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**PRESS RELEASE
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**MEETING OF THE NATO-RUSSIA COUNCIL
AT THE LEVEL OF FOREIGN MINISTERS
HELD IN BRUSSELS ON FRIDAY, 7 DECEMBER 2007**

CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT

Meeting in Brussels on 7 December 2007, the Foreign Ministers of the NATO-Russia Council reiterated the continued importance of the NRC as a unique forum for frank and dynamic political exchanges. Despite serious disagreements on the CFE Treaty, Kosovo's final status, as well as missile defence related matters, they recognised the fact that their recent political dialogue has been particularly active, including on issues for which the NRC is not the sole negotiating forum. Acknowledging current challenges, Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to the NATO-Russia Council as a valuable venue for seeking joint positions.

In this context, Ministers agreed to broaden and intensify NRC's political dialogue and exchanged views on Kosovo, Afghanistan, the future of the CFE regime, the fight against terrorism, and continued their discussions on missile defence as well as NATO Transformation.

Ministers reiterated their commitment to pursue cooperative projects of common interest, as mandated by NRC Heads of State and Government in Rome in 2002. Recognising that NRC practical cooperation has not yet reached all its full potential, they agreed to continue to seek possibilities for further cooperation in the NRC framework.

Reaffirming the NRC's determination to continue cooperation in the fight against terrorism, Ministers welcomed Russia's continued contribution to Operation Active Endeavour, and looked forward to the active role of Russian military assets in 2008 and 2009.

Ministers agreed that all NRC member states share a fundamental interest in the success of international efforts to promote peace and stability in and around Afghanistan, and resolved to continue co-operation in support of those efforts. In this respect, they welcomed the successful conclusion of the initial phase of the NRC Pilot Project on Counter-Narcotics Training of Afghan and Central Asian Personnel, and the launch of the Project's second phase in January 2008. Ministers were encouraged by progress made in NRC work on theatre missile defence, and looked forward to the Computer Assisted Exercise to be held in Germany in January 2008. Ministers furthermore underscored the importance of defence and military cooperation and agreed to continue work in this field. They appreciated progress made towards reaching the final operational capability of the Cooperative Airspace Initiative system and noted NRC work in the area of non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery.

Ministers agreed to promote further enhancement of public awareness of NRC activities, including by making optimal use of the newly launched NRC website.