



**PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF ALBANIA  
TO THE INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS IN VIENNA**

**Special Meeting of the Permanent Council No. 516, 14 July 2004**

**Statement by Ambassador Zef Mazi on behalf of the delegations of the SAP  
countries - Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, and Serbia and  
Montenegro in response to the address of  
H.E. Dr. Bernard Bot,  
Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of the Netherlands**

Mr. Chairman,

On behalf of the delegations of the SAP countries - Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Serbia and Montenegro as well as my country, Albania, I am very pleased to warmly welcome Minister Bot and to thank you Mr Minister for your presentation to the Permanent Council on priorities of the Dutch EU Presidency.

Our delegations would like to support this substantial statement. We note in particular the EU views on cooperation between EU and OSCE. We also note the references made by Minister Bot on enlargement, internal reforms and the Stabilisation and Association Process. We are pleased to note that our closer cooperation and continued progress in our process with the EU is one of the Dutch Presidency's priorities. Our countries are fully committed to implement all the necessary reforms in fulfilling the Copenhagen political criteria and conditionalities of the SAP. We are also convinced that the next round of enlargements will take place in South Eastern Europe. The Thessaloniki Agenda and Declaration, as well as the other relevant high-level meetings, have confirmed that the future of the Western Balkans is within the European Union. As it has been previously stated, future progress and timing for accession will depend on each country's own merits in meeting the above-mentioned criteria and conditionalities.

As stated on other occasions, including at the Maastricht Ministerial declaration, continued internal progress, regional co-operation and good-neighborly relations have transformed South Eastern Europe into a region of consolidated stability and co-operation. Convinced that strengthening of our co-operation is beneficial to ourselves and that it also facilitates the integration process with the EU, our countries will continue to move along this road and constantly promote regional co-operation.

Our delegations welcome the views of the EU Presidency on enhanced co-operation between EU and OSCE, in three T's, regional issues as well as commitment of the EU to contribute to the reform process of the OSCE. We wish also to express our appreciation for the good co-operation between EU and OSCE representatives in the field, which is an

important element in our route towards the EU. In the OSCE context, while supporting the work of the field missions in general, our countries are becoming increasingly active in the overall work of the organization, including the reform process. In this context, we are pleased to see that the process of consultations between EU and our delegations here has already started and will be continued on all issues of common concern, including those related to the overall work of the OSCE. We also look forward to further deepen this process in the framework of the Common Foreign and Security Policy, as it is also foreseen in the Thessaloniki Agenda.

By way of concluding, Mr. Chairman, on behalf of our authorities, I would like to assure the Dutch Presidency of the European Union of our continued commitment to our region's European future. Of special importance for our countries would also be the support from the Dutch Presidency for a potential expansion of participation in the financial perspective for the period 2007-2013 due to start soon, including possibly an orientation to infrastructural projects.

One again, Mr. Minister, we would like to thank you for your insightful and stimulating presentation in the PC today.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.