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## **STATEMENT BY THE EUROPEAN UNION AT THE 1246th MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

7 November 2019

### **In response to the Co-Chairs of the 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**

Mr. Chairperson,

The European Union welcomes the Co-Chairs of the Minsk Group, the Personal Representative of the Chairperson-in-Office and the Head of the High-Level Planning Group (HLPG) and thanks them for their detailed reports.

It takes this opportunity to reiterate its complete support for the Minsk Group and its full confidence in the Co-Chairmen to achieve progress in the search for a political, equitable and lasting settlement of the conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh, which is vital for the future of the region.

It is attentively following the development of the situation in Nagorno-Karabakh, which remains fragile in spite of a steady reduction in the level of violence on the ground. It reiterates its commitment 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 and urges the parties to pursue the path of constructive dialogue and to take best advantage of the efforts made by the Co-Chairs.

It recalls the commitment undertaken by President Aliyev and Prime Minister Pashinyan when they met in Vienna under the auspices of the Co-Chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group on 29 March 2019 to build up an environment conducive to peace and take further concrete and tangible steps in the negotiation process to find a peaceful solution to the conflict.

It takes note of the numerous meetings in Armenia and Azerbaijan organized by the Co-Chairs of the Minsk Group and the Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office and welcomes the agreement by the Ministers for Foreign Affairs to pursue their dialogue and to meet again before the end of the year.

Like the Co-Chairs, it considers it important to maintain an atmosphere of trust to foster sustained discussion of the settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. It is committed in the framework of its programme, the European Partnership for the Peaceful Settlement of the Conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh, to facilitating contacts between the societies divided by the conflict and will continue with efforts of this

nature. It thus reaffirms its support for all programmes that help to reconcile the civil societies and foster peaceful exchanges between the populations. The inclusive, meaningful and equal participation of women in the meaning of United Nations Security Council resolution 1325 can have a crucial and positive influence on all phases of peace processes, including in Nagorno-Karabakh. The EU urges an intensification of efforts in this regard within the Minsk Group and in its activities.

The EU remains involved through its Special Representative Toivo Klaar, whose activity it warmly commends, in particular in support of efforts to settle the conflict, and is willing to provide increased assistance to the conflict settlement process through the establishment of confidence-building measures in support of and in full complementarity with the Minsk Group with a view to facilitating the next stages in the establishment of peace.

Mr. Chairperson,

We should like to express our positive appreciation of the work carried out by the Personal Representative of the Chairperson-in-Office on the Conflict Dealt with by the OSCE Minsk Conference, Ambassador Kasprzyk, and his team. The European Union attaches the greatest importance to the continuation without obstacle of their ceasefire observation activities on the line of contact and along the border between Armenia and Azerbaijan. These activities incontestably help to reduce tensions in the region and represent a valuable instrument for implementing confidence-building measures on the ground.

The EU reiterates its support for the planning and deployment of an OSCE peacekeeping mission for the conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh. The deployment of a mission of this type will depend, however, on the conclusion of a comprehensive agreement by the parties on the basis of the principles identified for a peaceful settlement of the conflict under the aegis of the Minsk Group.

Mr. Chairperson,

In conclusion, the EU reiterates its full support for the mediation by the Co-Chairs of the Minsk Group, the activities of Ambassador Kasprzyk and the planning conducted by the HLPG. All of these processes, which need to be co-ordinated, contribute to a peaceful settlement of the conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh. The EU further reiterates its intention of working closely with the parties to promote stability and prosperity, to consolidate democracy and the rule of law in the region, and to strengthen with them their co-operative relations in the framework in particular of the Eastern Partnership.

The candidate countries North Macedonia<sup>1</sup>, Montenegro<sup>1</sup>, Serbia<sup>1</sup> and Albania<sup>1</sup>, the country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate Bosnia and Herzegovina, 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.

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1 North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.