



EUROPEAN UNION

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EU Statement on European security architecture - the role of non-aligned countries

Mr Chair, the European Union and its Member States would like to thank you for putting this highly relevant and timely topic on today's agenda. We also thank the distinguished speakers for their insightful presentations.

Security in the OSCE area needs to be comprehensive and indivisible. The EU and its Member States share the common conviction that it is the **inherent right of each participating State to be free to choose or change its security arrangements** and the commitment of each participating State to **respect the rights of all others** in this regard. The EU itself is a good example: Currently, six of our Member States remain military non-aligned with view to security alliances, while 21 belong to a security alliance. It is always a free choice of every single Member State.

The basic principle to choose freely one's own – military or political – alliance was first mentioned in the Helsinki Final Act and reaffirmed in the 1990 Charter of Paris for a New Europe, the 1999 Charter for European Security and other fundamental OSCE documents. It is an inherent right, which cannot in any way be constrained. Any demands that would effectively restrain the sovereignty of other nations are unacceptable.

Mr. Chair, the situation at the Ukrainian border and on the illegally annexed Crimean peninsula is highly alarming. To improve the security situation and to safeguard peace and stability in Europe, now clear and visible steps of de-escalation as well as

a thorough and honest dialogue, pursued through our established instruments and mechanisms and in line with the key principles and commitments that underpin European security are needed. We thus welcome the launch last week of the Renewed OSCE European Security Dialogue as a timely confidence-building initiative of the OSCE Chair that we staunchly support. We hope that all participating States will join these diplomatic efforts to reduce tensions and secure stability in the OSCE region.

In this context, we remain convinced that the OSCE, with its comprehensive acquis and bringing together both aligned and non-aligned and neutral countries, remains the most appropriate forum to address any security concern by any participating State.

In conclusion, in our view, the main challenges we are currently confronted with are of concern to all participating States. Namely, how to preserve the European security architecture, how to stop and reverse the blatant violations of international law as well as OSCE principles and commitments. Whenever a participating State violates these, all others should speak up, whether aligned or non-aligned. This is in our common interest. Hence, the best security guarantee for all pS is to uphold international law, restore the principles and commitments of our organisation and make sure that these are respected by all.

Thank you, Mr Chair!

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

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