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EUROPEAN UNION

**OSCE Permanent Council Nr 832
Vienna, 28 October 2010**

EU statement on the Geneva discussions of 14 October 2010

The European Union reiterates its strong support for the Geneva discussions, the latest round of which took place on 14 October. Despite the persistence of difficulties and differences amongst participants, we consider the continuation of the Geneva discussions to be of utmost importance. They provide the only forum in which all sides are represented and three international actors – the European Union, the OSCE and the United Nations – work in close co-operation for the security and stability of the region. We support the OSCE's active participation in the meetings, in which good use can be made of its extensive cross-dimensional experience.

The EU welcomes the fact that during this round of discussions the importance of fully functioning Incident Prevention and Response Mechanisms was acknowledged by the participants, and that agreement could be registered on the resumption of the Ergneti / Dvani Incident Prevention and Response Mechanisms in the near future. The EU attaches great value to both Incident Prevention and Response Mechanisms, as important confidence building measures.

We are also pleased that in the second working group on humanitarian issues, an initiative was welcomed to launch a series of water projects proposed by the OSCE and to be financed by the EU. We encourage all participants to work

towards their implementation. As co-Chair, the EU regrets the decision of some participants not to attend this working group session. Full contribution by all participants is essential for confidence building and resolution of immediate humanitarian problems.

The EU notes that 16 December 2010 has been set as the date for the next round of consultations and is looking forward to contribute to it.

The situation in Georgia, including its Abkhaz and South Ossetian regions, remains of concern to the EU. We reiterate our firm support for the security and stability of Georgia, based on full respect for the principles of independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity recognized by international law.

We welcome the removal of the Russian checkpoint in Perevi, Georgia, which was announced during this round of Geneva Discussions, and see it as a positive development on the ground. We look forward to further progress towards the full implementation of the EU-brokered Six Point Agreement of 12 August 2008 and its Implementing Measures of 8 September 2008, including the withdrawal of all military forces to the positions held prior to the outbreak of hostilities. We also reiterate our call for unhindered access for the European Union Monitoring Mission to the Georgian regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia and unhindered access for humanitarian organisations, in particular to the South Ossetian region.

The EU remains convinced of the urgent need for a meaningful cross-dimensional OSCE presence throughout Georgia, in particular for the benefit of the civilian population, including a robust monitoring capacity able to operate unhindered across the administrative boundary lines. We reiterate our call to the Chairmanship-in-Office to intensify its efforts to bring the OSCE back to Georgia as soon as possible. We believe that in view of the upcoming Astana Summit tangible progress in this regard can be made.

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 UKRAINE and the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA align themselves with this statement.

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

** Iceland continues to be a member of the EFTA and the European Economic Area.