



EUROPEAN UNION

**OSCE Permanent Council Nr 835
Vienna, 11 November 2010**

EU reply to the Director of the OSCE Academy Bishkek, Mr Maxim Ryabkov

The European Union warmly welcomes Director Ryabkov to the Permanent Council and thanks him for his presentation of activities and the outlook for next year.

The OSCE Academy Bishkek is a flagship activity of the OSCE in Central Asia. We highly value the work of the Academy in all four fields of activity. Through them, the Academy makes a sizeable contribution to the development of a network of young professionals coming from each Central Asian country, as well as from Afghanistan, dealing with comprehensive security, thereby also advancing regional co-operation in Central Asia.

Education and the promotion of regional co-operation are key objectives of the EU's cooperation with Central Asia. In the 2007 EU-Central Asia Strategy, the EU has pledged to co-operate closely with the OSCE Academy in Bishkek. We are pleased that since last year the MA Programme of the Academy includes courses on European studies.

We welcome the good co-operation between the Academy and its host country, Kyrgyzstan. In particular, we are heartened by the extension of the allocation of the premises free of charge until 2016 and by the upgrade of the license for the

Academy, as to give it full academic status in Kyrgyzstan. These positive steps provide the Academy with the stability needed for strengthening sustainability and further developing its activities.

We also appreciate the agreement between the Academy and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan, which allows graduates to be assigned to the Ministry and to receive professional training. We hope other countries in the region will follow soon, also with a view at increasing the interest of graduates in working for the public service of their respective countries.

We note with interest the initiative of developing a second MA programme on economic governance and development. We believe this idea well reflects the need for greater regional co-operation in such areas as good governance, socioeconomic development, regional trade, customs relations and energy and water policy in Central Asia. While we cannot collectively commit to any funding at this point, we are looking forward to further details.

Finally, the EU wishes the Director of the OSCE Academy Bishkek, its dedicated staff and last but not least the students and alumni every success in their important work and further endeavours.

The candidate countries TURKEY, CROATIA*, the FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA* and ICELAND**, the countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate countries ALBANIA, BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA, MONTENEGRO and SERBIA, the European Free Trade Association countries and members of the European Economic Area LIECHTENSTEIN and NORWAY, as well as the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA, ARMENIA, GEORGIA, ANDORRA and SAN MARINO align themselves with this statement.

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

** Iceland continues to be a member of the EFTA and the European Economic Area.