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STATEMENT BY THE EUROPEAN UNION AT THE 879th MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL

Vienna, 8 September 2011

Regarding the tenth anniversary of the attacks of 11 September 2001 on the United States of America

The 11th of September 2011 marks the tenth anniversary of the terrorist attacks that so cruelly struck the United States of America. Today, in a mood profound reflection, we remember with deep emotion that tragic day for the American people and for all peoples who are committed to the fundamental values of democracy.

The European Union wishes to state that it has forgotten nothing of that dramatic event. Our thoughts go out to those who have suffered and continue to suffer at the loss of a loved one, relative or friend. In making this statement, we wish to honour today the memory of the victims of those senseless and cowardly acts, and we condemn in the strongest terms the terrorism that continues to strike indiscriminately throughout the world.

In the face of this barbarity, for which there can be no justification, and in the face of terrorist organizations and individuals who have no respect for human life, the European Union remains committed and reaffirms that more than ever it is determined to combat unrelentingly this evil alongside its allies, in conformity with international law and with respect for human rights. In the fight against terrorism it is imperative that we remain united. In this connection, the European Union recognizes the generally acknowledged contribution of the OSCE, which seeks to promote a concerted approach to effectively combating this scourge.

We welcome the significant victories that have been won in the fight against terrorism. They are the result of unrelenting tenacity and remarkable co-operation among countries that reject any ideology of hatred. In this regard, we should stress that the United States of America and the European Union share certain common principles based on mutual interest and respect – justice and progress, tolerance and dignity for all human beings.

It is with gratitude that we pay tribute to the men and women who, at risk to their own lives, are working to protect innocent people against terrorist threats and attacks. Today we declare that there will never be any lessening of this commitment.

Acting in solidarity and united by their shared values, democracies will continue to defend, resolutely and with self-sacrifice, freedom and human rights.

The candidate countries Turkey, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro¹ and Iceland², the Stabilisation and Association Process countries and potential candidate countries Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia, the European Free Trade Association countries and members of the European Economic Area Liechtenstein and Norway, as well as the Republic of Moldova, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Andorra and San Marino, align themselves with this statement.

1 Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Montenegro continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

2 Iceland continues to be a member of the European Free Trade Association and the European Economic Area.