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Vienna, 2 September 2010**

EU statement on the situation in Kyrgyzstan

The European Union would like to thank the Chairmanship-in-Office, the Director of the CPC, as well as the Permanent Representative of Kyrgyzstan for the update on the situation there.

We also appreciate the continuous flow of information provided by the spot reports issued by the OSCE Centre in Bishkek and the ongoing efforts of the Centre to support the Kyrgyz authorities across all three dimensions.

The EU remains concerned about reports of ongoing violence, human rights violations and arbitrary arrests in southern Kyrgyzstan. We are also concerned by the increasingly tense political climate in the run up to the parliamentary elections next month. We urge all sides to exercise maximum restraint and to play their full part in defusing tensions. In this context, we welcome the creation of a department of inter-ethnic development and religious politics within the Presidential Administration.

The EU also underlines that establishing the facts behind the recent violent events in Southern Kyrgyzstan constitutes an essential prerequisite for ensuring accountability, peace and inter-ethnic reconciliation. The EU stands ready to support the establishment of an independent international enquiry to complement the efforts of the Kyrgyz authorities.

We would also like to echo the Representative on Freedom of the Media in commending the appointment of a supervisory board for Kyrgyzstan's public service broadcaster. We hope it will promote tolerance and understanding in a society by reflecting ethnic, religious, cultural and language diversity in its everyday work. We also hope it will move quickly to ensure the provision of fair and impartial news coverage, particularly in light of the forthcoming parliamentary elections.

The European Union welcomes Ambassador Müller's appointment as Head of the OSCE Police Advisory Group. We are confident that this important initiative is in safe hands. We welcome Ambassador Müller's consensus-oriented approach and encourage him to continue to consult closely with the Kyrgyz authorities. In this context we appeal to the Kyrgyz authorities to clear the way for the finalization and signing of the respective Memorandum of Understanding in accordance with PC Decision No 947. It appears that a major obstacle to the immediate deployment of the Police Advisory Group has been a widespread misunderstanding, possibly fuelled by a campaign of misinformation, about its mandate. We wish to underline that the role of the Police Advisory Group is to advise and support local police forces. It will have no executive powers. We remain convinced that the Police Advisory Group can assist the Kyrgyz authorities to reduce inter-ethnic tensions, to ensure the restoration of public order and to strengthen the capacity of the territorial units of the Ministry of Interior. We therefore call upon all parties for maximum pragmatism to expedite its eventual deployment.

The candidate countries CROATIA*, the FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA* and ICELAND, the countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate countries ALBANIA, BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA, MONTENEGRO and SERBIA, the European Free Trade Association countries and members of the European Economic Area

LIECHTENSTEIN and NORWAY, as well as UKRAINE, the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA and ANDORRA align themselves with this statement

*Croatia and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.