



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Permanent Council (Special) No. 1327 Vienna, 30 July 2021

EU Statement

FINAL (664 words)

1. Madam Chair, at the outset we wish to pay homage to the efforts the SE Chairpersonship has devoted over the past months to reach agreement on issues of high importance for our Organization: the 2021 Unified Budget, the Annual Security Review Conference, and the Human Dimension Implementation Meeting. Each of these plays an important role in the work of the OSCE. Failing to reach agreement would cast a dark shadow on the OSCE's continued relevance and effectiveness.
2. The 27 EU Member States thank Sweden for all the efforts and negotiations in order to ensure the adoption of the budget. We are ready to accept the Chair's Fourth Proposal, as we were to accept the previous proposals, and we deeply regret that no consensus has yet been found due to one participating State not having instructions from the capital even at this late stage.
3. The EU strongly regrets that it was not possible to hold the ASRC as scheduled. This situation is unprecedented. The ASRC is the main annual event in the first dimension for reviewing security work undertaken by the OSCE and its participating States as well as discussing ongoing security challenges in the OSCE region. The failure to hold the ASRC on an annual basis, as mandated by the Porto Ministerial Council in 2002, would send a negative and worrying signal about the ability of our Organization to preserve regional security and stability in the OSCE area. We fully support the SE Chairpersonship's proposals for a solution to this situation in order to enable holding the ASRC as soon as possible. We also call on all participating States to work together towards this objective.
4. We fully support the CiO in its relentless efforts to timely adopt the needed HDIM Decisions and for providing ample opportunities for consultations since early January

this year, both at the Human Dimension Committee and in the series of informal meetings. We regret that one participating State was unable to join consensus. We reiterate that we were ready to support the original CiO proposals and will continue to contribute towards a timely adoption of decisions in line with our modalities and commitments.

5. We would have liked to see Democratic Elections as a special topic, as it is a very important and relevant issue for all OSCE pS. We supported a broader scope of the topic of Freedom of Expression, particularly relevant and important to be discussed by all pS in view of the worrying developments regarding Freedom of Expression in the OSCE area, as testified, inter alia, by RFOM's recent reports and press releases. We also supported a broader scope of the topic of Hate Crime in view of giving the civil society organizations more room to address issues that they find relevant under this topic.
6. In the spirit of compromise, we however stood ready to consider and support the multiple proposals made by other delegations throughout the negotiating process. We believe that the revised proposals presented by the CiO reflect a good balance and best effort of the CiO to address different positions of the participating States following long negotiations.
7. We have not heard anyone objecting to the proposed dates, which have been known from the very beginning of the year. We reiterate that, according to the PC Decision 476, we have all committed to adopt the agenda at the latest 4 months before the meeting takes place.
8. We negotiated in good faith, showed flexibility and made a number of concessions, as it was very important to move forward given the time pressure and time necessary for ODIHR and CiO to organize HDIM. We expected the same level of flexibility by other delegations and we regret that it has not been the case for one delegation.
9. The sense of urgency should be evident to all and we stand ready to continue supporting the SE Chairpersonship in all its efforts and to continue engaging in order to finally reach agreement.

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 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.