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auprès de l'OSCE

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**EU STATEMENT IN RESPONSE TO THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF BOSNIA  
AND HERZEGOVINA, H.E. Dr. MLADEN IVANIC**

The EU is very pleased to welcome the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina, H.E. Dr. Mladen Ivanic, at this occasion and in particular during this work-intensive period and ahead of some key decisions for the future of his country. We would also like to thank him for his comprehensive presentation outlining the current status of Bosnia and Herzegovina's integration process into Euro-Atlantic institutions.

The EU recalls its comprehensive engagement in Bosnia and Herzegovina, including through its military operations, the EU Police Mission, its EU Special Representative and the activities of the European Commission.

We take note with interest of his report and congratulate the authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina for the reforms undertaken and the progress achieved so far towards acceding to NATO's Partnership for Peace (PfP) Programme and fulfilling the conditions for starting negotiations on a Stabilisation and Association Agreement with the European Union.

At the same time, we encourage the authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina to keep up this momentum so that the criteria for Bosnia and Herzegovina's further integration into the EU and the Partnership for Peace are met, including further steps towards full ICTY cooperation and the restructuring of the police on the basis of the recommendations of the Police Restructuring Commission.

The EU will continue to assist the authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina on their road towards EU membership. As the recent examples involving countries in the region have shown, we gauge the progress of reform carefully taking into account the specific tasks each country has completed. In the crucial days and weeks ahead the EU will pay close attention to how the authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina will handle these key tasks ahead. In this context, the EU reiterates that the fulfilment of Council of Europe post accession commitments is also an important precondition for the development of closer relations with the EU.

Finally, we would also like to use this opportunity to thank and commend Ambassador Davidson, Head of the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina, and his team for their

significant contribution on the ground to ensure sustainable peace and further democratic reforms in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The OSCE Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina will remain a valuable partner in assisting in the reform process.

The Candidate Countries Bulgaria, Romania, Turkey and Croatia<sup>1</sup> align themselves with this statement.

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<sup>1</sup>Croatia continues to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process