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STATEMENT BY THE EUROPEAN UNION AT THE 1328th MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL

5 August 2021

On the statement by the Co-Chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group

The European Union shares the concerns expressed by the Minsk Group Co-Chairs in their statement of 29 July regarding the numerous recent clashes along the border between Armenia and Azerbaijan. It regrets the loss of life and the injuries they have caused.

In view of the increase in incidents in recent weeks, it is essential to de-escalate the situation without delay. The European Union urges the parties to show the utmost restraint and to refrain from any provocation. It calls on them to take the necessary steps to reduce tensions and prevent any risk of escalation and invites them to fully implement the commitments they have undertaken in good faith.

The European Union once again echoes the call by the Minsk Group Co-Chairs to the parties to resume high-level dialogue at the earliest opportunity under their aegis and to agree together the various parameters for implementation in the long term of a set of measures for stabilization, rehabilitation and restoral of trust.

In that connection, the European Union reiterates its full support for the mediation format of the Minsk Group and its Co-Chairs for arriving at a final comprehensive and lasting settlement. It stands ready to contribute to this, also through the European Union Special Representative for the South Caucasus. It recalls that it is willing to provide its expertise and to offer its assistance with the delimitation and demarcation of the borders and to support the necessary confidence-building measures so as to make progress towards lasting peace and prosperity in the South Caucasus. The European Union also reiterates its support for the Special Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office and remains for its part fully committed to efforts aimed at establishing lasting peace and promoting prosperous development in the region.

In conclusion, the European Union would like to thank Ambassador Igor Popov for the commitment and determination he has shown since 2010 in seeking a negotiated, comprehensive and lasting solution to the conflict. It welcomes the appointment of Ambassador Igor Khovaev and wishes him every success in his new functions.

The candidate countries the Republic of North Macedonia¹, Montenegro¹, Serbia¹ and Albania¹, the European Free Trade Association countries and members of the European Economic Area Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, as well as Andorra and San Marino, align themselves with this statement.

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