



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Permanent Council No. 1355 Vienna, 17 February 2022

EU Statement in response to the early warning issued by the OSCE Secretary General Helga Schmid

1. We thank the OSCE Secretary General for giving early warning on the risk of further escalation of the already dire security situation with regard to Ukraine. This action is in line with the tasking of the Vilnius 3/11 MC Decision on elements of the Conflict Cycle.
2. We echo the call of the Secretary General for de-escalation and for full respect of the OSCE principles and commitments that underpin European security, including those enshrined in the Helsinki Final Act.
3. The EU strongly believes that dialogue is the key path to strengthening our comprehensive security and safeguarding peace and stability in the OSCE region. We again call on Russia to immediately de-escalate, to abide by international law and to engage constructively and in good faith in dialogue through the established international mechanisms, including within the OSCE.
4. In this context, we regret that Russia did not attend the meeting organised under the risk reduction mechanism of the Vienna Document on Tuesday regarding unusual military activities of the Russian Federation. This is not in line with Russia's commitments in the politico-military area and it does not dispel the raised concerns of Ukraine and many other participating States. We take note of the statements by Russian authorities that some of the Russian troops currently deployed at Ukraine's borders and in the illegally annexed Crimean peninsula should be returning to their bases. We will continue to closely monitor developments on the ground in this regard.

5. We stand ready to make full use of all available tools, procedures and mechanisms within the OSCE, including the Renewed OSCE European Security Dialogue, and we call on other participating States to do the same.
6. Finally, the EU underlines the high value of the SMM in observing and reporting facts on the ground to the international community and as an active part of the OSCE crisis management structures.

The Candidate Countries REPUBLIC of NORTH MACEDONIA*, MONTENEGRO* and ALBANIA*, 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 and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.