STATEMENT OF THE MEETING OF CHAIRPERSONS OF COSAC ON CURRENT EVENTS IN UKRAINE

2 February 2015, Riga

The meeting of Chairpersons of COSAC,

expressing deep concern by the recent escalation of the military conflict in Eastern Ukraine;
fully concurring with the Statement of 27 January 2015 of the Heads of State or Government of the European Union on the situation in Ukraine,

strongly condemns recent indiscriminate shelling of the Ukrainian city of Mariupol leading to the death of 30 civilians; takes into account the statement of the extraordinary EU Foreign Affairs Council of 29 January 2015 which noted the "evidence of continued and growing support given to the separatists by Russia, which underlines Russia's responsibility;"

calls on Russia to undertake real measures towards de-escalating the crisis in Eastern Ukraine and to comply with the Minsk Protocol, namely by observing a complete ceasefire, by withdrawing Russian armed forces and mercenaries from the territory of Ukraine, by stopping the transfer of weapons and armed combatants across the border from Russia to Ukraine, as well as by enabling Ukrainian authorities to regain full control over its border with Russia;

reiterates constant support for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognised borders; underlines the need for the EU to continue a united non-recognition policy regarding the illegitimate annexation of Crimea;

welcomes the decision of 29 January 2015 of the extraordinary EU Foreign Affairs Council to extend the restrictive measures targeting persons and entities for threatening or undermining Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity; indicates that the following steps in the possible review of the restrictive measures will be completely dependent on Russia's readiness to respect the requirements of the Minsk Protocol;

emphasizes the right of the Ukrainian people to freely choose alliances they want their country to be part of, without intervention of other countries; underlines the overwhelming support the current Ukrainian president and the Parliament have received during the last democratic elections;

encourages the European Union as well as its Member states to provide a comprehensive support to Ukraine both financially and politically, in order to help to stabilise its economy and implement wide-ranging political and administrative reforms;

encourages Ukraine to continue the process of democratisation, further implementation of economic, political, social and judicial reforms; to step up the efforts in fight against corruption, and to ensure the respect of human and fundamental rights;

expects the Eastern Partnership Summit in Riga on 21 – 22 May 2015 to assess the progress in implementing the Association Agreements with Ukraine as well as with Georgia and Moldova and provide the Eastern Partnership Initiative with strong and motivating political support; welcomes the decision of parliaments who have either already ratified the Association Agreements with respective countries or declared their intention to do so as a positive signal to keep the ratification process in motion.