



MC.DEL/51/12  
7 December 2012

ENGLISH only

## EUROPEAN UNION

### 19<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the OSCE Ministerial Council Dublin, 7 December 2012

---

#### EU closing statement

---

Two years after our Heads of State and Government met in Astana and as we get ever closer to the OSCE's 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the Dublin Ministerial Council meeting has given us the opportunity to take further steps in advancing the vision of Astana. Our Irish hosts deserve our sincere thanks and appreciation for guiding the organisation throughout the year and for their efforts to secure a solid outcome at this meeting.

The EU High Representative stated yesterday that we want to see the OSCE remain a robust pillar in Europe's security architecture. The OSCE should continue to play an important role in this architecture based on its comprehensive security concept and its principles and commitments enshrined in the Helsinki Final Act, the Charter of Paris and other documents. The vision of Astana cannot become a reality without our firm adherence to all OSCE commitments in all three dimensions and their full implementation. In this context, it is of core importance that conflicts are prevented and solved and confidence is built in the politico-military sphere, which still needs to be consolidated and enhanced. Furthermore, this concept has at its core the promotion of, and respect for, human rights and fundamental freedoms, democracy and the rule of law.

The European Union deeply regrets the failure to adopt any decisions in the human dimension for the second year running. We reiterate that security cannot be achieved without respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, including those of human rights defenders and LGBT persons. Each participating State must implement all of its human dimension commitments. We deplore the clear signs of backwards movement on existing commitments and values. But our human dimension commitments also need updating to

reflect the changing security environment. Freedom of the media, including the safety of journalists, and freedom of peaceful assembly and association are key issues in the OSCE area. We will continue to pursue them. We particularly regret that some participating States were not prepared to acknowledge explicitly that rights and commitments offline also apply online.

Likewise, we deplore that, contrary to last years, there is no forward-looking approach on arms control in Europe and on CSBMs.

Respect for the OSCE *acquis* and the organisation's concept of comprehensive security are indispensable for the establishment of the security community defined in the Astana Declaration, and should be the cornerstone of the Helsinki+40 process. We remain convinced that building on agreed norms, principles and commitments will ensure that the OSCE remains relevant and will play an important role in the future.

The European Union would like to see a more effective OSCE, better able to fulfill its objectives, in a more secure space from Vancouver to Vladivostok. We expect that the Helsinki+40 process will act as the road map and the vehicle for strengthening the organisation, consolidating the *acquis* of 40 years of co-operation and starting a process –including track two initiatives- leading to a more effective and efficient OSCE. We commend the Irish Chairmanship for this initiative and stand fully behind the co-ordinated strategic approach agreed with forthcoming chairmanships.

We consider that the Helsinki+40 process should give an important contribution to our efforts to restore trust and confidence in the OSCE space. We view it as our primary source of guidance on how, and framework in which, to realise the Astana Declaration. This is why we would have preferred a significantly more substantive and ambitious decision operationalising the outcome of Astana. At the same time, we recognise the guidance given to future Chairmanships in this decision. The European Union will work with and support them in this difficult, common endeavour. Valuable input from civil society and academic bodies, for example the Security Days and the IDEAS initiative, has been made.

Protracted conflicts in the Republic of Moldova, Georgia and the Nagorno Karabakh conflict continue to pose a serious threat to our common security. We regret that, for yet another Ministerial Council, adopting a Political Declaration has not proven possible. This leaves unaddressed by the Ministerial Council two of the conflicts dealt with by the OSCE and the developments associated with their resolution. The European Union stresses the importance of renewed impetus towards tangible progress in resolving protracted conflicts on the way to 2015. The EU is concerned about the lack of progress in the settlement of the conflict in Georgia and of the Nagorno Karabakh conflict. We take note, in this context, of the statement made on 6 December 2012 by the Heads of Delegation of the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chair countries. It remains our firm belief that the security community cannot be achieved without the resolution of the protracted conflicts.

We appreciate the efforts that the Chairmanship has made in order to revive and advance the 5+2 negotiations on the settlement of the conflict in the Republic of Moldova and we welcome the stated intention of the incoming Ukrainian Chairmanship to achieve further progress. We also welcome the Ministerial statement issued today that recognises progress of the 5+2 talks this year towards a final Transnistria settlement. This the first time our Ministers have issued a separate statement in support of the 5+2 process, reaffirming our collective commitment to help the sides resolve a protracted conflict that has persisted far too long. We urge all participants in the 5+2 process to develop basic principles for a comprehensive settlement consistent with OSCE norms, principles and commitments, and to redouble efforts towards our shared goal of a final settlement that respects the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Moldova and provides a special status for Transnistria. In addition to the issues addressed in the Ministerial statement regarding the 5+2, there are other issues to be dealt with. Commitments regarding the withdrawal of military forces should be honoured. The OSCE has an important role to play in facilitating this process. We also urge intensified work to promote demilitarisation and to achieve greater mutual confidence and trust through openness regarding all military forces in the region.

Mr Chairman,

A prevailing commitment was made by all participating States in Vilnius to, *inter alia*, revitalise, update and modernise the major instruments for ensuring stability, predictability and transparency, and welcomed intensified negotiations to update and modernise the Vienna Document.

We therefore express our disappointment that the draft decision on issues relevant to the Forum for Security Co-operation did not meet with consensus. Notwithstanding this negative development, we consider abiding commitments on arms control and confidence- and security-building regimes, as set out in Astana, Vilnius and other relevant OSCE documents, remain valid and should be further progressed.

We welcome progress made throughout the year in addressing transnational threats and the adoption today by the Permanent Council of the last outstanding decision, on the counter-terrorism framework. We are pleased that Ministers recognised this progress in the chapeau decision. We look forward to the full implementation of these decisions.

We regret that the work done this year by the working group on cyber security did not culminate in the adoption of Confidence Building Measures in this field. It is clear to us that the OSCE toolkit in combating contemporary threats and challenges is incomplete without these.

We are pleased that a declaration on good governance has been adopted at this Ministerial. Good governance, cutting across all three dimensions, is paramount for the European Union and we anticipate the full implementation of the commitments in this declaration. The EU stands ready to assist participating States in meeting obligations in this field.

The European Union engaged in an open and constructive manner with all participating States on their proposals. We regret that some participating States were not willing to reciprocate this attitude, refusing to engage on our proposal regarding the Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and Association. We thank those participating States that have joined this endeavour and we invite other participating States to consider co-sponsoring this proposal in the future.

We welcome the readiness of all participating States to continue to strive for better implementation of gender commitments including the UNSCR 1325 under the Ukrainian Chairmanship.

The OSCE remains an important organisation for the EU; we aim to enhance further the already excellent co-operation between us. We highly value the work of the autonomous OSCE institutions, the ODIHR, the RFoM and the HCNM, as well as the field missions in supporting the participating States implement their commitments.

In this context, like the Chairman-in-Office, we lament the decision of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly to terminate its 1997 Co-operation Agreement with ODIHR.

The European Union expects that progress in all dimensions, including in the human dimension, should be made in the forthcoming year. We pledge our support to the incoming Ukrainian Chairmanship and reiterate that OSCE Chairmanships should lead this organisation by example.

I kindly request that this statement be annexed to the Journal.

The Acceding Country Croatia\*, the Candidate Countries the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia\*, Montenegro\*, Iceland+ and Serbia\*, the Countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the EFTA country Liechtenstein, member of the European Economic Area, as well as the Republic of Moldova, Georgia, Andorra and San Marino, align themselves with this statement.

\* Croatia, 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 the EFTA and of the European Economic Area.