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STATEMENT BY THE EUROPEAN UNION AT THE 1337th MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL

30 September 2021

On the statement by the Co-Chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group

The European Union commends the statement by the Co-Chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group issued on 24 September. It also welcomes the meeting between the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Armenia and Azerbaijan under the aegis of the three Co-Chairs on 23 September on the margins of 76th session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York. It applauds this first direct exchange between the two Ministers since November 2020, which marks a first positive and important step towards re-establishing substantive dialogue between the parties. It actively encourages them to continue this dialogue between the Ministers for Foreign Affairs in the coming weeks, as suggested by the Co-Chairs.

The European Union once again emphasizes the importance of a new commitment by the parties to the peace process through direct dialogue, with a view to enhancing security, stability and prosperity in the region. This dialogue should be aimed at joint agreement, under the auspices of the Co-Chairs, on the various parameters for implementation in the long term of a set of measures for stabilization, rehabilitation and the restoral of trust. At the same time, the European Union continues to appeal to the parties to respect commitments undertaken and to demonstrate the utmost restraint in words and deeds. It urges them to take all necessary measures to prevent any risk of escalation and to commit themselves again to deal sincerely with the most urgent issues, including the release of all prisoners of war and other detainees. In that regard, it is willing to provide its expertise, if the parties so wish, and to support the implementation of confidence-building measures.

The European Union will continue to promote a lasting and comprehensive settlement to the conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh and reiterates its full support for the mediation format of the Minsk Group and its Co-Chairs as a means of achieving a final settlement and of finding comprehensive solutions to all the remaining problems linked to or resulting from the conflict, in accordance with the mandate of the Co-Chairs. It is willing to contribute to this, notably through the European Union Special Representative for the South Caucasus, Toivo Klaar, and remains for its part fully committed to efforts aimed at establishing lasting peace and promoting prosperous development in the region, which it would welcome. It also reaffirms its support for the Personal Representative of the Chairperson-in-Office and his team, whose work is of vital importance to the Co-Chairs of the Minsk Group.

The candidate countries the Republic of North Macedonia¹, Montenegro¹ and Albania¹, the country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate Bosnia and Herzegovina, the European

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

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.