

Canadian Delegation to the
Organization for Security & Cooperation
in Europe



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Délégation du Canada auprès de
l'Organisation pour la sécurité et la coopération
en Europe

**DELEGATION OF CANADA TO THE OSCE
STATEMENT IN RESPONSE TO THE ADDRESS BY
THE GERMAN FEDERAL MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS
FRANK-WALTER STEINMEIER
646^H PLENARY MEETING OF THE PERMANENT COUNCIL
18 JANUARY 2007**

Canada joins others in warmly welcoming H.E. Foreign Minister Steinmeier. We thank him for his comprehensive presentation of the common challenges which face the OSCE and the European Union in the course of the next months, and of the priorities of the German Presidency of the European Union in this area.

We believe the ongoing, wide-ranging, fruitful co-operation between the OSCE and the European Union is essential to progress on several issues of primary interest to both organizations. Achieving political settlement of the outstanding conflicts in the OSCE area must remain one of our key objectives. In this context, we are grateful for the increased attention and resources devoted by the EU in recent years to the situation in Georgia and Moldova. These complement and reinforce the OSCE's efforts.

There is no doubt in our mind that both the EU and the OSCE will also have an important role to play in the aftermath of the release of President Ahtisaari's report to contribute to a stable and democratic Kosovo.

Canada is also supportive of continued OSCE engagement in Central Asia in all three OSCE dimensions. We welcome Germany's intention to develop a coherent strategy for Central Asia during its EU Presidency.

We also noted and welcomed the Minister's mention of Afghanistan, a neighbour to the region and OSCE Partner for Cooperation. Canada shares the view that the OSCE can play a wider and useful role in Central Asia in activities which address challenges we all face, such as border management, illicit drug trafficking and counter-terrorism.

Our collective commitments highlight that security in the OSCE region can only be realized through the development and deepening of democratic governance, an area where the EU leads by example.

We must continue to work together to establish pluralistic societies that respect and promote human rights, fundamental freedoms and rule of law, allow peaceful dissent, and work to combat all forms of intolerance and discrimination.

In closing, Minister Steinmeier, please be assured of Canada's support and willingness to work closely with Germany during its EU Presidency and within the G8 context.