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Swedish Presidency of the European Union

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EU statement on the November 11 Geneva discussions

The European Union is pleased to note the engagement of participants in the latest round of the Geneva discussions on Georgia that took place yesterday, in which discussions were held on elements of a potential agreement on the non-use of force and international security arrangements, as well as on a number of humanitarian issues.

As said on earlier occasions, and despite the still existing difficulties and differences amongst participants, the EU considers the continuation of the Geneva discussions of great importance, as the only forum in which all sides are represented and three major international actors - the European Union, the OSCE and the United Nations - work in close co-operation for the security and stability in the region. We reiterate our full support to the OSCE's active participation in the meetings, in which good use can be made of its valuable and extensive experience. We welcome the fact that Ambassador Bolat Nurgaliyev attended yesterday's meeting, which demonstrates the interest of Kazakhstan, the incoming Chairman-in-Office, in taking an active part in the Geneva discussions. We are

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looking forward to the next round of consultations set for 28 January 2010, and call for continued active engagement of all participants towards making concrete progress in both working groups.

Recent incidents regarding arrests of people - including minors - in the vicinity of the administrative boundary lines, are a cause for concern, and highlight once more the need for regular meetings of the incident prevention and response mechanisms as confidence building measures, in which the OSCE plays an essential role.

In concluding, the EU reiterates its firm support for the security and stability of Georgia, based on full respect for the principles of independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity recognised by international law, including the Helsinki Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe and United Nations Security Council resolutions.

The candidate countries TURKEY, CROATIA* and the FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA*, 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 ICELAND, LIECHTENSTEIN and NORWAY, as well as UKRAINE and the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA align themselves with this statement.

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