



EUROPEAN UNION

**OSCE Permanent Council No 1133
Vienna, 9 February 2017**

**EU statement in response to the Update by the Secretary
General on the open mandate questions**

The EU is very attached to the good work that the Office in Yerevan is carrying out, as all participating States are. We regret the current stalemate in the negotiations surrounding the extension of its mandate, as has just been confirmed by the Secretary General. This situation has a severe impact on the work of the mission and a solution has to be found urgently.

We believe that the concerns raised by Azerbaijan regarding the demining activities have been addressed by the Austrian Chairmanship's decision to end these activities, and we understand that the issue is therefore now solved. We look forward to the Mission continuing its work. We hope that progress will be achieved soon, and we trust the participating States will engage in good faith to prolong the mandate of the Mission in Yerevan.

We are encouraged by positive reports of the Special Envoy of the Chairmanship, Ambassador Muller, about his discussions with the government of Tajikistan concerning the interim prolongation of the existing mandate, thus providing a legal basis for the transition period.

The Candidate Countries the FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA*, MONTENEGRO*, SERBIA* and ALBANIA*, the Country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and Potential Candidate BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA, and the EFTA countries ICELAND and LIECHTENSTEIN, members of the European Economic Area, align themselves with this statement.

* The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.