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**ADDRESS TO THE PERMANENT COUNCIL
OF THE
ORGANISATION FOR SECURITY and COOPERATION IN EUROPE
(OSCE)**

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***"THE EUROPEAN UNION AND THE ORGANISATION FOR SECURITY
AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE: THE SHAPE OF FUTURE
COOPERATION"***

VIENNA (25 September 2002)

Mr Chairman, Excellencies, Secretary General

INTRODUCTION

I should like to begin by thanking you for inviting me here today. It is a pleasure to be back in Vienna and to meet you all again. I should like to speak to you this afternoon on the subject "**The EU and the OSCE: the shape of future cooperation**".

NATURAL-BORN PARTNERS

I believe we will have a common future, as we have had a common past. The European Community, now the European Union, and the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, now the OSCE, were **both born out of the cold war, with a similar desire - to establish forms of cooperation in Europe which would defuse the tensions between former enemies and prevent further conflict on the continent.** While the EC was designed to make war impossible again in Europe, by integrating the economies of the Member States and by developing supranational institutions, the purpose of the CSCE was to reduce tensions between the West and the Soviet block by facilitating dialogue and mutual contacts. In short, the **EC and the CSCE were natural-born partners** and as both institutions have grown in dimension and evolved in their competencies into the EU and the OSCE respectively, so too has their partnership grown and evolved.

It is hardly surprising therefore that the **EU and the OSCE have found so many grounds for cooperation and close partnership**, in strategy, planning and in the field. As a general indication of the level of cooperation, it's worth pointing out that the **EU and its Member States provide the bulk of funding for the OSCE and a large share of its field operations staff**. I could also single out specific examples of such cooperation, and indeed if time allows I shall do so later. But for now I should like to turn to the where the future is leading us, for there is little doubt that it is bringing us closer, and that we need to reassess our relationship of cooperation in the framework of that knowledge.

WIDER EUROPE

In the forthcoming **European Council in Copenhagen** it is expected that a decision will be taken on EU enlargement when up to ten new countries will accede to the Union. This new wave of enlargement, possibly the most important so far, will have a broad Eastward thrust, and will throw up **new opportunities and challenges for us and for our Eastern neighbours**.

As enlargement approaches, the EU is preparing for the **inevitable shift in perspective which such a geographical redefinition will bring to the region** and how it will affect the countries involved. For those countries who are admitted to the EU as members, this will be a time of major adjustment and transition. For those who have not been accepted on this occasion, there will be further advances to make and goals to reach, but hopefully the very fact that enlargement will take place will provide incentive and reassurance that accession is a real perspective. Some neighbours, while not explicitly placing their candidature for the EU, have nevertheless made it clear that they are looking to EU for the future.

This complex net of relationships is not an easy one to untangle. Yet the EU is determined to regard the next wave of enlargement as an opportunity to reevaluate relations with all our Eastern neighbours and not just those who accede. The EU is anxious to promote democracy and stability in these countries for their own sake, but also for the security of the region. It is to be hoped that EU accession will have positive consequences, not just for some but for all our neighbours. This will be a time for exploring new forms of cooperation to forge closer ties and also to deal with common problems such as illegal immigration, trafficking of drugs and human beings, and spillover from local and regional crises.

The EU's relations with Russia, a key player in the region, continue to

strengthen. Recent initiatives, including enhanced cooperation in the field of conflict prevention and crisis management, are pointing to new directions for the relationship to grow and develop. **Russia's demonstrated willingness to assume its responsibilities as a major power in world politics is contributing to break down increasingly artificial divisions between East and West** and we look forward to even greater rapprochement and cooperation with the EU and with the international community at large.

In a wider Europe, Ukraine, Belarus and Moldova will become new neighbours to the East. Our common challenge is to take advantage of the new situation and try to create stronger and deeper relations with this region, both to seize new opportunities and jointly tackle common problems. This is **not an homogenous group of countries** and we already enjoy vastly different types of relations with each of them. Whatever we set out to achieve following present discussions, the **principle of differentiation will be maintained.**

The difference between the countries is also mirrored in the activities of the OSCE. While the OSCE continues to play an important role in all the countries, the scope and content of its engagement vary a lot. We continue to regard the work of the OSCE in the region as very valuable, but will also seriously **consider how the Union can take on greater responsibilities and better assist in achieving our joint objectives.**

It is not only our relations with individual countries in Eastern Europe which we must reevaluate, however, but also with the OSCE with whom our relationship will naturally

deepen in the wake of enlargement. In the past, the EU and the OSCE have cooperated in a prolonged and serious fashion in Eastern Europe. With enlargement, the EU will soon make up almost half of the membership of the OSCE, so we shall soon share even greater common ground.

