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STATEMENT BY THE EUROPEAN UNION AT THE 1388th (SPECIAL) MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL

13 September 2022

On the situation between Armenia and Azerbaijan

The European Union had intended to take the floor this week to commend the positive developments between Armenia and Azerbaijan over the past two weeks, as illustrated by the fourth high-level meeting organized in Brussels on 31 August under the auspices of the President of the European Council, Charles Michel, and by the release of a further five Armenian soldiers by Azerbaijan on 8 September.

Unfortunately, this positive momentum has just been undermined yet again by the violent confrontations which took place during the night of 12 to 13 September. The European Union wishes to express its deep concern over the attacks along the Armenian-Azerbaijani border, including reported artillery strikes against populated areas and civilian infrastructure inside Armenia. These particularly grave and alarming incidents, which have claimed new casualties on each side, serve to remind us of the extreme volatility of the situation on the ground, which remains very tense.

In calling for an immediate cessation of hostilities, the European Union and its Member States underline the importance of doing everything possible to avoid a more serious escalation, to ease tensions, to return in good faith and without preconditions to the negotiating table, and to fully honour the commitments undertaken as part of the ceasefire arrangements of 9 November 2020. As the European Union already emphasized on 9 August when speaking before the Permanent Council, the first of these commitments concerns observance of the ceasefire. Additionally, the European Union urges all the armed forces to return to the positions they were occupying before this escalation.

The European Union will continue to support and contribute to efforts aimed at promoting dialogue between Armenia and Azerbaijan, not least in the framework of the OSCE. The European Union remains determined to help in overcoming tensions and to pursue its commitment to lasting peace and stability in the South Caucasus.

The candidate countries the Republic of North Macedonia¹, Montenegro¹ and Albania¹, the potential candidate country Bosnia and Herzegovina¹, the European Free Trade Association countries and members of the European Economic Area Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, as well as Andorra and San Marino, align themselves with this statement.

¹ The Republic of North Macedonia, Montenegro, Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.