



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

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Slovenian Presidency of the Council of the European Union

**Permanent Council No. 703
28 February 2008**

EU statement in response to the address by the Chairman of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, H.E. Ján Kubiš

The European Union warmly welcomes His Excellency Ján Kubiš on the occasion of his return to the Permanent Council. The presence of the Chairman of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe in the Permanent Council of the OSCE is a powerful sign of the importance of the cooperation between these two organisations.

The European Union, the Council of Europe and the OSCE share, promote and defend the same set of values and, despite differences in their respective organisational structures and membership, all three are equally engaged in promoting respect for human rights and the rule of law. We believe that these are essential to creating lasting peace and stability.

Effective cooperation is an established principle of the relations between the OSCE and the Council of Europe. Working together with common goals helps to avoid the duplication of efforts and to increase synergies. The work of the Coordination Group dealing with the four key areas of the fight against terrorism, the protection of the rights of persons belonging to national minorities, the combating of trafficking in human beings and the promotion of tolerance and non-discrimination ensures that this principle is both preserved and promoted.

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The EU welcomes the fact that the ODIHR, the OSCE Special Representative on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings, and the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities are playing their respective roles in this cooperation. Cooperation must however not be limited to these institutions and it is for this reason that we are pleased at the positive relations between OSCE field presences and Council of Europe offices in a number of countries.

The EU views favourably OSCE participation in the Conference on the Anniversaries of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities and the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages and the Conference on the education of Roma children and youth and their integration into the school system. We welcome participation on the part of the Council of Europe in OSCE events whenever appropriate.

The EU considers election observation another area of highest importance for both organisations. We commend the excellent cooperation that we have seen between the ODIHR, the OSCE PA and the PACE on numerous election observation missions and strongly encourage all of them to continue these common efforts wherever possible.

Your Excellency, the European Union values your approach in the pursuit of our common goals. We take this opportunity to express our commitment to the valuable efforts of both the OSCE and the Council of Europe and to express our gratitude to you for your personal engagement to these organisations both in the past as the Secretary General of the OSCE and now as the Chairman of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe. We thank you for your address and wish you all the best for your efforts.

The candidate countries Turkey, Croatia* and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*, the countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential

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candidate countries Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia, the European Free Trade Association countries and members of the European Economic Area Iceland and Liechtenstein, as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, Armenia, Azerbaijan 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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