



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Permanent Council Nr 951 Vienna, 9 May 2013

EU statement on the occasion of Europe Day

Today Europeans celebrate Europe Day – a symbolic day marking the beginning of a great project – a unity of European nations living side by side in peace and prosperity.

On this very day in 1950, Robert Schuman gave his famous speech, marking the birth of the European Union. He gave the speech against the backdrop of two world wars in which the countries of what is now the OSCE area were involved and paid a heavy toll.

Too often one forgets why the European Union was created. The Union of today has evolved and adapted to contemporary circumstances, but the Coal and Steel Community, and then the EEC, were created to ensure that never again would Europe be destroyed by war.

Robert Schuman began his speech with the words: “World peace cannot be safeguarded without the making of creative efforts proportionate to the dangers, which threaten it.” The creative effort proposed by Schuman was a step by step approach, which led to the emergence of a peaceful, united and more prosperous Europe.

Today, our Europe is built on strong foundations of shared values and common purpose, rooted in freedom and democracy.

We have every right to celebrate the power of these ideas. The Berlin Wall could not withstand their force and they provided the basis on which our divided continent was reunited willingly and peacefully.

Today, despite the challenges of the financial crisis, the European Union continues to offer hope of a better future to the millions of our fellow Europeans

and, through the enlargement process, strengthens the stability of our continent and advances its prosperity.

Last year, the European Union was awarded the Peace Nobel Prize for the historical achievements. However, the prize should not only serve as tribute to past achievements. It is an encouragement for current and future endeavours of peace and stability, at home and abroad, including in the OSCE.

The Acceding Country Croatia*, the Candidate Countries the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*, Montenegro*, Iceland+ and Serbia*, the Countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as the Republic of Moldova, Georgia, Andorra and San Marino, align themselves with this statement.

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

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