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Greece's statement delivered
by H.E. Ambassador Aglaia Balta,
Permanent Representative of Greece to the United Nations, New York

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I warmly welcome the presence of the Chairman of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina, H.E. Mr. Denis Bećirović, as well as of the representatives of Croatia, Serbia and the European Union.

First of all, let me extend our deepest condolences to the victims, families, to all EUFOR personnel, and to the Government of Italy for the fatal helicopter crash near the settlement of Gorice. We honour their courage, service and dedication.

Greece welcomes today's unanimous adoption by the Council of resolution 2834, renewing the authorization of the European Union Force in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Operation ALTHEA, for a further period of 12 months. We thank the United Kingdom for facilitating this year's process.

EUFOR ALTHEA is vital in supporting the implementation of the Dayton Peace Agreement and maintaining a safe and secure environment in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

We recognize the importance of coordination with competent authorities, together with the need for transparency and sustained engagement with local communities, in building trust and ensuring the Operation's continued effectiveness. Greece has contributed to EUFOR ALTHEA since its launch in 2004, reflecting our longstanding commitment to peace, stability and security in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the wider region.

The Dayton Peace Agreement remains the cornerstone of peace and stability in the country. Greece reiterates its unwavering support for the sovereignty, territorial integrity, unity and political independence of Bosnia and Herzegovina. We firmly underline the need for the full respect of its constitutional framework and the Institutions established under the Dayton Peace Agreement, essential to the country's stability, peace and prosperity.

I wish to thank the Office of the High Representative for its latest report, and express our appreciation for its valuable work. We further underscore the importance of the 5+2 agenda and the continued efforts of the Office of the High Representative towards its

implementation, in accordance with its mandate. We look forward to the timely designation of the new High Representative by the Peace Implementation Council (PIC), with the view to concluding the remaining objectives.

We welcome the recent elections in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the use, for the first time, of voting technologies, which strengthen electoral transparency and reinforce public confidence in the democratic process.

Safeguarding and strengthening state-level institutions and ensuring their effective functioning is critical for preserving the unity of the country and its European path. Greece will continue to support strong and effective democratic institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which contribute to the country's stability, cohesion and development.

The European Council's March 2024 decision to open accession negotiations with Bosnia and Herzegovina marked a significant milestone on its EU integration path. The appointment of a Chief Negotiator, alongside the ratification of the Facility and Loan Agreements and the implementation of the Reform Agenda under the Growth Plan for the Western Balkans, is essential to advancing the accession process and ensuring economic and social development. We urge all political parties to work together to deliver the necessary reforms for the benefit of all citizens, particularly on strengthening the rule of law and democratic institutions.

We strongly condemn the glorification of convicted war criminals, as well as divisive and inflammatory rhetoric by any political actor that deepens ethnic divisions and undermines mutual trust. Such actions are fundamentally incompatible with European values, democratic principles and the rule of law, and run counter to the pursuit of lasting peace and stability in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the wider region. Political leaders bear a particular responsibility to promote mutual respect, constructive engagement and an inclusive vision for the country's future.

Lasting stability and prosperity in Bosnia and Herzegovina can only be achieved through unity, reconciliation, good neighborly relations and regional cooperation. The principles and commitments enshrined in the Thessaloniki Declaration of 2003, and reaffirmed in the Delphi Declaration on April this year, present a vision of a shared future within the European Union for the Western Balkans, including Bosnia and Herzegovina.

I thank you.