

Joint Statement by President Barack Obama, President Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin of Russia, and President François Hollande of France on the Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict

June 18, 2012

We, the Presidents of the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chair countries—France, the Russian Federation, and the United States of America—are united in our resolute commitment to a peaceful settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. The parties to the conflict should not further delay making the important decisions necessary to reach a lasting and peaceful settlement. We regret that the Presidents of Azerbaijan and Armenia did not take the decisive steps that our countries called for in the joint statement at Deauville on May 26, 2011. Nevertheless, the progress that has been achieved should provide the momentum to complete work on the framework for a comprehensive peace.

We call upon the leaders of Armenia and Azerbaijan to fulfill the commitment in their January 23, 2012 joint statement at Sochi to “accelerate” reaching agreement on the Basic Principles for a Settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict. As evidence of their political will, they should refrain from maximalist positions in the negotiations, respect the 1994 ceasefire agreement, and abstain from hostile rhetoric that increases tension. We urge the leaders to be guided by the principles of the Helsinki Final Act—particularly those relating to the non-use of force or the threat of force,

territorial integrity, and equal rights and self-determination of peoples—and the elements of a settlement outlined in our countries’ statements at L’Aquila in 2009 and Muskoka in 2010.

Military force will not resolve the conflict and would only prolong the suffering and hardships endured by the peoples of the region for too long. Only a peaceful, negotiated settlement can allow the entire region to move beyond the status quo toward a secure and prosperous future.

Our countries will continue to work closely with the sides, and we call upon them to make full use of the assistance of the Minsk Group Co-Chairs as mediators. However, peace will depend ultimately upon the parties’ willingness to seek an agreement based on mutual understanding, rather than one-sided advantage, and a shared vision of the benefits that peace will bring to all their peoples and to future generations.

NOTE: The joint statement referred to President Ilham Aliyev of Azerbaijan; and President Serzh Sargsian of Armenia. An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

Statement on the Selection of Prince Salman bin Abd al-Aziz Al Saud as Crown Prince and Deputy Prime Minister of Saudi Arabia

June 18, 2012

I congratulate King Abdallah and the Saudi people on the selection of Prince Salman bin Abd al-Aziz Al Saud as Crown Prince and Deputy Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. As governor of Riyadh and then Minister of Defense, Crown Prince Salman has served his country with dedication and honor over the past five decades. I had the pleasure of receiving him at the

White House this April and know that he is a man of deep faith who is committed to improving the lives of the people of Saudi Arabia and to the security of the region. The United States looks forward to continuing our strong relationship with Crown Prince Salman in his new capacity as we deepen the longstanding partnership between the United States and Saudi Arabia.