



Permanent Mission
of the Federal Republic of Germany
to the OSCE
Vienna

PC.DEL/2/07
11 January 2007
ENGLISH only



German Presidency of the European Union

645th (Special) Meeting of the Permanent Council

11 January 2007

EU Statement in response to the address by the

Chairman-in-Office,

Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Spain,

H.E. Miguel Ángel Moratinos Cuyaubé

The EU congratulates H.E. Miguel Ángel Moratinos Cuyaubé, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Co-operation of Spain, on assuming the functions of Chairman-in-Office of the OSCE. We welcome you warmly to the Permanent Council for the first time in this new capacity and thank you for your address outlining the priorities of the Spanish Chairmanship in 2007. We wish you well and look forward to working with you and your delegation.

The EU welcomes the intention of the Spanish Chair to build on the impressive results achieved by the Belgian Chair in 2006 by its tenacity, patience, diligence and flexibility. In this context, it is very promising that the Chairmanship plans to draw its guidance for its efforts from three principles: Priorities, Perseverance and Patience.

The EU considers the OSCE an important partner in promoting shared values. We support the new Chairmanship in its efforts to focus the organization on the opportunities in all three dimensions and to further enhance transparency. We encourage the Chairmanship on its path to safeguard our shared commitments and to promote their implementation.

We will support the Spanish Chairmanship in promoting the OSCE as a forum for dialogue and cooperation. We share the view that there are important challenges ahead of us. We support the Spanish Chairmanship's intention to give special attention to the frozen conflicts, in particular to confidence-building.

Developments on the ground point to opportunities in some areas:

The successful donors' conference to support the economic rehabilitation in the zone of conflict in South Ossetia/Georgia and the follow-up with concrete projects opened up an opportunity to build confidence by mutually beneficial economic cooperation. We recall that the EU has already proposed further steps to build confidence such as an increase in the number of OSCE military observers.

The visit of about 30 Heads of Delegations to the OSCE at the Russian ammunition site at Kolbasna in the Republic of Moldova, the first official OSCE visit to the site in more than two and a half years, indicated that although at a slow pace, standstill could be overcome, if real political will is there. Complete fulfilment of the remaining commitments made at the OSCE's Istanbul Summit in 1999 and reflected in the CFE Final Act, remains key.

The consensus found at the Ministerial Council in Brussels on a statement on Nagorno-Karabach was already welcomed by the EU in Brussels. We continue to believe in the opportunity for the leadership of Armenia and Azerbaijan to peacefully settle this long-standing conflict.

The EU believes that 2007 will be decisive for Kosovo. The EU strongly supports the work of UN Special Envoy, President Martti Ahtisaari, on the future status of Kosovo. The EU welcomes the OSCE's continued active involvement in Kosovo, particularly in using its extensive field presence, also after the settlement of status.

The first dimension offers many opportunities for the OSCE to strengthen security, stability and cooperation. The Forum for Security Cooperation provides a unique tool to address threats to our security and to create confidence, for instance by promoting the implementation of important documents, such as the OSCE documents on Small Arms and Light Weapons and on Stockpiles of Conventional Ammunition. We look forward to a continuation and further strengthening of our valuable work in the fight against terrorism. The OSCE has a special role to play in ensuring that these efforts are conducted in line with human rights. We would also like to highlight important projects which have the potential to further stability and security in the whole OSCE area, such as the support for the establishment of democratically controlled police forces, the implementation of OSCE's Border Security and Management Concept and the fight against organized crime.

In the economic and environmental dimension, we can build on the experiences of the past years and on the results of the Ministerial Council in Brussels. On important issues as transportation and energy security, the OSCE will be available as a forum for political dialogue and discussion. We very much welcome the Chairmanship's initiative to focus more strongly on environmental security by taking up again the issue of water management thus providing continuity to a theme already introduced by previous chairmanships and to treat the problem of land degradation and soil contamination as a threat to our collective security.

In the third dimension, we support every effort by the Spanish Chairmanship to promote human rights, democracy and the rule of law, which are at the core of the OSCE's human security concept. We also share its wish to continue the fight against intolerance and discrimination and against trafficking in human beings. We recognise the excellent work of ODIHR, which has developed into a trademark for OSCE's work in the fields of institution building, rule of law, election observation, protection of human rights and tolerance as well as of the High Commissioner on National Minorities and the Representative on Freedom of the Media. We look forward to supporting the continuation of the OSCE institutions' successful programs and to building on them in accordance with the decisions of the Ministerial Council in Brussels.

The field missions of the OSCE, which constitute a comparative advantage of the OSCE, play a very important role in advancing the work in all three dimensions and in implementing our shared commitments, while keeping a cross-dimensional perspective. We express our appreciation for their work and pledge our support to the continuation of their efforts to implement their mandates.

We share the Chairmanship's assessment that cooperation with the Mediterranean region as well as with our Asian partners can be strengthened. We are looking forward to any substantial suggestions towards that aim.

Aside from all these substantive issues, we are fully aware that some quite demanding house-keeping tasks are awaiting the Spanish Chairmanship. The OSCE has not yet agreed on a budget for 2007. We are confident that an agreement can be found soon. Furthermore, by the end of this year, we will have to decide on the scales of contribution. We call on all participating States to address these issues constructively.

To reach its objectives, the OSCE will have to muster the full support of all its participating States. The EU is determined to enhance the existing cooperation between the OSCE and the EU in order to contribute to the achievement of common goals. We therefore reiterate our full support for the Chairmanship and its programme for 2007.

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, Montenegro and the EFTA country Iceland, a member of the European Economic Area, align themselves with this declaration.

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