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FSC.DEL/406/06

13 September 2006

ENGLISH only

EU Statement on the Occasion of the Change of Chairmanship of the Forum for Security Co-operation, 13th of September 2006.

The European Union would like to extend a warm welcome to Canada as incoming Chair of the FSC, and to Cyprus as a new member of the FSC Troika. We look forward to working constructively, as we prepare for the Ministerial Council in Brussels. We offer our renewed thanks to Bosnia and Herzegovina, which now leaves the FSC Troika.

Looking back at the last session, we congratulate Bulgaria for its effective chairmanship. In particular, the Special FSC Meeting on SALW stimulated debate on the OSCE's role in the preparation for the UN Review Conference of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All its Aspects. These preparations ensured a visible OSCE contribution in the Review Conference. Based upon the results of the Review Conference we agree with the Canadian chair's view that regional organizations, such as OSCE, will have a crucial role to play in the further implementation of the Programme of Action. This should encourage us to further implement the OSCE SALW and Stockpiles-documents and also strengthen the organisation's outreach activities in these areas. In this respect the EU encourages participating States to come forward with new ideas and initiatives, such as the proposal to fight the illicit air-transport of SALW and their ammunitions in the OSCE area.

The presentation by the Chair of the 1540 Committee during the Bulgarian FSC-Chairmanship allowed a focused and productive discussion within the FSC with regard to the implementation of the FSC and MC Decisions 7/05. The EU welcomes the continued effort to find appropriate ways for the OSCE to support implementation of UNSCR 1540.

The EU would also like to express its appreciation for the work done for the preparation of the Special Meeting on Code of Conduct, to be held in two weeks time. The Code of Conduct is one of the main FSC-documents, which also has a strong cross-dimensional aspect. In that respect, the EU sees the Special Meeting to be one of the most important FSC-events in the coming season, as implementation of already agreed measures should be seen as important as negotiating new initiatives. In this regard, the EU is also willing to constructively engage in the cross-dimensional work concerning a Security Sector Reform Concept, as the FSC has long experience in many aspects of this subject.

The EU would like to express its appreciation for the work programme presented by the Canadian Chair for the autumn session. In particular, we look forward to making an effective contribution to the FSC tasking set in Ljubljana; namely, to submit to the Brussels Ministerial Council, through the FSC Chair, progress reports on the further implementation of the OSCE Documents on SALW and on Stockpiles of Conventional Ammunition..

To conclude, madam Chair: The EU stands ready to engage constructively and in a spirit of co-operation in the work of the Forum.

The Acceding Countries Bulgaria and Romania, the Candidate Countries Croatia¹ and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the Countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Montenegro, and Serbia, EFTA countries Iceland, and Norway, members of the European Economic Area, as well as Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova align themselves with this statement.

¹ Croatia and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process