



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Permanent Council No. 1302 Vienna, 11 February 2021

EU Statement in response to the Presentations by the Chairpersons of the Three Committees

The European Union thanks the Chairs of the Security, the Economic and Environmental and the Human Dimension Committees for presenting their priorities for this year.

The European Union attaches great importance to the work of the Security Committee, which makes a critical contribution to the work of the OSCE as a forum for discussing non-military security issues and a platform for advancing OSCE commitments related to preventing and countering transnational threats.

We thank Ambassador Bush for presenting the work program of the Security Committee for this year. The European Union welcomes the topics selected for the meetings, which cover the full spectrum of transnational threats and build on the priorities of successive Chairmanships to prevent and counter violent extremism and radicalisation leading to terrorism, combat organised crime, enhance cyber/ICT security and strengthen border security and management. We particularly appreciate the focus placed on the implementation of the Declaration on Transnational Organised Crime adopted at the Tirana Ministerial Council, through dedicated meetings covering the different aspects of this dynamic and complex phenomenon. Operationalising our joint commitments, based on the OSCE's tools and expertise, should remain a high priority of the work of the Security Committee. In this respect, as this year marks the 10th anniversary of MC decision 3/11 on strengthening OSCE capabilities across the conflict cycle, we look forward to our collective reflection on how to enhance the

effectiveness of the conflict cycle toolbox. We also welcome the specific attention given to preventing and countering terrorism, as this remains one of the most serious threats to peace and security across the OSCE area. We also welcome the attention placed on human rights and gender equality in the work of the Committee, which are essential elements to ensure the effectiveness and sustainability of our work to prevent and counter transnational threats.

Regarding the working methods of the Committee, we commend your inclusive and consultative approach, aimed at taking into account the views of all delegations. We support your sustained efforts to promote more informal, interactive discussions, the continuation of a practical focus and the involvement of a broad range of stakeholders from civil society, academia and field operations, as well as the full use of the practice of the voluntary reports. We hope that it will be possible to organise a Security Committee field visit this year, as this would contribute to strengthen the linkages between our work in Vienna and the activities of the OSCE field operations on the ground. I wish to express the full support of the European Union to Ambassador Bush and his team. We look forward to continuing to actively support and contribute to the work of the Security Committee this year.

We welcome Ambassador Florian Raunig and thank him for taking on the responsibility of chairing the Economic and Environmental Committee. We appreciate your dedication to the activities and topics of the Second Dimension. We thank you for presenting the outline of the work planned for this year. We appreciate continuity with the work of previous Chairmanships, and we support your vision of upholding the balance of the economic and the environmental topics. In this last regard we appreciate your efforts to advance discussions towards tangible results.

Considering that the focus of the Economic and Environmental Forum will be on economic issues, we appreciate the attention of Committee meetings to environmental topics such as climate change, biodiversity, sustainable recovery and good environmental governance. Climate action and environmental protection are increasingly important elements of the comprehensive approach to security and thus our common responsibility. We support your plans to ensure that environmental topics are a core part of our discussions this year and that proper consideration is given to

gender aspects. We welcome efforts aimed at aligning the work of the Economic and Environmental Committee with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

As regards the working methods of the Committee, we look forward to the opportunity to continue our engagement with the field operations in the framework of the Committee meetings.

We congratulate Ambassador Anne-Kirsti Karlsen and her team on assuming the Chairpersonship of the HDC and look forward to our good cooperation in the Human Dimension, which should remain at the forefront of our work.

We welcome the extensive choice of topics for the HDC meetings, in particular the focus on fundamental freedoms. We see merit in addressing freedom of expression, freedom of assembly and association, freedom of religion or belief, as well as addressing intolerance and discrimination in a comprehensive manner, the rights of persons belonging to national minorities, gender equality, human rights defenders, civil society, democratic institutions and elections, torture prevention, abolition of death penalty, disinformation, hate crimes and Roma and Sinti issues.

We appreciate plans to continue involving a broad range of stakeholders in the work of the HDC, particularly by inviting speakers from civil society, autonomous institutions, field operations and other international organizations. We appreciate your intention to circulate concept notes to better guide our discussions, as well as your encouragement of greater interaction in our meetings. We also welcome plans to continue the practice of voluntary reporting and we thank those participating States that made efforts and presented such reports. We encourage participating States to make full use of this agenda item.

We take this opportunity to thank Ambassador Ivo Šrámek and his able team for the excellent work done as HDC Chair for the past two years.

In conclusion, we express our full support to the Chairs of the three Committees and their teams and we look forward to actively support and contribute to their work.

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 the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA, GEORGIA, ANDORRA, MONACO 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.