambassador Ivo Šrámek and his able team for the great work done as Chair of the Human Dimension Committee this year. We welcomed the choice of topics, in particular the focus on the freedom of expression, including disinformation and propaganda, human rights defenders, torture prevention, political participation, elections, as well as on the role of education in promoting tolerance and non-discrimination. We also valued the focus on gender issues, including the joint Security Committee and Human Dimension Committee meeting on combating violence against women.
  
9. We appreciate that you continued and strengthened the inclusive and interactive approach of the Human Dimension Committee meetings, which contributed to the involvement of a broad range of stakeholders - from civil society, autonomous institutions and field missions, as well as from other international organisations - and to more engaging discussions. We appreciate the continued practice of voluntary reporting in the Human Dimension Committee and thank those participating States that presented reports and encourage others to make use of this agenda item and share their experience next year. We also appreciate the practice of providing concept papers to steer the discussions.
  
10. We very much regret that at the Bratislava MC consensus could not be reached on adopting texts in the three OSCE dimensions. We nonetheless thank each of you for your efforts in driving the consultations on the texts, and for supporting the efforts of the Slovak Chairmanship to reach consensus on issues of common interest for all participating States. We trust that the good work carried out in the three Committees will be continued in the year to come, thus contributing to the implementation and further strengthening our OSCE commitments.

The Candidate Countries REPUBLIC of NORTH MACEDONIA\*, MONTENEGRO\*, SERBIA\* 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, the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA , GEORGIA, ANDORRA and SAN MARINO align themselves with this statement.

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