



## Portuguese Presidency of the Council of the European Union

**679<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Permanent Council**  
**6<sup>th</sup> September 2007**

### Statement of the European Union in response to Brigadier General Claudio Sampaolo

The European Union warmly welcomes the Chairman in Office's Personal Representative for Article IV, General Sampaolo, and thanks him for his address to the Permanent Council.

The European Union congratulates all parties involved in the improvement of the security situation in the Balkans through the implementation and fulfilment of the Dayton Peace Accords, especially by the several steps taken in defence reform and by agreeing on legally binding amendments, as on the implementation of the Agreement of Sub-Regional Arms Control.

The European Union notes with particular satisfaction that the Entities in Bosnia and Herzegovina transferred the rights, obligations and responsibilities for the further implementation of the Agreement to the State Level of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and that the Republic of Montenegro became an independent Party to the Agreement as of 16 January 2007.

The European Union is pleased to see that the inspection regime is functioning very well and further reductions in holdings of armaments are expected.

We encourage all parties to continue on this path and to enhance their dialogue and co-operation, including through regional structures such as the Regional Arms Control and Verification and Implementation Assistance Centre (RACVIAC).

The European Union will continue to support the process of arms control and confidence building in this region as well as the important and valuable work of the Personal Representative and his office.

As this is his last appearance before the Permanent Council, the European Union would like to congratulate General Claudio Sampaolo on his excellent professional and personal commitment throughout his mandate as Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairman in Office and wish him all the best in the future.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.

The Candidate Countries Turkey, Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia\*, the Countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia, EFTA countries Iceland and Norway, members of the European Economic Area, as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, Armenia and Georgia align themselves with this statement.

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