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EU statement on the High-Level Conference on Tolerance and Discrimination in Astana

The EU would like to present its gratitude to Kazakhstan for her hospitality and very good organisation of the High-Level Conference on Tolerance and Discrimination in Astana. We would also like to thank ODIHR for its role in making this conference possible.

We highly welcome the advice and proposals put forward by the many NGOs which took part in the conference. Their contributions are a valuable part of OSCE events.

The conference showed we need to pursue and strengthen our efforts in order to reach our goal of eradicating all forms of discrimination.

The EU in particular appreciated the many interventions referring to the need to combat discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

The EU thanks the Chairperson-in-Office for his concluding document entitled "Astana Declaration". We would like to note, however, that while this declaration highlights many crucial and valuable points, and lays out

some of the key challenges in the field of tolerance and non-discrimination, it does not reflect the full range of EU views on this issue.

The EU stands ready to work together with the OSCE, the Council of Europe and the United Nations to move beyond tolerance and non-discrimination to attain mutual respect and understanding.

The candidate countries CROATIA*, the FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA* and ICELAND, the countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate countries MONTENEGRO and SERBIA, the European Free Trade Association countries and members of the European Economic Area LIECHTENSTEIN and NORWAY align themselves with this statement.

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