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**EUROPEAN UNION**

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**EU statement on recent hate related violence in the US**

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The European Union is against hate crimes wherever they occur. The European Union expresses deep concern over the recent violent attack in Charlottesville which left one woman (Heather Heyer) dead and 19 persons injured.

We echo the statement made by ODIHR Director on 15 August, condemning this heinous crime, which took place in a climate of racist, xenophobic and anti-Semitic speech.

Hate crimes are intolerable. The European Union believes it is imperative that authorities condemn such incidents, bring the perpetrators to justice, and ensure that people can safely exercise their right to freedom of peaceful assembly and freedom of expression.

Furthermore, the media must be able to report on such developments of public interest, free from intimidation or fear. In this regard, we welcome the statement also made by the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, Harlem Desir, calling on the US authorities to refrain from statements that risk undermining the credibility of the media.

The Candidate Countries the FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF 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 NORWAY, members of the European Economic Area 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.