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## **STATEMENT BY THE EUROPEAN UNION AT THE 809th MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

Vienna, 13 May 2010

### **In response to Mr. Raphael Perl, Head of the OSCE Action against Terrorism Unit**

The European Union thanks Mr. Raphael Perl for the presentation of his annual report. At the outset, we endorse your three introductory points: we must display cohesion in countering terrorism; international co-operation is a *sine qua non*; and the OSCE makes a recognized contribution to this endeavour.

The assessment of your activities in 2009 is entirely worthy. Your appeal for generosity on 14 May 2009 was heard, for participating States granted you a stable volume of voluntary contributions despite the financial crisis. Your unit puts a great deal of effort into supporting the political process in an exemplary way, which is heartily appreciated. Indeed, yours is a role that works to everyone's advantage: the Chairmanship and participating States benefit from your expertise, and you can also guide the thinking of delegations and influence the Organization's agenda.

At the same time, it must be emphasized that it is the prerogative of the 56 participating States to jointly determine and put forward the priority activities for your unit through the decisions adopted and the mandates given for each year.

This year is off to a good start. Scheduling the more technical workshops in the first half of the year is a good practice. The topics addressed correspond in a timely manner to two of the four priorities established by the European Union (EU) during the discussions on the OSCE Programme Outline for 2010, namely, the promotion of international legal instruments on counter-terrorism and travel document security. As regards the follow-up to the first two workshops, we should like to have further details on the subregional workshops planned, particularly in terms of demand and targeting; we should also like to know why you plan to develop a handbook of best practices on protection of critical energy infrastructure – given that the OSCE has very little experience in this area – and what its objectives would be.

Our third priority for 2010, countering the violent extremism and radicalization that lead to terrorism, will inevitably be at the centre of the conference on the prevention of terrorism, to be held in Astana in October 2010. Lastly, our fourth priority for 2010, use of the Internet for terrorist purposes, is one of the two areas of cyber security in which the OSCE has already carried out specific work, with the campaign against child pornography on the Internet. Continuing the discussion on cyber security will enable us to examine in detail

the role that the OSCE might reasonably play in this area. This can also contribute to the more general ongoing discussion of how the OSCE should respond to this important challenge in a more strategic and complementary fashion. Moreover, the project carried out by the Action against Terrorism Unit (ATU) in Moldova to connect that State to the Interpol databases is an excellent example of action that will have rapid and tangible effects in the field. We encourage you to develop these types of activities.

The question of resources is fundamental: "Money is the nerve of war." But as you rightly point out, we must be realistic, especially in the current economic context. We are aware of the reality of your unit's staffing situation. You will note in this regard that the EU member States, which provide you with nearly 70 per cent of the unified budget and more than half of the voluntary contributions you receive, and which second staff to you, are very reasonable when it comes to requests submitted to your unit. In this context of resource constraints, it is more important than ever for the ATU to concentrate its efforts on the key areas in which the OSCE has comparative advantages.

In conclusion, the EU is more determined than ever to counter terrorism. If this fight is to be effective, it must be carried out with respect for human rights, fundamental freedoms and the rule of law. Anti-terrorism efforts must never serve as a pretext for restricting freedom of expression or undermining the independence of the media.

The candidate countries Turkey, Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia\*, the Stabilisation and Association Process countries 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, Liechtenstein and Norway, as well as the Republic of Moldova, Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia, align themselves with this statement.

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