

Minsk Group co-chairs, personal representative of chairperson in office and high level planning group: UK statement

Thank you Mr Chair.

The United Kingdom joins our colleagues in welcoming the Minsk Group Co-Chairs; Mr. Schofer, Ambassador Visconti and Ambassador Popov. We also welcome the Personal Representative of the Chairperson in Office, Ambassador Kasprzyk and the Head of the High Level Planning Group, Lieutenant Colonel Mustafaraj.

The United Kingdom express full support for all of your work over the last 12 months, including throughout the recent military action and also in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. Your unparalleled efforts, as detailed in your recent reports, serve as a timely reminder of the efforts of the Minsk Group Co-Chairs. It is clear, the Minsk Group should remain the primary format through which any final settlement should be reached.

The renewal of active hostilities in recent months has been deeply concerning. The United Kingdom reaffirms its support for the deal agreed between the Governments of Armenia and Azerbaijan which has prevented further loss of life.

The United Kingdom welcomes the report by Ambassador Kasprzyk. In particular we note the efforts to continue providing mediation support in order build confidence between the parties earlier this year despite the disruption of COVID-19. We are grateful for the assessment of the current situation on the ground and echo the emphasis on the importance of ensuring the respectful return of the remains of the deceased. Keeping neutral OSCE communication channels open has never been more important.

Ambassador Kasprzyk's report has made clear the need for the OSCE to remain fully engaged on this file and reinforces the value of an OSCE presence in the region. The United Kingdom remains ready to provide support to Ambassador Kasprzyk and the Co-Chairs going forwards.

The United Kingdom also appreciates the efforts by Lieutenant Colonel Mustafaraj and the HLPG. We welcome your cooperation with the Co-Chairs and Ambassador Kasprzyk, as well as your engagement with relevant international organisations.

To conclude, the United Kingdom once again reaffirms its full support for the Co-Chairs of France, the United States and Russia and urges all Minsk Group members to provide their full support for their efforts. The Minsk Group and the OSCE have a vital role to play in the coming months and we encourage full

engagement between the Co-Chairs and Ambassador Kasprzyk and Lieutenant Colonel Mustafaraj. The United Kingdom stands ready to assist, however necessary, and is committed to providing support for the humanitarian response and ongoing conflict resolution efforts.