



German Presidency of the Council of the European Union

655th Meeting of the Permanent Council

8 March 2007

EU Statement in Response to the Address by H.E. Mr. Valdas Adamkus, President of the Republic of Lithuania

The EU is particularly pleased to welcome the President of one of the Member States of the European Union, H.E. Valdas Adamkus, President of the Republic of Lithuania, and congratulates him on his committed, visionary and comprehensive address to the Permanent Council of the OSCE.

The idea of building a “Europe whole and free” is an idea that is common to all of us and a responsibility that we share throughout the whole OSCE region. The EU and its Member States are committed to the common values, standards and norms of the OSCE: cooperation, in particular regional cooperation, prevention of conflicts and management of crises are our common endeavour. The speech we just listened to is an expression of this engagement.

We all share the President’s assessment of the work of the OSCE as well as of its institutions and of the importance given to the field and election observation missions. We subscribe to the President’s challenge that as long as conflicts remain unsettled and tensions persist in regions of the OSCE area there is still work to be done. Through dialogue and confidence building we can contribute to tackling the disagreements that lie at the bottom of these conflicts. In this context the President’s suggestion of combining attention to confidence building in conflict areas with the task of addressing the new security challenges of the 21st century, for example through building on the OSCE’s programs to assist participating States to reform their

police agencies and to move towards new and modern forms of policing, is very much forward-looking and deserves our support.

We value Lithuania's active contribution to the work of the OSCE in all its three dimensions. This also includes voluntary financial contributions to OSCE-led economic rehabilitation projects in South Ossetia, Georgia, to ODIHR's election observation diversification fund as well as to ammunition destruction activities.

Lithuania has clearly demonstrated that it is ready and able to shoulder the additional responsibility of the OSCE chairmanship. We endorse Lithuania's readiness to take on the OSCE Chairmanship. The EU welcomes and fully supports the aspirations of any of its member states to chair the OSCE.

The European Union again thanks President Adamkus for his forward-looking address and wishes him all the best.

The Candidate Countries Turkey, Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia* as well as the Countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, and Serbia align themselves with this statement.

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