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Statement by Ireland announcing the appointment of three Personal Representatives of the Irish Chair-in-Office on promoting tolerance and non-discrimination

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Thank you Mr Chairman for the floor,

Ireland is pleased to inform delegations that the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, Mr. Eamon Gilmore, as incoming Chair-in-Office, intends to appoint three personal representatives to continue the important work of the OSCE in promoting tolerance and non-discrimination.

Ambassador Adil Akhmetov will serve as Personal Representative of the Chair-in-Office on Combating Intolerance and Discrimination against Muslims.

Rabbi Andrew Baker will serve as Personal Representative of the Chair-in-Office on Combating Anti-Semitism.

Mrs. Justice Catherine McGuinness will serve as Personal Representative of the OSCE Chair-in-Office on Combating Racism, Xenophobia and Discrimination, also focusing on Intolerance and Discrimination against Christians and Members of Other Religions. Mrs. Justice McGuinness is a retired judge of the Supreme Court of Ireland, a former member of Seanad Éireann, the upper house of the Irish Parliament, and a former Chairperson of the Employment Equality Agency. She has served in an advisory capacity to the General Synod of the Church of Ireland, part of the worldwide Anglican Communion. She is also an honorary patron of the Holocaust Education Trust of Ireland.

Each of the appointees has a strong commitment to tolerance and non-discrimination issues. They will bring valuable expertise to their role and will make an important contribution to the ongoing work of our organisation on promoting tolerance and non-discrimination.

Ireland looks forward to continued close cooperation with delegations in advancing this important agenda during 2012.

Thank you.