

## **Press Stakeout following Security Council Debate on Bosnia and Herzegovina**

Good morning colleagues from the press,

Let me say a few words as Penholder of Security Council Resolution 2706 on EUFOR-Althea following the debate and adoption we have just had in the Security Council on Bosnia and Herzegovina.

My country, Switzerland, welcomes the unanimous adoption by the Council of Resolution 2706, which renews for a year the authorization of the EUFOR-Althea operation led by the European Union.

As this year's Penholder in this file, we have sought, these last several weeks, to bring everyone to the table, to consult widely and to work transparently and in an inclusive way.

What we achieved today is an important objective. This mission, EUFOR-Althea, is making a significant contribution to peacekeeping in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and is playing a key role in stabilizing the whole region.

The mission's mandate includes implementing and upholding the 1995 Dayton Peace Agreement, maintaining a secure environment, and working with Bosnian authorities to achieve these goals.

Switzerland has been participating in the EUFOR Althea mission since its establishment in 2004. This military peace-building commitment is part of an overall effort to promote security and stability in the Western Balkans. We will continue to contribute with Swiss military personnel and experts to the accomplishments of the mission.

We will further support the states of the region in their efforts to progress on their European path, including through our instruments of international cooperation.

Let's not forget: there are strong human ties between Switzerland and Bosnia and Herzegovina, in particular following the arrival of numerous refugees during the conflict from 1992 to 1995. Today, the Bosnian diaspora in Switzerland numbers some 60'000 people.

We are committed to a united, peaceful and prosperous future of the country.

We would like to thank today all the members of the Council for their constructive commitment throughout the process. The unanimous renewal of the authorization is a strong signal in support of the stability and security of Bosnia and Herzegovina.