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**STATEMENT BY
THE EUROPEAN UNION AT THE 1459th MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

1 February 2024

On the occasion of International Holocaust Remembrance Day

The European Union thanks Ambassador Terezija Gras for her address on behalf of the Croatian Presidency of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA). We welcome the organization by the European Commission, the Belgian Presidency of the Council of the European Union and the IHRA of the European Holocaust Remembrance Conference in Brussels on 23 January, and the adoption of the IHRA Charter for Safeguarding Sites.

On the occasion of the 79th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz and the International Holocaust Remembrance Day, we thank the IHRA for its vital work in ensuring that the truth about the Shoah is never forgotten, obscured or distorted.

We strongly condemn Russia's continued spurious invocation of the fight against Nazism to justify its war of aggression against Ukraine, as well as its inaccurate and inappropriate use of the term denazification. Such distortion erodes our understanding of the Shoah, disrespects the victims and survivors, and undermines democratic principles.

We are deeply concerned about the dramatic increase in anti-Semitic, racist and discriminatory attacks since the Hamas terrorist attack on 7 October 2023. Anti-Semitic acts are unjustifiable and run counter to our fundamental values of equality and combating discrimination of any kind. We have a duty all the more to remain vigilant and to act resolutely against all forms of anti-Semitism, racism and discrimination.

The European Union is committed to combating all forms of anti-Semitism, including attempts to legitimize, justify, trivialize or deny the Shoah. Our Member States are combating these phenomena by implementing the EU Anti-racism Action Plan and the European Strategy on combating antisemitism, not to mention our legislation on digital services, which seeks to limit the dissemination of illegal content online, including incitement to hatred or violence. As an international partner of the IHRA, the European Union works alongside this organization to carry out education, research and remembrance work.

We also support the commitments and action that the OSCE and its autonomous institutions have developed over the years in the fight against anti-Semitism and all forms of intolerance and discrimination by promoting the rule of law and universal respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. In that regard, we welcome the involvement of the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights in the #ProtectTheFacts initiative, the IHRA's global awareness-raising campaign to combat Holocaust distortion.

We welcome the priority given by the Maltese Chairmanship to the fight against intolerance and discrimination and the conference on combating anti-Semitism in the OSCE area to be held on 9 April in Malta.

Allow me to assure you, Madam Ambassador, and the British Presidency starting in March, of the resolute support of the European Union at your side to ensure that the memory of the Shoah and all its victims will never be forgotten but will continue to live on in us so as to help us build a world of peace and respect for all.

The candidate countries North Macedonia¹, Montenegro¹, Albania¹, Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, Bosnia and Herzegovina¹ and Georgia, the European Free Trade Association countries and members of the European Economic Area Iceland and Liechtenstein, as well as Andorra, Monaco and San Marino, align themselves with this statement.

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