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**STATEMENT BY
THE EUROPEAN UNION AT THE 1352nd MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

27 January 2022

On the occasion of International Holocaust Remembrance Day

The European Union thanks Kathrin Meyer sincerely for her address. As a Permanent International Partner of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA), we welcome her commitment and recall the ministerial declaration adopted in Brussels in 2020, 20 years after the founding Stockholm Declaration.

On the occasion of the 77th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz and the International Holocaust Remembrance Day, and 80 years after the infamous Wannsee conference, which set in motion the Holocaust, we thank the IHRA for its vital work in ensuring that the truth about the Shoah is never forgotten, obscured or distorted. Let us not forget that the Nazi regime and its sympathizers, its fascist and nationalist partners and the other collaborators who took part in these unprecedented crimes in the history of humanity attempted to systematically exterminate the Jewish people and other groups on the basis of their ethnic origins, beliefs or sexual orientation.

With the pandemic making it more difficult for this essential work of remembrance to be carried out, we welcome the efforts by civil society organizations to adapt and invent new ways of communicating history.

At a time when anti-Semitism is gaining strength and when conspiracy theories and attacks on Jews and the memory of the Shoah are spreading, particularly in the context of the pandemic, we are more than ever duty-bound to remember, both individually and collectively. Anti-Semitic acts are unjustifiable and run counter to our fundamental values of the equality of all and combating discrimination of any kind. We have a duty all the more to remain vigilant and to act resolutely against all forms of anti-Semitism, racism and discrimination, online or offline. We are thus planning to strengthen our legal arsenal to combat all tendencies in that direction, particularly in digital services.

The European Union has always opposed and continues to speak out against all forms of anti-Semitism, including attempts to legitimize, justify or trivialize the Holocaust. Last October, the European Commission adopted the first strategy on combating anti-Semitism and fostering Jewish life. This strategy has three thrusts, the third of which is devoted specifically to fostering education, research and Holocaust remembrance.

In that regard, we welcome the organization by the Polish Chairmanship of a conference in Warsaw in early February on combating anti-Semitism in the OSCE area, and the holding last October of the Malmö International Forum on Holocaust Remembrance and Combating Antisemitism.

Over the years, the OSCE has developed a significant body of commitments to combat anti-Semitism. They form part of the wider framework of OSCE commitments in the fight against all forms of intolerance and discrimination in the context of promoting the rule of law and universal respect for human rights fundamental freedoms.

The work of the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights in combating anti-Semitism, intolerance and hate crimes, whatever their motives, is a valuable tool available to the participating States. We welcome the work carried out within its programme “Words into Action to Address Anti-Semitism”.

We also take this opportunity to recall that the non-legally binding working definition of anti-Semitism adopted by the IHRA in Bucharest in 2016 is a useful instrument for combating anti-Semitism. We take note of the adoption by the IHRA in 2020 of a non-legally binding definition of anti-Gypsyism/anti-Roma discrimination, which could also play a useful role in combating racism and discrimination.

Finally, allow me to assure you, Ms. Meyer, and also the Greek Chairmanship of the IHRA and the Swedish Chairmanship starting in March, of the determined support of the European Union at your side to ensure that the memory of the Shoah and its victims is never forgotten but continues to live in us so as to help us build a world of peace and respect for all.

The candidate countries the Republic of North Macedonia¹, Montenegro¹, Serbia¹ and Albania¹, the country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate Bosnia and Herzegovina, the European Free Trade Association countries and members of the European Economic Area Iceland and Liechtenstein, as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, Georgia, Andorra, Monaco and San Marino, align themselves with this statement.

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