



## EUROPEAN UNION

### OSCE Permanent Council Nr 1055 Vienna, 28 May 2015

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#### **EU statement in Response to the Report of the Head of the OSCE Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina, H. E. Jonathan Moore**

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The European Union and its Member States warmly welcome Ambassador Jonathan Moore, Head of the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina, to the Permanent Council, and thank him for his comprehensive report.

We highly appreciate the activities of the Mission and improvements achieved particularly in the following areas: rule of law, war crimes processing, human rights, effective security policy, displaced persons and gender equality. We note that there are still areas where further progress is needed, such as freedom of the media and safety of journalists, justice sector reform, education, the legislative framework for combatting trafficking in human beings, oversight of the intelligence sector, disposal of surplus and stockpile management of weapons and ammunition, and reducing of the backlog of war crimes cases. We encourage the Mission to continue to pursue these issues attentively.

We commend the Mission for the successful implementation of a three-year reform strategy which is about to be completed this year and which has already brought substantial savings. We appreciate the fact that a strategic approach and effective prioritization means that these large scale savings have been secured without undermining the key areas of the mission's activities.

Mr Chairperson, we underline that for all field operations effective evaluation is essential to ensuring the efficient use of resources, and that their activities remain results oriented and add value. We note the efforts of the Mission to focus on results and follow-up, to ensure that all activities and reporting are representative of a culture of evaluation and implementation of lessons learned. To that end, we would be

grateful if Ambassador Moore could highlight some of the key impacts of the Mission's programmatic work during the reporting period.

The Mission has proven its readiness and ability to respond to unexpected events and changing circumstances during social unrests and devastating floods. This flexibility must be preserved for the future as well. We see the establishment of temporary premises based on concrete needs during the crisis as a good example of such an approach.

The broad field presence is another key added value of the Mission. It must be fully exploited to engage with local stakeholders and seen as a key asset which the OSCE can bring to cooperation with relevant international partners. We fully acknowledge the need for prioritisation reflected through new reconfigured and reduced hub-based coverage and look forward to its benefits.

Enduring partnership with local stakeholders on all levels is of utmost importance. We support the Mission in its efforts towards close cooperation with relevant international players on the ground. The aim should be avoiding duplication and focus on activities where the real added value of the Mission lies. We welcome that the Mission puts further emphasis on regional cooperation, one of the Serbian Chairmanship's priorities highlighted also during the recent visit of the Chairperson-in-Office to Bosnia and Herzegovina. Bosnia and Herzegovina's Chairmanship of the Council of Europe opens further possibilities for cooperation in this area. Furthermore, continued horizontal cooperation and interaction with other OSCE field missions in the region is also very important.

Mr. Chairman, we strongly encourage the Mission's intention to help sustain the momentum gained after adoption of the "Declaration on Commitment to EU Integration" by supporting Bosnia and Herzegovina in related reform processes. We recall this year's March Foreign Affairs Council's conclusions, which called for developing an initial reform agenda and for upholding Bosnia and Herzegovina's commitments and obligations. Now finalization of the initial reform agenda is necessary.

We recall that the Stabilisation and Association Agreement with Bosnia and Herzegovina will enter into force on 1 June 2015. The Agreement serves as the basis for the implementation of the accession process and should allow Bosnia and Herzegovina to move forward in its relations with the EU and pave the way to the overall aim of preparing the country for future EU membership.

We once again thank Ambassador Moore for his report and we also thank him and his dedicated team for all their work and efforts.

The Candidate Countries the FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA\*, MONTENEGRO\* and ALBANIA\*, and the EFTA Country NORWAY, member of the European Economic Area, as well as UKRAINE align themselves with this statement.

\* The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.