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Delegation

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**EU Statement on Helsinki Final Act: 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

It is a great pleasure to celebrate the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Helsinki Final Act. The Helsinki preparations were notable, not only for EC political co-operation, which was then facing its first real test, but also for the emergence of the neutral and non-aligned group which played a decisive - some would say the decisive - role in the agreement reached at Helsinki. Agreement that henceforth security in Europe would be comprehensive and co-operative. Comprehensive in 3 dimensions: human rights, the economy and the environment would be added to traditional security concerns over frontiers and the territorial integrity of States. Co-operative in the very name used to designate the process inaugurated at Helsinki. We owe a particular debt of gratitude to the Austrian negotiators of those days, for their role in bridging the east west divide. They had a vision that has been, as we heard in Minister Ursula Plassnik's speech last week, amply realised.

The Final Act acknowledges that frontiers can be changed peacefully and by agreement. Tragically that has not been the case everywhere over the last 30 years. Nonetheless, the process started by the Helsinki Final Act allowed those institutions – the Council of Europe, Nato and the EU - which brought peace, stability, democracy and prosperity to part of the European continent after 1945, to enlarge. The CSCE/OSCE has been through its commitments, the umbrella for, and the motor of, these achievements.

Against the background of the ongoing debate on reform of the OSCE, the EU considers the norms and commitments developed by the Helsinki process as valid today as ever. The effective functioning of the OSCE's institutions, its field missions and its election observation missions have been an indispensable contribution to the overcoming of dividing lines, to crisis management and to the prevention of conflicts in the OSCE area. Arms control and confidence building measures have strengthened stability and security in Europe. The EU will maintain its full support for the OSCE's norms and commitments.



The EU now looks forward to the celebration of the anniversary of the Final Act in Helsinki this weekend. Finland, like Austria, played a constructive role 30 years ago and continues to do so now. The European Union will play its full part in following up the recommendations of the Panel of Eminent Persons, confident that, as was the case 30 years ago, its contribution will be imaginative, constructive and anchored in the vision of the signatories of the Final Act.

The Acceding Countries Bulgaria and Romania, the Candidate Countries Turkey and Croatia <sup>1</sup>, the Countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Serbia and Montenegro, as well as Ukraine and Moldova align themselves with this declaration.

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<sup>1</sup> Croatia continues to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process