



Slovensko predsedstvo EU 2008
Slovenian Presidency of the EU 2008
La Présidence slovène de l'UE 2008

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Slovenian Presidency of the Council of the European Union

**Permanent Council No. 717
19 June 2008**

EU statement in response to the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities, Mr. Bernard Snoy

The European Union warmly welcomes the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities, Mr. Bernard Snoy to the PC and thanks him for his report. We thank Mr. Snoy and his Office for the valuable input and support they give to the Chairmanship of the OSCE and to the participating States, as well as for their close cooperation with the economic and environmental officers in the OSCE field presences.

As a security and cooperation organisation, the OSCE has an important role to play in areas where there is a link between security and the environment. The EU recalls the importance of making full use of the organisation's comprehensive approach to security in order to promote stability and to respond to threats and challenges to security resulting from economic and environmental factors, such as, for example, climate change.

Ensuring continuity and conducting meaningful follow-up activities after each Economic and Environmental Forum, while at the same time focusing on areas where the OSCE has an added value and avoiding duplication with other actors, are key priorities for the EU. The EU considers it important to ensure that programmes and projects carried out within the Economic and Environmental Dimension are consistent with the security objectives of the OSCE and commensurate with the available

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expertise. We especially support economic and environmental activities that promote dialogue and cooperation and help to build confidence, thus contributing to security.

We believe that we all need to look ahead and promote a more strategic view in the second OSCE dimension in order to build upon the progress made in this field.

A strategic debate about the future direction and programmes of this dimension, with a strong focus on added value to the security aspects of the organisation should be launched in the months ahead. Such an approach could result in a Ministerial Council decision on the future tasks of the Economic and Environmental Dimension. We welcome the intention of the Finnish Chairmanship to help to facilitate this process.

Finally, the EU is looking forward to participating actively in the discussions of the Economic and Environmental Committee on the follow-up to the 16th Economic and Environmental Forum. The importance of efficient and secure transport, water management and the protection of the environment for cooperation and stability in the OSCE region were highlighted in Prague. The EU believes that the OSCE can make key contributions by facilitating dialogue aimed at raising awareness, creating political will to overcome obstacles as well as by bringing together different international and regional organisations so that we can learn from each other, and can share expertise and experiences.

In conclusion, let me thank once more Mr. Snoy and his Office and assure them of the EU's continued support for their important work.

The candidate countries Turkey, Croatia* and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*, the countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate countries Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia, the

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European Free Trade Association countries and members of the European Economic Area Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, as well as Armenia align themselves with this statement.

* Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process

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