

Prohlášení
Statement
Déclaration

Vienna 4 June 2009

EU Statement in response to the Report of the Secretary General to the Permanent Council in accordance with the Helsinki Decision No. 8/08 on "OSCE Contribution to the Implementation Phase of the Alliance of Civilizations Initiative"

The EU would like to thank the Secretary General for his report on the outcome of the Second Forum of the Alliance of Civilizations, held in Istanbul on 6 and 7 April.

Five Heads of State and/or Government and a number of Ministers headed the delegations of Member States of the European Union.

The EU believes that the Forum has successfully contributed to the consolidation of the Alliance of Civilizations as an essential political platform for intercultural dialogue, open to Governments, International Organizations, Civil Society and the private business sector.

All EU Member States and the European Commission are now members of the Group of Friends of the Alliance and six Member States have adopted their National Plans to implement the objectives of the Alliance of Civilizations in the fields of education, youth, media and migration.

We share the view of the Secretary General that there is a great extent of correspondence between the objectives of the Alliance of Civilizations and

the OSCE values and commitments, in particular those in the field of tolerance and non-discrimination. We also agree that many OSCE activities are of direct relevance to the Alliance of Civilizations and contribute to the advancement of the goals of fostering dialogue, respect and understanding promoted also by the Alliance.

The EU welcomes that the ODIHR took the opportunity of presenting at the Forum the programmes and tools developed by the Office in the area of tolerance and non-discrimination.

We welcome the considerations on relations between the OSCE and the Alliance of Civilizations provided by the Secretary General in the third part of his report.

The EU is convinced that, within existing mandates and resources, the OSCE can and should continue to interact with the Alliance of Civilizations. The EU welcomes the continuation of contacts between the Secretariat and the Alliance, including by attending meetings of the Group of Friends of the Alliance, where relevant. We should also consider exchanging of experiences between the OSCE and the Alliance through mutual invitations to each other's relevant events. Furthermore, the EU is of the opinion that the Alliance provides a useful framework to disseminate relevant OSCE values, commitments and activities on human rights, democratization, gender equality, freedom of the media, tolerance and non discrimination, including the comprehensive approach to combat all forms of religious discrimination and the efforts to counter radicalization and extremism leading to terrorism. To that effect, the possibility of organizing sessions to introduce the valuable work of the OSCE at the next Forum of the Alliance in Brazil could also be seriously considered, as

a way of promoting OSCE values, principles and commitments, therefore mutually benefiting the OSCE and the Alliance of Civilizations.

We believe that in the present climate of global financial and economic crisis every avenue that can contribute to reduce the danger of an increase in intolerance and discrimination should be explored, and that the co-operation between the OSCE and the Alliance could play a useful role to that end.

The EU will also follow with interest the possibilities for future interaction between the OSCE and the Alliance of Civilizations in the framework of two of the regional strategies for intercultural dialogue that were announced at the Istanbul Forum, one for South East Europe and another for the Euro-Mediterranean region.

Finally, we consider that the Partners for Cooperation have an important contribution to make to the future of the relations between the OSCE and the Alliance of Civilizations.

The candidate countries TURKEY, CROATIA* and 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 countries and members of the European Economic Area ICELAND and NORWAY, as well as UKRAINE, the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA and GEORGIA align themselves with this statement.

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