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EUROPEAN UNION

**OSCE Permanent Council Nr 836
Vienna, 15 November 2010**

EU statement in response to the address by the Chairperson-in-Office, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan, His Excellency Mr Kanat Saudabayev

The EU welcomes His Excellency Mr Kanat Saudabayev, Secretary of State and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan and Chairperson-in-Office of the OSCE, back to the Permanent Council at a crucial time, just a few weeks before the Astana OSCE Summit.

We thank the Chairperson-in-Office for his address outlining the state of play ahead of the Summit. The EU has listened with great interest to this important statement.

In our address to him at the occasion of his speech to the Permanent Council in January, we noted that the Kazakh Chairmanship was going to open a new chapter in the history of our organization, underlining the importance of the Central Asian region and increasing the attention paid by the international community, the media and civil society not only to that region but to the whole of the OSCE. The fact that there will now be a Summit for the first time in eleven years after Istanbul, on Kazakh soil, further underscores the validity of this statement.

We again welcome, as President Nazarbayev pointed out already in his video address to us in January, that Kazakhstan is firmly committed to the fundamental

principles and values of the OSCE and that he will endeavour to ensure that all three dimensions of the Organization's work are given equal attention. We commend his efforts in this regard throughout the year. The final and decisive challenge in this regard will be the Summit.

Our strategic objective for the Summit will be to build a future security community where the use of force should be unthinkable, guided by the spirit of the Corfu Process. This should be reflected in a concrete and ambitious Action Plan, covering all three dimensions.

As you know from the address of Baroness Ashton in Almaty, the EU has four key priorities:

- Becoming better at preventing, managing and resolving conflicts, and rehabilitating conflict-stricken regions, including progress regarding existing, protracted and emerging conflicts
- Strengthening and modernising conventional arms control and confidence and security building measures.
- Strengthening the implementation of all our commitments in the three dimensions, notably in the human dimension.
- Reinforcing our ability to jointly tackle transnational and emerging threats and challenges that affect us all, including from Afghanistan.

Mr Chair,

We are pursuing this strategic objective and these priorities when putting forward our proposed amendments to the draft Summit documents skilfully elaborated by the Chair and assisted by the Secretariat.

In so doing we are currently faced by two major challenges on our way to Astana:

- First, as the EU stressed already in response to the Chairperson-in-Office in January, the fundamental importance of the OSCE comprehensive concept of security includes at its core the promotion and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, democracy and the rule of law. This is a key concern for the EU in the run up to the Summit and in the context of the negotiation of the Summit document. There can be no going back on OSCE commitments. We need to reflect in the action plan to be adopted at the Summit that there are new challenges, notably related to media in the digital age, which need to be addressed by the OSCE.
- Secondly, we share the Chairperson-in-Office's concern, expressed already in January, that there is a deficit of political trust and confidence which also affects the ability of this Organization to contribute to the security of the OSCE area and to act decisively in times of crisis and conflict. In this regard, we recall our ongoing efforts in relation to the crisis in Kyrgyzstan. Restoring confidence and trust has been the main purpose of the Corfu Process to which we all remain committed. We need to be ambitious by taking concrete steps to restore trust and confidence between participating States and to strengthen our capacity to address challenges in all three dimensions, including those posed by protracted and emerging conflicts. This is the second main challenge ahead of the Summit. The EU is of the view that a Summit document should mention the protracted conflicts concerning the Transnistrian settlement, Georgia and Nagorno-Karabakh specifically and set out a clear action plan to enhance OSCE capabilities to address the entire conflict cycle.

Mr Chair,

Our ability to address these challenges will to a large extent determine the legacy of the Astana Summit. We pledge to work without rest in the run up to the Summit with the Chair and with all the participating States in the OSCE to make the Astana Summit 2010 a symbol of a reinvigorated OSCE, proud of its values and commitments, and ready to address more effectively new threats and challenges in the years ahead.

I thank you, Mr. Chair.

The candidate countries CROATIA*, the FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA* and ICELAND**, the countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate countries ALBANIA, BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA, MONTENEGRO and SERBIA, the European Free Trade Association countries and members of the European Economic Area LIECHTENSTEIN and NORWAY, as well as GEORGIA, ANDORRA and SAN MARINO align themselves with this statement.

*Croatia and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

** Iceland continues to be a member of the EFTA and the European Economic Area.