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**STATEMENT BY THE EUROPEAN UNION  
AT THE 973rd MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

21 November 2013

**In response to the Head of the OSCE Mission to Moldova,  
Her Excellency Ambassador Jennifer Brush**

The European Union thanks Ambassador Brush for her activity report and fully supports the efforts of the OSCE Mission to Moldova to fulfil its mandate.

At a time when the Mission's projects and activities are focusing on reintegration, taking care to systematically involve the representatives on both banks of the Dniester, we are deeply concerned by the growing attempts by Tiraspol to restrict the ability of the members of the Mission to carry out their mandate in the Republic of Moldova, particularly in the Transdnestrrian region. We call on all participants in the "5+2" negotiations to work in a spirit of co-operation and to use their influence to put an end to these attempts to prevent the Mission from accomplishing its mandate. We support the Mission's work in particular in the area of security and encourage it to actively implement its mandate based on the commitments undertaken within the OSCE by the participating States and to continue to monitor and report on developments in this area.

The European Union remains very interested in the continuation and conclusion of the "5+2" negotiations, with respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Moldova. We welcome the investment by the Ukrainian OSCE Chairmanship in bringing about progress in the discussions on a political settlement. The European Union calls on the "5+2" participants to address the political, institutional questions without delay at the next "5+2" meeting planned for 25 and 26 November 2013 in Kyiv, along with the questions of security in the third basket and the other two baskets, in accordance with document on the negotiation process in the "5+2" format and the Dublin statement on the conflict settlement. It is also time to adopt the confidence-building measures discussed over the past several months, most recently at the meeting on confidence-building measures in Landshut, Germany, on 30 and 31 October. The European Union will continue to do its utmost to help bring about a political settlement of the conflict and its implementation as soon as a comprehensive political settlement has been achieved. It calls on all participants in the "5+2" negotiations, the only format that guarantees the transparency and necessary legitimacy to bring about a lasting solution, to act in a spirit of co-operation to enable progress to be made on substantive issues.

We reiterate our satisfaction at the projects the Mission has carried out to promote human rights, democracy, the rule of law, freedom of the media, strengthening civil society

and combating trafficking in human beings and gender inequality. The support provided by the Mission to ensure respect for the rights of persons belonging to minorities in the Republic of Moldova and to the functioning of schools providing education in the Roman alphabet in the Transdniestrian region is extremely valuable. In this regard, it is vital for Tiraspol to take specific measures immediately to enable these schools to operate under favourable conditions and to desist from measures that obstruct their functioning.

We reaffirm our willingness to foster the political association and economic integration of the Republic of Moldova in the European Union in the framework of the Eastern Partnership. We welcome the initialling at the forthcoming Summit in Vilnius of the Association Agreement between the European Union and the Republic of Moldova on the creation of a deep and comprehensive free-trade area and trust that it will be signed by autumn 2014 so as to permit its entry into force. The European Union also welcomes the progress in the dialogue on the liberalization of the short-stay visa regime. The Association Agreement will contribute to a settlement of the Transdniestrian conflict by increasing prosperity on both banks of the Dniester. The European Union is willing to promote dialogue between Chişinău and Tiraspol on the possibilities for an agreement.

We once again reiterate our full support for the OSCE Mission to Moldova and its efforts to contribute to a settlement of the conflict and thank Ambassador Brush and wish her every success in the continuation of her activities.

The candidate countries the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia<sup>1</sup>, Montenegro<sup>1</sup> and Iceland<sup>2</sup>, the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate countries Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina, the European Free Trade Association countries Liechtenstein and Norway, as well as Georgia, align themselves with this statement.

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1 The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Montenegro continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

2 Iceland continues to be a member of the European Free Trade Association.