We recognise the **1999 Istanbul Charter for European Security and its commitment to strengthen cooperation between international organisations and institutions** and make full use of the resources of the international community. We recognise as well the shared commitment of the EU and the OSCE to democracy, prosperity and stability in Europe as a whole, and beyond. International organisations like ours should not be working solely in parallel but in **joint efforts towards the same goals**.

It is against this background that I should like to **focus now on our cooperation in the Western Balkans, the Caucasus and Central Asia**.

WESTERN BALKANS

The Western Balkans are in better shape than at any other time during more than a decade. Democracy is prevailing and the EU strategy of replacing the logic of political disintegration with that of European integration has started to bear fruit. For the first time in many years there is a shared vision for the future in the region: **the vision of closer, and eventually full, integration into a reunited Europe.** There is also a comprehensive policy, the Stabilisation and Association Process, that the EU has put in place in order to transform this vision into concrete reforms and make the prospect of full membership a real possibility.

Indeed, here we find the two main differences between the Balkans of 1999, when I took up the function as EU High Representative for CFSP and the region of today: First, and most importantly, that the countries of the region have at last begun to work towards Europe. Second, that Europe has started to get its act together in order to help that process forward.

But we should not allow ourselves to become complacent. The effective rule of law has not yet been established in the region, many economic indicators point in the wrong direction, and in some areas proponents of further political disintegration still endanger the prospect of European integration. It is crucial that the cycle of elections that the region goes through this autumn results in governments with whom the EU and the rest of the international community can work in order to meet the remaining challenges.

In FYROM, we must consolidate the peaceful process created by the Ohrid Framework Agreement. With Serbia and Montenegro, we have to urgently finalise the new Constitutional Charter so that the state, with its two constituent parts, can adopt necessary reform and move towards Europe. **In Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo, we should step up our efforts to fight organised crime and organised extremism** that will otherwise threaten to block the road ahead. **The European Union Police Mission**, which will carry on the work of the United Nations in Bosnia and Herzegovina from 1 January 2003, will play an important role in this respect.

However, to effectively help the countries in the region to succeed, the EU needs close co-operation with the OSCE. Just to take the most recent examples: **FYROM, where I was particularly impressed by the comprehensive and highly effective efforts of the OSCE in support of the Ohrid Agreement, including thorough monitoring , police training and most recently through its great work in ensuring peaceful and democratic parliamentary elections. Or Southern Serbia, where you have successfully assumed the international leadership** in the efforts to create a sustainable and peaceful political process.

The **flexibility and the expertise of the OSCE is, and will remain, essential** all over the Western Balkans if we are to succeed in our joint efforts to help this region to become just another region of a united Europe.

CAUCASUS

We enjoy good relations with all three countries of the Southern Caucasus. The **forthcoming Cooperation Council with these three, within our Partnership and Cooperation Agreement, will take place on 1 October.** Our cooperation takes on broader terms with every year. At the same time, limits have been placed on developing the potential of our relations notably by the frozen conflicts in the region. The Union will continue to back the efforts of the OSCE and the UN in this respect, but ultimately we will look to the different parties to find viable solutions and act upon them. In the same spirit we will continue to urge all actors, both inside and outside the region, to show restraint and responsibility in order not to let the region drift in the opposite direction.

The EU is at present exploring enhancing cooperation with the OSCE in this region and considers that **cooperation on specific cross-border issues, including border management and migration, and how to stem increased threats from crime, trafficking and illegal immigration, provide promising avenues of approach, as part of an overall cooperation in the domain of conflict prevention.**

CENTRAL ASIA

I want to express my great appreciation for the work carried out by the OSCE over several years in Central Asia. The Bishkek Conference on terrorism last December highlighted the OSCE's active contribution in the promotion of security in the region after 11 September. At the moment, the security situation in the region seems reasonably stable. Alarmist scenarios on possible spillover of Al Qaida and the Taliban influence in the aftermath of the war in Afghanistan have not materialised due to the swift action by the international community with the support of local Governments.

