



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Annual Security Review Conference

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Working Session IV:

EU Statement on “Early warning, conflict prevention, crisis management, conflict resolution and post-conflict rehabilitation – lessons learned and the way ahead 10th anniversary”

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1. The European Union thanks the Swedish Chairpersonship for convening this working session. We welcome this opportunity to discuss issues related to the OSCE’s role in early warning, conflict prevention, crisis management, conflict resolution and post conflict rehabilitation, and the specific focus placed this year on women’s participation and inclusive peace processes. We also appreciate the contribution of EU Special Representative Toivo Klaar to the discussion.
2. Conflict prevention and response to emerging crises lie at the very heart of OSCE activities. The European Union has constantly emphasised that the full implementation of the Vilnius MC Decision 3/11 on the Elements of the Conflict Cycle is the basis for strengthening the role of the OSCE in conflict prevention and resolution across the three dimensions. The 10th anniversary of the Decision provides a valuable opportunity to take stock of the work done, assess the way the OSCE addresses all phases of the conflict cycle, identify the remaining obstacles to its full implementation, and discuss the best ways to overcome them.
3. We believe that the work undertaken by the Secretariat, the autonomous institutions, field operations and other executive structures to implement MC Decision 3/11 is of utmost importance. These efforts are only possible due to the strong and flexible mandates of the autonomous institutions and field operations. These need to be preserved, especially during the current challenging circumstances posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. This requires the timely availability of adequate resources, both human and financial, in support of relevant mandates and tasks. We therefore call on

all participating States to provide the organisation with the necessary resources to fulfil its conflict prevention and resolution activities through the Unified Budget. We highly appreciate the role of ODIHR, RFoM and the HCNM for providing early warning and offering assistance related to handling challenges across the three dimensions. The OSCE field missions also play a highly important role in early warning and in addressing conflict situations, providing a direct link to the situation on the ground. Their direct engagement with host countries and civil society is of tremendous importance for sustaining peace within the full spectrum of the conflict cycle.

4. Experience in the OSCE area has shown that conflicts are rarely one-dimensional. As had been pointed out by the Secretary General during the recently held Conflict Cycle Seminar, conflicts are rooted in complex issues such as political polarisation, socio-economic disparities, environmental degradation, violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms, and deficiencies in the rule of law and the security sector. In order to effectively prevent and manage conflicts, these must be addressed in a timely and comprehensive manner.
5. The OSCE is generally well equipped to deal with the elements of the conflict cycle, but there is room to enhance the organisation's capacities to address tensions and instabilities. Very often, stronger political will by all actors involved is needed. We also agree with the voices at the Conflict Cycle Seminar who underlined the need to strengthen the existing toolbox by making it more comprehensive and inclusive.
6. In this regard, we welcome the specific focus of today's session on women's participation and inclusive processes. Women's participation and gender equality in all phases of the conflict cycle is a key priority for the EU. The implementation of the 2004 OSCE Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality together with the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 and its subsequent resolutions are more important than ever. Women's full, equal and meaningful engagement in all stages of conflict prevention, resolution and peacebuilding is crucial to bring about long-lasting and sustainable peace. Across all conflicts and crises, the EU supports and promotes the diverse roles of women in leadership and decision-making in all matters related to peace and security, and has deployed gender advisers to CSDP missions and operations for more than a decade. Today, the EU has a solid network of gender advisers in all its missions and operations, together with more than 120 gender focal points. This network makes a critical contribution to the systematic integration of a gender perspective in conflict-

analysis and to address the gendered aspects of the root causes and drivers of conflicts.

7. Furthermore, the EU grounds all its actions across the conflict cycle in the firm commitment to safeguard and promote human rights, gender equality and supporting democratic values. We also work closely with civil society in all phases of the conflict cycle both in Brussels and on the ground as civil society is a critical and invaluable partner for the EU.
8. The EU is engaged in many conflict prevention efforts around the world. It pursues an integrated approach, making use of all available tools and aiming at strengthening long-term resilience. In this respect, the EU has invested significantly in strengthening the resilience of its partners in the Western Balkans, Eastern Partnership countries, Central Asia and in the MENA region. We also try to be proactive in the prevention of violent conflict by identifying, together with Member States, early actions in countries not yet affected by violent conflict. Looking ahead, the EU will put ever more emphasis on conflict prevention and early action, as well as long term peace-building, and work in an integrated and inclusive manner with all relevant international, regional, state and non-state actors.
9. In conclusion, we would like to thank again the Swedish Chair and the speakers for today's discussions. The European Union reiterates its support for the efforts intended to advance the implementation of the Vilnius MC Decision 3/11 and remains committed to supporting the OSCE's role across the conflict cycle. Thank you.

The Candidate Countries TURKEY, REPUBLIC of NORTH MACEDONIA*, MONTENEGRO*, SERBIA* 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.

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