



PERMANENT REPRESENTATION OF PORTUGAL
TO THE OSCE

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Portuguese Presidency of the Council of the European Union

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Statement of the European Union on the Signature of a SAA and Interim Agreement with Montenegro

The European Union would like to draw your attention to Council Conclusions issued by the General Affairs and External Relations Council of the European Union on Monday 15 October on the signature of a Stabilisation and Association Agreement and of an Interim Agreement with Montenegro.

Begin quote: “The Council welcomed the signature of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement and of the Interim Agreement with Montenegro as an important step on the country’s path towards the EU. It looked forward to intensifying co-operation with Montenegro through the comprehensive framework offered by these Agreements and the other mechanisms of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

The Council highlighted the importance of Montenegro establishing a sustained and effective track record in implementing these Agreements. It encouraged Montenegro to push ahead with its reform agenda and called on all political forces to unite their efforts to accelerate that process. It urged Montenegro to intensify its efforts on the priorities set out in the European Partnership. In particular, it stressed the importance of further determined action and sustained progress in strengthening administrative capacity and in the area of rule of law, including the fight

against organised crime and corruption, as well as the establishment of an independent and accountable judiciary.

The Council also underlined the importance to adopt, in a timely way and in a spirit of consensus, a Constitution that complies with international standards and the recommendations of the Council of Europe and its Venice Commission.” *End of quote*

The Candidate Countries Turkey, Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*, the Countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia, EFTA country Norway, member of the European Economic Area, 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.