

25th Meeting of the OSCE Ministerial Council**Milan****6-7 December 2018**

Statement on the 70th anniversary of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide

I have honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the EU and its Member States and Armenia, Azerbaijan, Canada, Georgia, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Montenegro, San Marino, the Republic of Serbia, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Ukraine and the United States of America.

In two days, on December 9, we will mark the 70th anniversary of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide.

We consider that the 70th anniversary of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide provides an important opportunity for OSCE participating states and the international community to reaffirm the significance of the Convention and to continue their efforts to prevent and punish the crime of genocide.

We acknowledge that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted on the next day on December 10, 1948 recognized the inherent dignity and the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family as the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world and we also reiterate relevant commitments enshrined in the Helsinki Final Act.

We express our appreciation to all participating States that have ratified or acceded to the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, and in particular to those States that have done so since the adoption by the OSCE Ministerial Declaration 3/08 of 5 December 2008.

We further call upon the State-Parties to increase and intensify their activities aimed at the full implementation of their obligations under the Convention.

We note that in adopting the Convention, the United Nations recognized that the crime of genocide was an odious scourge which had inflicted great losses on humanity and was convinced that international co-operation was required to facilitate the speedy prevention and punishment of the crime of genocide.

We recognize that genocide is one of the most serious crimes under international law which is condemned by international community as a whole and can never be justified.

We stress the importance of enhanced international cooperation, including through the United Nations system and regional organizations and arrangements, aimed at fostering the principles enshrined in the Convention.

We welcome the proclamation by the United Nations General Assembly of 9 December as the International Day of Commemoration and Dignity of the Victims of the Crime of Genocide and the Prevention of This Crime.

We emphasize the important role that education, including human rights education, can play in genocide prevention, and further encourage Governments to promote, educational programmes and projects that contribute to the prevention of genocide.

Thank you