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EU statement in view of the Almaty Informal Ministerial

The EU thanks the Chairman in office and the Secretariat for the information provided so far about the organisation of the Ministerial. The EU and its Member States will be well represented at the Ministerial and expects it to be an important political gathering which needs focused objectives in order to be effective. So let me focus also on the substance of the Ministerial meeting, in the light of its importance for its possible follow up.

Mr Chairman,

At the joint FSC-PC meeting last week, the EU set out a series of concrete proposals for the way ahead. Let me again recall the need to validate the continued role and importance of the Corfu Process for setting in motion a broad-ranging and open debate on issues of key importance to all OSCE participating States, but also for re-vitalising the OSCE as an organisation.

Furthermore, we need to keep in mind our overarching goal, namely to rebuild trust and confidence in order to strengthen the security in and of Europe. To achieve this, we need to move forward towards a reinforced security community, which would be based on an OSCE +, entailing:

- A stronger commitment to the OSCE by all participating States,
- An improved implementation and better use of our comprehensive OSCE acquis,
- An updating of the OSCE commitments in key areas of strategic importance,
- A better OSCE contribution to security in our common space.

The EU continues to stress the need to narrow down our priorities. We all know that having more than a very limited number of priorities amounts to having no priorities at all.

And again, the EU believes that there are four areas that need to be prioritised and dealt with in their full scope:

- First, strengthening of OSCE capabilities in all three dimensions to promote early warning, conflict prevention and resolution, crisis management and post-conflict rehabilitation, including in relation to protracted conflicts. As appropriate, updated and new mechanisms. Most important: to strengthen the generic capabilities of the OSCE institutions. As regards the protracted conflicts, we will consider tangible progress on these a key litmus test of the good will of partners.
- Second, strengthening implementation and better follow-up of OSCE norms, principles and commitments (including updating them as necessary). There should be a particular focus on the human dimension commitments, with the emphasis on human rights and fundamental freedoms, including freedom of the media. Again, both in substance and from a general political perspective it will be very important for our ministers to be able to demonstrate real OSCE

action in the human dimension in its full scope. Tolerance and nondiscrimination are important issues but the EU cannot agree to limit our focus on this area.

- Third, strengthening the conventional arms control framework, including confidence and security building measures (such as an updated VD 99). Progress on CFE is also of utmost importance. Again it will be difficult for ministers to argue that they have addressed key issues of importance in the OSCE area if this significant vector is ignored.
- And fourth, increased attention to transnational threats in all three OSCE dimensions. We wish to utilise more strategically and display more clearly the contribution that the OSCE can give, including in reviewing its Maastricht strategy. This is a discussion involving threats stemming from Afghanistan, the issue of drugs as just discussed in an important OSCE conference, but also issues relating to cyber security and other virtual threats.

Let me again stress that we need to focus not only on implementation but also on strengthening commitments. For this reason, it is important to focus concretely on how to enable the OSCE institutions to further enhance their input.

Mr Chairman,

When discussing the way forward, let me again reaffirm the strategic vision of a security community towards which we are striving. And again the imperative of mobilising the sufficient political will to actually achieve this.

In order to do so, we believe that we need to define an integrated action plan, which would set out what we should focus our efforts on in the months and years to come. I repeat that we are not willing to refer proposals to decision-making bodies without a clear determination of the priorities and timeline for negotiations and decisions. This means concretely that we will need to keep regular Corfu ambassadorial meetings as a strategic steering tool here in Vienna.

In Almaty, our Ministers should give us clear guidance on how to take the dialogue forward, through the rest of the year and beyond. In this, we see the proposed Summit as an integrated part and we take note of the Chairmanship's perception paper of 5 July distributed under reference CIO.GAL/118/10. If we can agree on a sufficiently substantial agenda for a Summit, it can play an important role in terms of furthering the objectives of the Corfu Process and mobilising the political will required to move forward. At the Summit, an action plan could then be agreed on. We need to focus on this task and Ministers should hopefully be in a position to mandate us to do just that, and this should be reflected in a Chairmanship's perception paper at the end of the Almaty meeting.

Mr Chairman,

Let me stress again in this context the obvious topical significance, both in substance and from a political perspective, for the OSCE to address appropriately the crisis in Kyrgyzstan. In Almaty, we should be guided by the idea that the entire process we are going through aims at perfecting and further building the capacities to handle potential or emerging crises.

The candidate countries TURKEY, CROATIA*, the FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA* and ICELAND, the countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate countries ALBANIA, BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA, MONTENEGRO and SERBIA, the European Free Trade Association countries and members of the European Economic Area LIECHTENSTEIN and NORWAY, as well as the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA, GEORGIA, ANDORRA and SAN MARINO align themselves with this statement.

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