



Slovensko predsedstvo EU 2008
Slovenian Presidency of the EU 2008
La Présidence slovène de l'UE 2008

PC.DEL/418/08
29 May 2008

ENGLISH only

Slovenian Presidency of the Council of the European Union

**Permanent Council No. 714
29 May 2008**

EU statement in response to the presentation of the 2009 Programme Outline by the Secretary General

The European Union would like to thank the Secretary General for his introduction to the 2009 Programme Outline discussion, as well as the Secretariat and the Fund Managers for producing this document.

The European Union highly appreciates the importance the quintet of OSCE Chairmanships attach to the Programme Outline as a means to strengthen longer-term planning, improve continuity and advance early preparations for their respective Chairmanships. We noted with great interest their proposal to combine the annual discussions on the Programme Budget Performance report and the Programme Outline and look forward to further discussions on this topic.

At this early stage, we would like to restrict ourselves to some general remarks. We will address each individual programme on its own merits during the discussion in the Preparatory Committee.

We are pleased that the structure of the Programme Outline 2009 continues the trend set by last year's document with the aim of enhancing clarity and providing a basis for strategic planning. We would encourage the fund managers to highlight proposed changes or additions to existing programmes.

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In this respect, we believe that the "Overview on Thematic Activities implemented by OSCE Executive Structures" represents a further step in the right direction, in particular at a moment when the Organisation is being entrusted with an increased number of tasks. We trust that the discussions on the Programme Outline will provide opportunities for in-depth considerations of cross-cutting issues.

In adhering fully to the principle of program budgeting, the EU reiterates its support for further improvements in the transparency, consistency, effectiveness and efficiency of the OSCE's work. We are confident that the complete rollout of the PBPB methodology across the Organisation will be helpful in this regard. We look forward to the consultations envisaged by the Secretariat as part of this process on the utility of making full use of Performance Indicators.

We proceed from the understanding that the Programme Outline discussion should be about strategic direction and not a budgetary or resource allocation exercise. We acknowledge, therefore, that specific financial requirements will be thoroughly addressed during the budget discussions later this year.

We welcome the fact that the Programme Outline takes into account political and regional developments. Substantive changes should first and foremost reflect the needs and requirements on the ground. In this respect, we support the continued focus on the Central Asian region and note the overall tendency towards consolidation in South Eastern Europe.

In keeping with the intention of focussing on the strategic nature of the Program Outline, the EU will address such issues as Local Salaries, Board and Lodging Allowance, Staff Recruitment and Staff Costs, National Income Tax in detail during the Unified Budget discussions.

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In conclusion, we underline our commitment to providing Fund Managers with strategic policy guidance on their programs and in this respect we look forward to lively political and strategic discussions in the Preparatory Committee Meetings ahead.

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 country and member of the European Economic Area Iceland, as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, Armenia and Georgia 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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