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The Netherlands Presidency of the European Union

**Permanent Council No. 535
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EU statement on Ukraine

The European Union remains very concerned about developments in Ukraine following the second round of the Presidential Elections on 21 November. The European Union attaches particular importance to Ukraine's commitments to the democratic values of the Council of Europe and the OSCE in the context of EU-Ukraine relations and continues to follow developments closely.

The European Union stresses the need to find a solution to the present political crisis in Ukraine as soon as possible and by peaceful means. The EU therefore welcomes the agreement which was reached at the second Round Table meeting in Kyiv on 1 December between President Kuchma and the two presidential candidates, Victor Yanukovich and Victor Yushenko, with the participation of High Representative Solana, Polish President Kwasniewski, Lithuanian President Adamkus, Speaker of the Rada, Lytvyn, Speaker of the Russian State Duma, Gryzlov, OSCE Secretary General Kubis and the Special Envoy of the EU Presidency, Ambassador Biegman.

The EU welcomes that the sides have reaffirmed their commitment to the non-use of violence and settlement of the political crisis by legal means. Any incident as happened in Lugansk, where several people including journalists and a member of OSCE staff were injured, is to be condemned. The EU shares the concern of the OSCE Media Representative Haraszti over harassment of media outlets in Ukraine.

The EU also welcomes the agreement of the sides to convene a next meeting of the Round Table after adoption of the relevant decision by the Supreme Court of Ukraine. In our view, it is important that the Supreme Court reviews the complaints filed after the elections in an open and transparent manner. The EU reiterates its conviction that respecting the unity and territorial integrity of Ukraine is essential to a peaceful resolution to the political crisis and that the will of the Ukrainian people must be respected.

The EU emphasizes that it is willing to continue to play a supportive role. It also welcomes the active involvement of the Chairman-in-Office of the OSCE in solving the crisis in Ukraine.

If it is decided to organise elections in one form or the other, the EU will support the important role of the OSCE/ODIHR in this process. It calls on all participating States to enable ODIHR to operate with the utmost speed and efficiency, when invited to act, as was mentioned in the letter by Ambassador Strohal to all Heads of Delegation of 30 November. The EU stands ready to take any preparatory steps required and calls on all other delegations to follow suit.

The Candidate Countries Bulgaria, Romania, Turkey and Croatia¹ align themselves with this statement.

¹ Croatia continues to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process