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**JOINT STATEMENT BY
THE HEADS OF DELEGATIONS OF THE
REPUBLIC OF BELARUS, THE REPUBLIC OF KAZAKHSTAN,
THE KYRGYZ REPUBLIC, THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION AND THE REPUBLIC
OF TAJIKISTAN AT THE CLOSING SESSION OF THE THIRTIETH MEETING
OF THE OSCE MINISTERIAL COUNCIL**

Skopje, 1 December 2023

On the current security situation in the OSCE area

Reaffirming the commitment to the development of friendly, equal and mutually beneficial inter-State relations in the Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian area and to the idea of establishing a free, equitable, democratic, common and indivisible Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian security community, rooted in agreed principles, shared commitments and common goals,

Emphasizing the need to preserve the central co-ordinating role of the United Nations in inter-State relations and further strengthen the primary role of the United Nations Security Council in maintaining international peace and security and in facilitating the resolution of international problems,

Adhering to the objectives and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, the Helsinki Final Act, the Astana Commemorative Declaration and other consensus documents of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe,

Guided by the common objective of ensuring the harmonious coexistence of different peoples and ethnic, religious and linguistic groups in the Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian area, and recognizing their indisputable right to civilizational, cultural, political, religious and ideological diversity and identity,

In view of the inadmissibility of a policy of exceptionalism, domination, the imposition on peoples of cultural and value paradigms that are alien to them, and given also the inadmissibility of interference in the internal affairs of sovereign States,

Guided by the need to uphold and respect the fundamental principle of equal and indivisible security whereby no State, group of States or organization may have pre-eminent responsibility for maintaining peace and stability or may strengthen its security at the expense of the security of others,

We affirm the importance of preserving the OSCE as a regional forum operating on the basis of the consensus rule and the principle of the sovereign equality of States, in the interests of strengthening security and developing co-operation among participating States.

We are convinced of the need to enhance the effectiveness of the OSCE, to search for unifying themes and to prevent double standards and geographical and thematic imbalances in its activities.

We believe it is important to observe the Rules of Procedure and other decisions of the OSCE decision-making bodies and to adhere to the principles of impartiality, transparency and accountability.

We advocate the promotion of a positive agenda, openness to discussing the most difficult issues and challenges, and a commitment to non-ideological pragmatic dialogue to solve common security problems, which in particular involves:

- Joining efforts to counter contemporary transnational challenges and threats on an equal basis, primarily international terrorism and extremism, organized crime, illegal migration, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, threats to the security of information and communication technologies, illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons, drug trafficking and trafficking in human beings;
- Developing mutually beneficial co-operation in addressing economic and environmental challenges in the OSCE area, expanding co-operation, free from protectionism and discrimination, in the fields of transport, energy, trade, investment, education, public health, agriculture and tourism, strengthening connectivity, and ensuring the social, economic and cultural rights of citizens;
- Respecting the diverse civilizational, cultural and historical backgrounds of OSCE participating States;
- Protecting the human rights and fundamental freedoms proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and unconditionally respecting the ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious identity of national minorities and other ethnic groups;
- Reinvigorating the fight against all forms of discrimination, including discrimination on the basis of race, ethnicity, language, gender and religion, in sports, culture, education and science, and against the ideology of the superiority of one race, religion or nationality over others and manifestations of anti-Semitism, Christianophobia, Islamophobia and xenophobia, aggressive nationalism and neo-Nazism;
- Preserving and promoting freedom of movement of citizens and human contacts, free circulation of goods and capital without ideological and political dividing lines; stimulating the creation of an open, equitable and non-discriminatory environment for development without protectionism, unilateral sanctions and other types of pressure;
- Joining efforts to maintain an open and secure global information space based on the principles of pluralism and freedom of expression, and free from hate speech and the manipulation of public opinion.

The present statement remains open for alignment by other OSCE participating States and Partners for Co-operation.

I request that the text of this joint statement be attached to the journal of the closing session of the Ministerial Council.