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## **STATEMENT BY THE EUROPEAN UNION AT THE 1288th MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

5 November 2020

### **On the situation in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict zone**

The European Union welcomes the negotiation meeting between the parties held in Geneva on 30 October under the auspices of the Co-Chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group. It takes good note of the measures agreed on at that meeting and welcomes most particularly the announcements made on humanitarian matters – above all, the parties’ commitment to “not deliberately target civilian populations or non-military objects in accordance with international humanitarian law”. In that regard, the European Union stresses the importance of giving immediate effect to the measures announced and reiterates that it is essential that they be strictly and unconditionally respected.

The European Union is likewise gratified by the parties’ willingness to actively engage in the implementation of the measures agreed on previously with regard to the recovery and exchange of the remains of soldiers killed in action, and to provide, to that end, the necessary safety guarantees for field-based interventions by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the Personal Representative of the Chairperson-in-Office. Moreover, the European Union takes positive note of the fact that the parties agreed to provide the ICRC and the Personal Representative with a list of currently detained prisoners of war within one week.

While noting the intensification of discussions on the modalities of a possible ceasefire verification mechanism, the European Union once again exhorts the parties to put an end to the armed clashes, and expresses its deep concern over the continuation of the fighting.

The European Union reaffirms its full support for the work of the Co-Chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group in their search for a negotiated political solution to the conflict. It stands ready to further support their initiatives and also those of the Personal Representative of the Chairperson-in-Office, and remains for its part wholly committed to efforts to establish lasting peace in the region.

The candidate countries the Republic of North Macedonia<sup>1</sup>, Montenegro<sup>1</sup>, Serbia<sup>1</sup> and Albania<sup>1</sup>, the European Free Trade Association countries and members of the European Economic Area Iceland and Liechtenstein, as well as Moldova, Andorra and San Marino, align themselves with this statement.

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