



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Permanent Council No. 1260 Vienna, 27 February 2020

EU Statement in Response to the Presentation by the Chair of the Security Committee

The European Union warmly thanks the new Chair of the Security Committee, Ambassador Bush, for presenting the work programme for this year. We welcome him in this new capacity and thank him for taking on the important responsibility of chairing the Security Committee. We take this opportunity to renew our appreciation for the work undertaken by Spain as Chair of the Security Committee, under the Chairmanship of Ambassador Luis Cuesta Civís and his predecessor, Ambassador González Roman.

The European Union values the work of the Security Committee, which offers a platform for the exchange of best practices on the implementation of the OSCE's Ministerial commitments as well as on OSCE-specific tools and expertise for preventing and countering transnational threats, through a comprehensive approach.

We thank Ambassador Bush for the organisation of the first informal meeting of the Security Committee on 10 February, which provided an excellent opportunity for experts to take stock and reflect on the work of the Committee, examine the topics covered by the Committee and its methods of work, and consider options to increase its potential moving forward.

The European Union welcomes the proposed work programme for the Committee. We appreciate the topics selected for the meetings of this year, which build on current commitments and work done by previous Chairmanships to prevent and counter violent extremism and radicalisation that lead to terrorism, to enhance cyber/ICT security, to strengthen border security and management, as well as

the specific focus placed on countering serious organised crime. These are in line with the Albanian Chairmanship's priorities and the work programme of the Transnational Threats Department. We support the mainstreaming of human rights in the work of the Security Committee, as we are convinced that our efforts to prevent and counter transnational threats will only be effective if we uphold human rights and the rule of law. This is particularly true for our work on VERLT, which can only benefit from a solid human rights-based and whole-of-society approach. As gender equality is a key priority for the European Union, we also welcome the intention of the Chair to mainstream gender throughout the work of the Committee including in the composition of panels.

Regarding the working methods of the Committee, we support the continuation of an operational focus, the active involvement of a broad range of stakeholders in the work of the Committee including speakers from civil society and field missions, and the encouragement to use the opportunities offered by voluntary reporting. We call on all participating States to make full use of voluntary reporting to share best practices in the implementation of OSCE commitments, as this can only further enrich our exchanges, and we stand ready to contribute.

In conclusion, I wish to express the full support of the European Union to Ambassador Bush and his team, in steering the activities of the Security Committee and related events. We wish him every success and look forward to our work together.

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, ARMENIA, GEORGIA 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.