EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Permanent Council No. 1279
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EU Statement on the Review of OSCE cooperation with OSCE Asian Partners for Co-operation

The EU would like to thank the Albanian Chairmanship for dedicating for the first time a meeting of the Permanent Council to the review of OSCE cooperation with our Asian Partners. This initiative is particularly timely, as 2020 marks the 25th anniversary of the OSCE Asian Partnership. We also thank the Slovak Chair and our Asian Partners for the choice of topics for this year's rolling schedule. The two meetings held this year on peacekeeping and combatting corruption have provided excellent opportunities to share views and best practices on issues of common interest.

The OSCE's Asian Partnership continues to act as a valuable framework to learn from each other's experiences and discover ways in which we can work together to enhance our shared security across the three dimensions of the OSCE. Over the years, the Asian Partnership has been strengthened and its importance demonstrated.

In this regard, we welcome the active engagement of the Asian Partners in OSCE events and activities, in particular through the practice of voluntary reporting on OSCE commitments, as well as the contributions of the Asian Partners to OSCE extra-budgetary projects. Increased regional activities have also demonstrated the dynamism of the OSCE's cooperation with Asian Partners. These include the inter-regional conferences held in Seoul on cyber/ICT security and on preventing and countering violent extremism and radicalization that lead to terrorism and the training courses offered to both OSCE participating States and Partners.

We believe that changing the name of the group last year gave a positive message regarding the importance of our partnership. However, we regret that no

consensus was found in Bratislava on the adoption of the draft Ministerial Declaration on Co-operation with the Asian Partners. This text would have reflected the promising developments and latest elements of our cooperation with Asian Partners.

We look forward to the upcoming Asian Conference in October on Multilateral Responses to the Global Security Challenges. We thank the Slovak Chair for consulting on the agenda of the Conference and support the proposed focus on regional CSBMs, trans-border environmental risks and challenges to freedom of information issues in the context of the COVID-19.

Going forward, an enhanced dialogue on topics such as ICT/cyber security and related OSCE confidence building measures would also be welcome. As cyber CBMs have also been developed in the Asia-Pacific region, we believe this topic would allow for a fruitful exchange of experience between OSCE participating States and Asian Partners.

In conclusion, we would like to reiterate our conviction that our partnership will continue to play an important role as a valuable platform for dialogue and sharing of best practices with our Asian partners. The EU remains committed to pursuing and strengthening cooperation with our Asian Partners, including through the OSCE, wherever the organisation can be of assistance with its comprehensive approach to security.

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 UKRAINE, the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA, ARMENIA, GEORGIA, ANDORRA 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.