



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. 710  
24 April 2008**

### **EU statement in response to the address by the Secretary General of the Council of Europe, Mr. Terry Davis**

The European Union warmly welcomes Mr. Terry Davis on the occasion of his appearance before the Permanent Council. We are happy that this visit gives us another occasion to recall and review some of the major issues on which the OSCE and the Council of Europe are working together.

The European Union, the Council of Europe and the OSCE share, promote and defend the same values. Despite differences in their respective instruments, organisational structures and membership, all three are equally engaged in promoting democracy, human rights, and the rule of law. We believe that these are essential to creating lasting peace and stability.

In this light, we have observed with satisfaction the continuing good cooperation between the Council of Europe and the OSCE. The report on the 7<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Coordination Group, held recently in Vienna, highlights the value of this cooperation in the four key areas of the fight against terrorism, the protection of the rights of persons belonging to national minorities, the combating of trafficking in human beings and the promotion of tolerance and non-discrimination. We welcome the Group's determination to ensure that joint activities are designed on a long-term basis and that special attention is paid to follow-up actions in order to maximise their impact, while keeping in mind the need for adequate articulation and the optimal use of

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resources. We subscribe to Mr. Davis' assertion that coordination must begin in the planning phase.

The EU welcomes the fact that, as focal points in these four areas, the Secretariat's Action against Terrorism Unit, the High Commissioner on National Minorities, the OSCE Special Representative on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings and the ODIHR are playing a major role in this cooperation. Cooperation must however not be limited to these focal points and it is for this reason that we are pleased at the positive relations between OSCE field presences and Council of Europe offices in a number of countries.

The EU considers election observation another area of highest importance for both organisations. We attach great importance to fruitful cooperation between the ODIHR, the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe on election observation missions and strongly encourage all of them to pursue and develop this cooperation wherever possible.

The European Union also cooperates directly with the Council of Europe in areas of common interest. This partnership has been given further impetus by the Memorandum of Understanding signed in May last year, which provides an institutional framework for reinforced cooperation in the Council of Europe core areas of democracy, human rights, rule of law, and, as appropriate, in areas such as culture, education and social cohesion. Mutually beneficial and reinforcing cooperation should continue to be a key aim for all states which are members of both organisations, as Mr. Davis has highlighted in his speech. The specific added value of each organisation is of greatest benefit when it is put to use meaningfully.

Mr. Chairman, allow me to conclude by thanking Mr. Davis once again for his address and by wishing him further success in all of his tasks.

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The candidate countries Turkey, 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 countries and members of the European Economic Area Iceland and Liechtenstein, as well as Armenia align themselves with this statement.

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

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