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EUROPEAN UNION

**OSCE Permanent Council Nr 1105
Vienna, 16 June 2016**

EU Statement on the attack in Orlando

The European Union would like to recall the statement of High Representative / Vice President Mogherini of 12 June.

The terrible attack which took place in Orlando, Florida claimed so many lives and left so many injured. It's a tragedy not only for the American people, but for the whole world as all the massacres of people killed for their faith, for their sexual orientations, for their beliefs, are.

Today, our thoughts and our hearts are with the victims and their families. We stand together in solidarity with the people of America, and especially with the LGBTI community which this hateful terror attack targeted.

We share the same values of equality and non-discrimination. And together we will continue to promote and defend those values.

We also echo the statement by ODIHR Director, Michael Link, who praised the many US political leaders who delivered a clear and swift message that violence and hatred towards any community or individual will not be tolerated, and we commend the many religious and community leaders who have spoken about the importance of all people living together in a spirit of mutual understanding and respect.

As the international community we have a particular obligation to protect persons belonging to minority groups and to ensure that all people, regardless of sexual

orientation or gender identity, can live lives free from discrimination and violence, and free from fear of violence.

The European Union remains committed to working with states, including in international and regional forums such as the OSCE, and with civil society to promote diversity and tolerance, and to prevent violence and discrimination on any grounds. We will continue to defend the rights and freedoms of all.

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, as well as UKRAINE, the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA, ANDORRA and SAN MARINO 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.