



Slovensko predsedstvo EU 2008
Slovenian Presidency of the EU 2008
La Présidence slovène de l'UE 2008

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Slovenian Presidency of the Council of the European Union

**Permanent Council No. 706
10 March 2008**

EU statement in response to the Special Envoy of the Chairman-in-Office, Ambassador Heikki Talvitie

The European Union warmly welcomes the Special Envoy of the Chairman-in-Office, Ambassador Talvitie, to the Permanent Council and thanks him for his address.

Ambassador Talvitie, the European Union appreciates your visits to Ukraine, Armenia and the Republic of Moldova as concrete evidence of the Chairman's desire to contribute personally to the OSCE's conflict prevention and crisis management efforts.

As previously stated, the European Union is deeply concerned about the situation in Armenia since the presidential elections and has condemned the acts of violence that resulted in loss of life and numerous injuries. We welcome very much the Chairmanship's prompt efforts to seek to defuse the crisis and continue to urge all political forces in Armenia to refrain from unlawful acts and to re-engage in political dialogue.

The EU believes there can be no solution to the crisis without the restoration of political rights and therefore calls upon the Armenian authorities to lift fully the state of emergency as soon as possible, to remove the restrictions on media freedom, and to release citizens detained for exercising their right to peaceful assembly. We support EU Special Representative for the Southern Caucasus, Ambassador Peter

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Semneby's call for an independent investigation of the events of 1 March, when the dispersal of demonstrations led to deaths and injuries.

We note the issuing of the ODIHR election observation mission's interim report, and encourage the Armenian authorities to respond constructively to it as well as to act upon the recommendations that will be contained in the mission's final report on the Armenian presidential elections.

The EU is concerned by reports of clashes across the line of contact in Nagorno-Karabakh. The EU joins the Chairman-in-Office in urging all parties to restore confidence and to prevent any further escalation of the situation by exercising maximum restraint and abiding by the provisions of the ceasefire agreement. The EU calls upon the sides to avoid any inflammatory statements and to redouble their efforts to endorse the basic principles for the peaceful resolution of the conflict worked out by the Minsk Group Co-Chairs.

Let me now turn to the Republic of Moldova. The EU is firmly convinced that a lasting settlement of the Transnistrian conflict can only be based on respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Moldova and recalls that transparency and political will are key ingredients for progress towards this goal. The EU fully supports your efforts to facilitate the resumption of the negotiation process in the 5+2 format and welcomes the 3+2 meeting of the negotiators and observers scheduled for later today.

At the same time, the EU encourages Chisinau and Tiraspol to engage meaningfully in the implementation of the package of confidence-building measures intended to bring the people on both sides of the Dniester River closer together.

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The EU, as an observer in the 5+2 process, is determined to continue to play an active role in facilitating the settlement to the Transnistrian conflict, in particular through its Special Representative for Moldova, Mr. Kálmán Mizsei, and through its Border Assistance Mission to Moldova and Ukraine.

Excellency, we wish you success in your endeavours this year and offer you the full support of the EU.

The candidate countries Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*, the countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate countries Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia, the European Free Trade Association country and member of the European Economic Area Iceland align themselves with this statement.

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

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