

**EUROPEAN UNION****OSCE Special Permanent Council Nr 1051
Vienna, 11 May 2015**

EU Statement in Response to the Address by H.E. José Manuel García Margallo, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Spain

It is a pleasure to warmly welcome Minister García Margallo to the OSCE Permanent Council. We very much appreciate that the Minister has come to see us this morning and share his views on the Helsinki +40 process, the crisis in and around Ukraine, and Mediterranean affairs.

Mr. Chairman, the Foreign Minister of Spain reminds us of the accomplishments of the OSCE in the past and of its comprehensive concept of security. Since the 1975 Helsinki Final act, we have managed to devise mechanisms and institutions to promote better relations among states and to build security between and within States. At the same time, the OSCE has carefully crafted commitments, blueprints for promoting human rights and fundamental freedoms, based on the belief that we can't ensure security if we do not uphold these commitments.

The OSCE is facing many challenges. The crisis in and around Ukraine affects not only Ukraine, but also has profound implications for all OSCE participating States. What is at stake are the established fundamental principles that have provided a solid cornerstone for our area in the last 40 years. This is the larger issue that we need to address. Foreign Minister García Margallo also discussed Mediterranean affairs, including among others, the challenge of illegal migration. The OSCE can play a role in combating this phenomena in a cross dimensional manner. The OSCE also has to remain flexible to cope with the challenges of the day.

We thank the Foreign Minister for his views. These provide a useful input to our discussions the coming days at the OSCE Ambassadorial retreat. We wish Minister García Margallo all the best for the future.

The Candidate Countries the FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA*, MONTENEGRO*, ICELAND+ and ALBANIA*, the Country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and Potential Candidate BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA, and the EFTA countries LIECHTENSTEIN and NORWAY, members of the European Economic Area, as well as UKRAINE, the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA, GEORGIA, ANDORRA, MONACO and SAN MARINO align themselves with this statement.

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

+ Iceland continues to be a member of the EFTA and of the European Economic Area.