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***COVER NOTE***

**REVISED DRAFT OF THE YEREVAN COMMUNIQUÉ**

The BFUG meeting in Rīga on January 25 – 26 had a first discussion of the draft Yerevan Communiqué. A revised draft on the basis of the discussions in Rīga was circulated to all delegations for comments. 24 delegations submitted comments.

Delegations were invited to submit clearly identifiable suggestions for concrete rewording and/or delegations, preferably as track changes to the draft sent for consultations. Most delegations broadly followed these guidelines but in the case of two submissions, it was impossible for the drafting group to identify concrete suggestions, either because these were not indicated or because the suggestions were very general comments rather than proposals for amendments. Overall, we received substantially more comments and proposed amendments to the introduction than to other parts of the draft.

In developing the revised draft, the drafting group reviewed all comments and even if a good number of choices inevitably had to be made, the drafting group sought to take account of as many suggestions as possible. This, however, resulted in a draft of more than 4 pages.

Therefore, the drafting group reviewed the draft once again and cut it down to slightly more than 3 pages. However, when the drafting group attempted to accommodate those suggestions in the draft, both the size of the communique grew substantially and also the communique became more technical rather than political; in part it read like technical instructions to carry out certain tasks. Drafting group has therefore, in general, not taken up suggestions intended to provide an explanatory narrative for specific measures. It has also sought to avoid repetition.

Drafting group asked the BFUG Board at its meeting on Feb 24 in to discuss the further developing the draft communiqué in particular considering the following issues:

* Most delegations are broadly happy with the revised structure and most comments are comments of detail. However, the EUA and the European Commission proposed major rewrites. These proposals which diverge considerably not only from the draft sent for consultation but also from each other, were too extensive to incorporate with simple amendments to the existing text and based on the comments by the remaining 22 delegations, the drafting group did not have the mandate to base the new revised draft on either of these proposals but the Board should consider whether and how these proposals should be used in the further work on the communiqué.

**On 24 February BFUG Board decided that drafting group should redraft communique, based on the 3 drafts received**

Drafting group now submits the rewrited draft to BFUG members for discussion at the meeting 24-25 March in Riga.

The *Draft communique 2* (version March 5)follows the agreed structure and where ewer possible followed the previous suggestions of the BFUG members. The *Draft communique 2* is two and a half pages. Drafting group believes that the *Draft communique 2* is more political, it has more vision and it addresses both the challenges and achievements.