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### **MINISTERIAL STATEMENT**

We welcome the joint statement of 1 December of Foreign Minister Lavrov, Foreign Minister Kouchner, and Deputy Secretary Steinberg of the Minsk Group Co-Chair countries and the Azerbaijani Foreign Minister Mammadyarov and Armenian Foreign Minister Nalbandian. We urge the parties to sustain the positive dynamic of the negotiations and strongly support their commitment to finalize the Basic Principles on the peaceful settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, based on the Madrid Document in order to begin drafting a comprehensive peace agreement in good faith and without delay. The Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to work intensively to resolve the remaining issues, to reach an agreement based, in particular, upon the principles of the Helsinki Final Act of Non-Use of Force or Threat of Force, Territorial Integrity, and the Equal Rights and Self-Determination of Peoples. We are convinced there is today a real opportunity to build a future of peace, stability, and prosperity for the entire region.