



European Union

**EU Statement on
20th Annual Regular Meeting of the
Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation (HCoC)
Vienna, 7-8 July 2021**

Mr. Chairman

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The following countries align themselves with this statement: Turkey[§], the Republic of North Macedonia*, Montenegro*, Serbia*, Albania*, Bosnia and Herzegovina*, Iceland+, Norway+, Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, Georgia and San Marino.

Let me first of all express our gratitude to Ambassador Laggner for all the work undertaken during the Swiss HCoC chairmanship, especially steering the HCoC through these unprecedented times. We warmly welcome Ambassador Ainchil of Argentina, as the new Chair from 2021 to 2022. We look forward to his leadership and cooperation in promoting the universality and full implementation of the Code in all regions of the world.

The EU would also like to thank Austria for its efficient support to the Code as the Immediate Central Contact (ICC) in Vienna.

Mr. Chairman,

The HCoC is the only multilateral instrument aiming at both preventing ballistic missile proliferation, and increasing transparency about ballistic missile and space launch vehicle programmes of the Subscribing States. In these turbulent times, the HCoC encourages restraint and plays an important role in building confidence, for the benefit of global peace and security.

[§] Candidate Country

* Candidate Countries the Republic of North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania as well as potential Candidate Country Bosnia and Herzegovina continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

+ Iceland and Norway are members of the EFTA and of the European Economic Area.

The EU and its Member States reaffirm their strong support for the HCoC, its universalisation, full implementation and efficient functioning. We call on all States, which have not yet done so, to subscribe to the HCoC and all Subscribing States to fully implement their commitments, especially by timely and regular exchange of pre-launch notifications on ballistic missile and space launch vehicle launches and test flights.

Since 2008, the EU provides significant political and financial support for the Code. A number of outreach events and meetings have taken place in highly fruitful cooperation with the Fondation pour la Recherche Stratégique (FRS) and the UN Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR). In the framework of the latest EU Council Decision (CFSP 2017/2370 of 18 December 2017), five expert missions have been accomplished and a number of substantial papers published related to the Code. Further outreach activities, such as regional seminars, conferences and side-events are being planned also this year, despite the COVID-19 pandemic. The EU also funded the webinar of the Fondation pour la Recherche Stratégique entitled "Confidence-building measures and new missile technologies", which was held online on Tuesday, July 6, in the margins of the HCoC 20th Annual Regular Meeting (ARM).

While the HCoC and the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) are the key pillars of our work, we are supportive of examining further multilateral steps to prevent the threat of missile proliferation. We support multilateral efforts to address security concerns emanating from ballistic missile proliferation, such as the Missile Dialogue Initiative, launched by Germany in 2019. International cooperation remains essential to address existing and emerging threats from new technologies.

Mr. Chairman,

The EU remains gravely concerned by the continued proliferation of delivery systems related to weapons of mass destruction, in particular the pursuit by several countries of concern of ballistic missile programmes. We call for the immediate dismantlement of such programmes, which are a source of mistrust and contribute to regional instability.

The EU condemns the continuous development by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) of its ballistic missiles programme, including the launch of solid fuel, short range ballistic missiles on 25 March 2021, which represent a grave threat to regional and international peace and security. We recall that under the UN Security Council resolutions, the DPRK is not allowed to conduct any further launches that use ballistic missile technology, nuclear tests, or any other provocation and it must abandon its nuclear and ballistic missile programmes and any other weapons of mass destruction in a complete,

verifiable and irreversible manner. The EU urges the DPRK to respond constructively to offers of dialogue by the United States and the Republic of Korea. The EU stands ready to support new diplomatic initiatives aimed at facilitating progress towards compliance with obligations set out in the relevant UN Security Council resolutions. All UN Member States are obliged to implement the sanctions and restrictions targeting the DPRK's illegal activities, as imposed by the UN Security Council, and should do their utmost to curb proliferation of goods and technology which could contribute to the DPRK's nuclear, other weapons of mass destruction or ballistic missile-related programmes, including the transfer of dual-used items and their financing. The EU and its Member States will continue to strictly enforce existing sanctions and call on all other States to do the same until the DPRK complies fully with all its international obligations and commitments.

The EU remains deeply concerned over Iran's actions that are inconsistent with the JCPOA. At the same time, the EU expresses its resolute commitment to, and continued support for the JCPOA at this critical point in time and is determined to continue working with the international community to preserve it and fully restore its implementation by all sides. To this end, the EU supports the ongoing intensive diplomatic efforts within the JCPOA Joint Commission and the contacts of the EU High Representative as JCPOA Coordinator with all relevant partners in view of a possible return of the US to the JCPOA, and the perspective of Iran's return to full JCPOA implementation. The JCPOA is an agreement of strategic importance and a key element of the global nuclear non-proliferation architecture. The EU calls on all countries to support its implementation in line with UN Security Council Resolution 2231(2015).

The EU takes note with concern of the continuation by Iran of its activities related to ballistic missiles and space launch vehicles in recent months. The EU urges Iran to refrain from any ballistic missile activities that are inconsistent with UNSCR 2231, notably its Annex B which calls upon Iran not to undertake any activity related to ballistic missiles designed to be capable of delivering nuclear weapons, including launches using such ballistic missile technology. The EU continues to fully apply UNSCR 2231 provisions which prohibit the supply, sale or transfer of missile and drones-related items, as listed in Annex B of the resolution, to and from Iran unless permitted in advance by the UN Security Council on a case by case basis, and calls upon Iran to fully respect all relevant UN Security Council resolutions related to the transfer of missiles and relevant material and technology to state and non-state actors. We reiterate our long-standing serious concern about the regional military build-up.

Since December 2012, the Syrian Arab Republic has again launched numerous ballistic missiles, ranging from liquid-propellant Scud-based missiles but also more operational solid-propellant Short Range Ballistic Missiles (SRBMs). These activities related to missile technology, along with strong indications of technical and financial support from third countries and resulting proliferation of

missile technologies from the Syrian soil to non-state actors in the region, constitute a source of concern for the international community.

Such developments in countries that are currently not subscribing to the Hague Code of Conduct further highlight the importance of universalization of the Code, which we will continue to promote in line with the EU Council Decision.

Mr. Chairman,

Next year will mark the 20th anniversary of the Hague Code of Conduct. This will be a time to celebrate and the EU and its Member States plan to reiterate their critical support to the Code through various outreach activities and other events.

Let me conclude by thanking you for all your efforts and assure you of our full cooperation and support for the issuance of a communiqué by this Annual Regular Meeting which should help to increase awareness and mobilise further international support for the HCoC.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.