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**STATEMENT BY THE FRENCH DELEGATION,
SPEAKING ON BEHALF OF THE EUROPEAN UNION AND OF
FRANCE, AT THE REINFORCED MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

14 November 2008

**On the priorities of the European Union for the
Helsinki meeting of the Ministerial Council**

Mr. Chairman,
Mr. Secretary General,
Distinguished Ambassadors,

The European Union wishes first of all to thank the Chairmanship for its efforts and its proposals. We appreciate this opportunity to work together on the preparations for the Helsinki meeting of the Ministerial Council on 4 and 5 December 2008.

I should like on this occasion to recall our priorities and expectations for this important meeting.

The European Union supports the principle of a balanced ministerial declaration, directed toward the future of the OSCE and consonant with our shared values and all the principles, commitments and decisions of the OSCE. We thank the Chairmanship for its welcome proposals to this end.

The lunch to take place on 4 December could provide the opportunity for a thorough exchange of views on European security, including the question of “frozen conflicts”. The European Union is ready to participate in such an exchange, on the basis of its own values.

The European Union considers it important that the Ministerial Council should identify ways of advancing towards solutions to the “frozen conflicts”. We are in favour of strong regional declarations on Nagorno-Karabakh and the Republic of Moldova. We recall on this occasion our attachment to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Georgia within its internationally recognized borders, in accordance with the Helsinki Final Act. We also wish to see the OSCE Mission to Georgia enabled to continue to operate on the basis of its present mandate.

In the politico-military dimension, the European Union reiterates its full support for the draft decisions proposed by the Chairmanship on small arms and light weapons and on stockpiles of conventional ammunition. We should also like to see a decision concerning

border security and management adopted on the basis of the draft proposed by the Chairmanship, and we are in favour of a decision on combating terrorism.

In the economic and environmental dimension, the European Union would attach great importance to the adoption of a ministerial decision on the security implications of climate change. It would be ready to take part in a possible debate during 2009 on the future course of activities in this dimension.

In the human dimension, the adoption of a substantial declaration on the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is a priority for the European Union. We also fully support the Chairmanship's draft on Roma and Sinti and the draft decision on trafficking in human beings. We are likewise very interested in the draft decision on the rule of law proposed by Austria, Belgium, Germany and Hungary, and in a draft decision on the Alliance of Civilizations.

Lastly, the European Union reiterates its support for the adoption of a document defining the legal status of the OSCE.

The candidate countries Turkey, Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*, the countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate countries Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia and the European Free Trade Association country and member of the European Economic Area Iceland align themselves with this statement.

Speaking now on behalf of my own country, I should like to draw your attention to the proposal made by the President of the French Republic to President Medvedev on 8 October for the organization, before the end of 2009, of an OSCE summit to discuss the security of Europe.

The OSCE framework offers many advantages in this connection:

- It is the only forum which brings together all those concerned with the problem of pan-European security on an equal footing;
- It thus enables the fact that the security of our continent rests on a strong transatlantic link to be taken into account;
- It also offers the possibility of adopting a broad approach, embracing security arrangements but also values and principles to which we are all attached such as democracy, human rights and respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity;
- Finally, it belongs among the instruments and institutions giving expression to and protecting our security.

The ministerial lunch on 4 December will provide an opportunity for an exchange of views, assessments and proposals in relation to this initiative.

Thank you for your attention.

* Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.