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**STATEMENT BY
THE EUROPEAN UNION AT THE 1025th MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

13 November 2014

**In response to the Co-Chairmen of the OSCE Minsk Group,
the Personal Representative of the Chairperson-in-Office on the
Conflict Dealt with by the OSCE Minsk Conference and the
Head of the High-Level Planning Group**

The European Union (EU) welcomes the Co-Chairmen of the OSCE Minsk Group, the Personal Representative of the Chairperson-in-Office on the Conflict Dealt with by the OSCE Minsk Conference and the Head of the High-Level Planning Group, and thanks them for their detailed reports.

The EU takes this opportunity to reiterate its support for the Minsk Group and restates its full confidence in the ability of the Co-Chairmen to advance the search for a fair and lasting political settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, which it regards as vital for the future of the region. We call upon the parties to focus their attention on seeking a constructive dialogue and encourage them to take greater advantage of the efforts undertaken by the Co-Chairmen.

The EU reiterates its attachment to a peaceful settlement of the conflict on the basis of the fundamental principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the Helsinki Final Act. In this connection, the EU recalls the commitment made by the Presidents of Armenia and Azerbaijan at the Sochi Summit on 23 January 2012 to accelerate reaching an agreement on the Basic Principles for a Settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict, and regrets the lack of progress in this regard.

The EU welcomes the fact that the Presidents of Armenia and Azerbaijan met on four occasions during the past year: in Vienna in November 2013, and recently in Sochi in August, Newport in September and Paris on 27 October. The EU calls for the agreement reached at the Paris Summit on the exchange of information, under the auspices of the International Committee of the Red Cross, on persons missing as a result of the conflict to be implemented as soon as possible, and hopes that it can be followed by other confidence-building measures. In this context, it regrets that despite the efforts of the Co-Chairmen to put in place a mechanism for investigating incidents along the front line, this commitment by the parties, which was reiterated in Sochi, has not yet been fulfilled.

At the same time, the EU endorses the statements by the Presidents of the French Republic, the United States of America and the Russian Federation recognizing the unacceptability of the status quo and calling upon the parties to move towards the elaboration of a comprehensive peace treaty.

The EU is willing to provide increased support for the efforts to settle the conflict through the establishment of confidence-building measures, in support of and in full complementarity with the Minsk Group, with the aim of facilitating the next stages of the implementation of a peaceful resolution.

Mr. Chairperson,

We should like to express our appreciation for the work of the Personal Representative of the Chairperson-in-Office on the Conflict Dealt with by the Minsk Conference, Ambassador Andrzej Kasprzyk, and his team, at times under difficult security conditions. The EU attaches the highest importance to the unhindered pursuit of their ceasefire monitoring activities on the line of contact and along the border between Armenia and Azerbaijan. These activities undoubtedly contribute to reducing tensions in the region and are a valuable tool for implementing confidence-building measures on the ground.

The EU reiterates in this regard its concern about this year's incidents, which were the most violent in more than 20 years. We are deeply concerned by yesterday's incident involving the helicopter shot down along the line of contact, and we express our condolences to the families of the victims. We express the fervent hope that this incident will not lead to an escalation or undermine the pursuit of negotiations.

In general, the EU remains deeply concerned by reports of recurring armed incidents along the line of contact and on the international border between Armenia and Azerbaijan, and by the continued high number of victims. We condemn any use of force and call on the parties concerned to avoid any actions likely to fuel tensions. To that end, we call on the parties to adhere scrupulously to the ceasefire to which they have committed themselves, to end the incursions on both sides of the line of contact, and to exercise restraint both on the ground and in their public statements. The EU appeals to the parties to make additional efforts and increase confidence-building measures to reinforce the ceasefire.

The EU welcomes the participation of the members of the Minsk Group and the High-Level Planning Group in some of the monitoring missions that took place this year.

Mr. Chairperson,

The EU reiterates its support for the planning activities aimed at the deployment of an OSCE peacekeeping mission for the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. The deployment of such a mission will, however, depend on the parties reaching a comprehensive agreement based on the principles that have been identified for a peaceful settlement of the conflict, under the auspices of the Minsk Group.

In conclusion, the EU renews its full support for the mediation conducted by the Co-Chairmen of the Minsk Group, for Ambassador Kasprzyk's activities, and for those of the High-Level Planning Group. All of these processes, which must be co-ordinated, are contributing to a peaceful settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. The EU also

reiterates its determination to work closely with the parties on promoting stability and prosperity, as well as consolidating democracy and the rule of law in the region, and on reinforcing its co-operative relations with them, particularly within the Eastern Partnership.

The candidate countries the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia¹, Montenegro¹, Iceland² and Albania¹, the country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate country Bosnia and Herzegovina, the members of the European Free Trade Association and the European Economic Area Liechtenstein and Norway, as well as Ukraine and San Marino, align themselves with this statement.

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

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