The OSCE has made remarkable efforts in building up the foundation of rule of law and democracy in all Central Asian States. This calls for longer term pragmatic engagement, which does not make big headlines, but over the years is likely to yield good results in providing the Central Asian societies with viable democratic institutions, which will respect fundamental human rights. In the longer run this is a key contribution to the overall stability in the region and the OSCE is well equipped to carry on the work. **The EU is considering further support for enhanced OSCE action in the region.**

In the context of the developing field presence of the OSCE in Central Asia over the recent ten years, **EU and OSCE have already reached a significant level of cooperation** on and in this region. This includes political exchange (through the EU delegation and EU States in Vienna as well as in the region itself among the Member States' Embassies and the EU Delegation in Almaty) and significant levels of support in the human dimension. **Almost half of the projects of the Office for Human Rights and Democratic Institutions are EU funded.** In Central Asia alone, the two Joint EU-OSCE programmes for Advancing Human Rights and Democratisation have so far granted a total amount of EURO 850,000.

Reinforced cooperation between the EU and the OSCE must aim at providing further value to the activities of both parties in this region. An open and constructive approach on both sides that respects each other's mandate is also indispensable. The EU is acutely aware of the relative strengths of both parties in this region and is currently looking at means of exploiting them fully through **coordinated, complementary and / or joint actions.**

CONFLICT PREVENTION AND CRISIS MANAGEMENT

If there is one area other than the Wider Europe which demands an ongoing assessment of the potential for cooperation between the EU and the OSCE, that is the area of conflict prevention and crisis management. In the last three years, I feel it is not an exaggeration to say that the EU has made enormous strides in developing military capabilities and civilian capabilities for the purposes of peacekeeping and peace-enforcing missions.

In the field of conflict prevention and crisis management, the **EU intention is to be capable of conducting an operation alone, alone but using the capacities of NATO, or jointly with NATO and /or other international organisations.** In this way, the EU's building of its capacities should not be perceived as a militarisation of the EU but rather as a means of cooperating intelligently, efficiently and without duplication with the international community and of putting its assets at the disposal of that community to further the common objectives of peace, security and stability.

In our cooperation with the OSCE, I believe pragmatism should be our starting point. Let's build on what we have already achieved: by benefiting from the experience of one another and by

- **exchanging information** and expertise in developing our crisis management tools;
- **co-operating on the ground** and between headquarters to increase our efficiency;
- **developing compatible methods and standards** to allow for this co-operation to develop.

I am confident that, as the ESDP develops, our relationship will deepen even further. Indeed, I would say that it must do.

Given the fact of **globalisation** and its current pace, we all know the importance of inter-regional coordination and **cooperation in developing security strategy**. The days when a nation could seal its borders and create a fortress state against external threats are over. **Cooperation is not an option, it is an imperative**. In embracing, promoting and defending democracy, we **need to respect the recognised multilateral fora** in taking responsible, and politically and morally accountable, decisions where global security is concerned. The EU, and demonstrably, multilateral fora such as the OSCE and the UN place great importance on the process of political dialogue in maintaining a stable security environment. **We believe that the dialogue among civilisations is an important tool in creating confidence, mutual trust and a shared sense of justice – and these are the bedrock elements of security.**

CONCLUSION

The OSCE is the biggest security organisation in Europe. It has a world-recognised experience and expertise in **conflict prevention and crisis management.** Despite ongoing conflicts in the vast territory it covers, it has maintained a **permanent dialogue among its 55 Members,** often under the threat of violence and war. Its field offices throughout the region are a vital source of political **information and intelligence.**

The EU has a strong background in trade – we are a primary global economic player. Equally strong is our background on **development** – we have projects all over the world and are among the biggest donors of **humanitarian assistance.** We have a demonstrated track record for **integration,** for including even the smallest and poorest countries into a widening Europe. EU Member States have demonstrated their commitment to democracy in war zones throughout the world. The EU has proven its **commitment to defend the principles of democracy and rule of law** by establishing a range of military and civilian capabilities for crisis-management and peace-keeping operations.

It is inevitable, given the history of the EU, its expanding geography, its widening role in world affairs, and the irreversible process of globalisation, that it will increase its capacity to act as a political and security body in the world. Not just because the EU wants this, but also because others want it of us.

Equally inevitable, in my view, given our common past and shared values and objectives, is that **cooperation between the EU and OSCE will strengthen** and deepen over the coming years. **The processes of coordination, complementarity and concertation will together form the future shape of that cooperation.**
