

PC.DEL/668/13

11 July 2013

ENGLISH

Original: FRENCH

## **STATEMENT BY THE EUROPEAN UNION AT THE 960th MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

Vienna, 11 July 2013

### **Regarding the anniversary of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe**

The European Union and its Member States wish to remind delegates, as the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office did a few days ago, that we are celebrating a significant anniversary this week.

The 7 July 1973 saw the conclusion in Helsinki of Stage I of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, which later evolved into the OSCE as we know it today. A few weeks later, in September 1973, the negotiators came together in Geneva to tackle the task of drafting of what, after two years of work, would become the Helsinki Final Act.

Certainly, this founding process unfolded in an environment that was very different from today. However, the qualities that enabled 35 ministers for foreign affairs to agree on the “Blue Book” are the qualities we still need today to advance on the course they set.

We must have a vision of the future. The citizens of our States on whose behalf we are acting here have rights, aspirations and hopes, and beyond our differences we must be guided by these concerns.

Furthermore, we need courage. The progress our fellow citizens expect will be achieved only at the cost of political developments which will sometimes be presented as impossible, as they seemed to be before Helsinki.

Finally, we must engage sincerely in dialogue. Our Organization was born out of a need for dialogue, and today more than ever it is incumbent on us to make it a place of engagement.

Mr. Chairperson, dear colleagues, the European Union is prepared to work in this spirit.

The candidate countries the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia<sup>1</sup>, Montenegro<sup>1</sup>, Iceland<sup>2</sup> and Serbia<sup>1</sup>, the countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate countries Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina, the European Free Trade Association country Norway, as well as the Republic of Moldavia, Armenia, Andorra and San Marino, align themselves with this statement.

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1 The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

2 Iceland continues to be a member of the European Free Trade Association.