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## **STATEMENT BY THE EUROPEAN UNION AT THE 832nd MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

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### **Regarding trafficking in human beings**

Trafficking in human beings, on whatever grounds, is a fundamental violation of human rights and fundamental freedoms. The European Union (EU) has taken strong measures to protect victims of trafficking and to prevent and combat this phenomenon, notably by strengthening police and judicial co-operation between its Member States. Its anti-trafficking activities are also part of a wider set of measures to combat violence, sex tourism and child pornography.

The fourth European Day against Human Trafficking took place on 18 and 19 October in Brussels on the theme “Towards a multidisciplinary approach to prevention of trafficking in human beings, prosecution of traffickers and protection of victims” and was attended by politicians, representatives of the public sector and civil society from all EU Member States and OSCE Special Representative Maria Grazia Giammarinaro.

Items under discussion included legal prosecution, particularly co-operation in financial investigations, co-operation in the identification and protection of victims, partnership with the private sector and preventive awareness-raising campaigns. The discussion confirmed the need for a comprehensive and balanced approach based on three pillars: prevention, prosecution and protection of victims. The European Union tirelessly urges the OSCE to pursue this approach. The participants also took note of the transnational nature of this form of crime, which Ms. Giammarinaro clearly outlined in her speech on 29 September in Moscow and which was once again emphasized here last week during the Review Conference.

The OSCE has a very complete set of commitments for combating trafficking in human beings including the 2003 Action Plan, which established a comprehensive framework for the entire Organization.

For the European Union, the Astana Summit offers an opportunity for the participating States to reaffirm their commitments with a view to galvanizing the political will at the highest level to implement these commitments in full.

Overall the EU has repeated unceasingly during the last few months that the implementation and follow-up of commitments is crucial for stability and security in the OSCE area. It would thus be appropriate to reaffirm the fundamental values of dignity and

personal integrity during the Astana Summit and for us to give an undertaking there to respect them fully, particularly with regard to combating trafficking in human beings.

In conclusion, the European Union would like to pay tribute to the work of Special Representative Maria Grazia Giammarinaro and her staff.

The candidate countries Turkey, Croatia<sup>1</sup>, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia<sup>1</sup> and Iceland<sup>2</sup>, the Stabilisation and Association Process countries and potential candidate countries Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia, the European Free Trade Association countries and members of the European Economic Area Liechtenstein and Norway, as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, Armenia, Georgia, Andorra and San Marino align themselves with this statement.

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

2 Iceland continues to be a member of the European Free Trade Association and the European Economic Area.