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Delegation of **Switzerland**

**STATEMENT BY
THE DELEGATION OF SWITZERLAND AT THE MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

29 January 2009

**In response to the statement by Mr. Karel SCHWARZENBERG,
*Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic and President of the
Council of the European Union***

Madam Chairperson,

Switzerland too warmly welcomes the Czech Foreign Minister, Mr. Karel Schwarzenberg, to the Permanent Council and wishes the Czech Republic every success in its Presidency of the Council of the European Union during the first half of 2009.

While it is not a member of the European Union (EU), Switzerland has shared with it since the beginning of the European integration movement such political values as democracy and the rule of law, respect for human rights and basic freedoms, the desire for co-operation in the most varied areas and the conviction that the security of Europe is based among other things on a reinforced co-operative partnership. These values and convictions have also become the foundations of the OSCE. The political obligations that have emerged from the Helsinki Final Act and the decisions that have followed from it attest to a pan-European community of nations sharing the same values, in which the EU and the OSCE supplement one another in a largely complementary manner as far as their goals and activities are concerned.

This complementarity is of real and exemplary importance in dealing with the conflict in Georgia, which has been a matter of concern for both organizations since last summer, and especially for the OSCE. These efforts have led, as a first stage, to a division of labour along civilian and military lines, which however does not yet exhaust the full potential of the OSCE. Just as the EU is today more than an economic community, so too the OSCE is more than a security organization with a purely military focus: The security that it seeks together with all participating States for the whole of Europe is co-operative, comprehensive and multidimensional.

The outstanding contribution being made by the EU and its member States to the work of the OSCE is obvious and is also held in high regard by Switzerland. The 27 participating States that are also members of the Union contribute a significant portion of the Organization's human and financial resources. Thanks to this support, the field missions, which play an important role in the actual implementation of OSCE objectives, are able to perform their tasks as comprehensively as they do today. Switzerland believes that these field missions are extremely important and for that reason regards it as essential that the OSCE be able to continue its monitoring and reconstruction activities in the Georgian conflict area. We call on all participating States to work with resolve towards this goal.

Switzerland welcomes the statement by Minister Schwarzenberg to the effect that the OSCE is the natural forum for a discussion on the future of European security. The position of Switzerland as regards the proposal for a “new European security architecture” envisages that, given the new challenges, certain adjustments to take into account new relationships and threats should be undertaken, without for that reason radically realigning the existing co-operative security structures. The first objective should be to restore confidence in the existing instruments of the comprehensive, not merely military, security policy.

In conclusion, we should like to thank the Presidency of the Council of the European Union for the good co-operation with our Organization. We are gratified that the useful weekly meetings of the EU Troika with the delegations of like-minded States will continue here in Vienna during this six-month period also. We thank you, Mr. Foreign Minister, for your remarks today and wish the Czech EU Presidency every success.

Thank you, Madam Chairperson.