

Prohlášení Statement Déclaration

Vienna 7 May 2009

Permanent Council No. 760 EU Statement in response to the Head of the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ambassador Garry Robbins

The EU is pleased to welcome Ambassador Robbins to the Permanent Council today and thanks him for his comprehensive report.

The European Union wishes to commend the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina for continuing the important work it is doing to assist the country in its efforts to meet its OSCE commitments and to prepare for further Euro-Atlantic integration.

The European Union reiterates its full support for the European perspective of Bosnia and Herzegovina. In this respect, the signature of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement and of the Interim Agreement with Bosnia and Herzegovina are important steps on the country's path towards the EU. The EU calls upon the local political leaders to engage thoroughly and with stronger determination on the necessary reform agenda in order to implement fully the Interim Agreement.

The need for a shared vision of the country's future, the enforcement of the rule of law, the strengthening of institutions and administrative capacity, and the fight against corruption and organised crime remain major challenges. We encourage all the political forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina to unite their efforts to pursue the priorities set out in the European Partnership and to

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complete fulfilment of the five objectives and two conditions set by the Peace Implementation Council Steering Board. To this end, we strongly encourage the continuation of the Prud/Odžak process, urging that the widest possible consensus be found, and call for the commitments undertaken in this context to be rapidly translated into concrete legislative results.

Nevertheless, the EU remains concerned about the overall political situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina. We call upon Bosnia and Herzegovina's political leaders to refrain from nationalist rhetoric and unilateral actions. We also call upon them to fully respect the rights of journalists and media freedom.

Furthermore, we welcome the stand-by agreement between Bosnia and Herzegovina and the IMF. We express our hope that the conditions set by IMF will be implemented in a constructive manner and without delay, and that Bosnia and Herzegovina's authorities take all necessary and effective measures to counter the repercussions of the global economic and financial crisis.

The EU commends the Mission for its successful work in 2009 in implementing its mandate. We welcome the Mission's aim to secure the sustainability over time of its programmatic activities. We take note of the planned consolidation of three programmes into a single Human Dimension programme in 2010, and we welcome the development of plans to improve intra-Mission cohesion between programmatic and political components. Any efforts of the Mission to avoid duplication and promote streamlining will be supported by the EU.

Ambassador Robbins' report rightly highlights the importance of school curricula designed to educate tomorrow's leaders to become citizens committed to tolerance, democratic norms and respect for human rights. The European Union reaffirms its broad support for the Mission's efforts to promote

a rational and professional education structure free from undue political interference, which prepares the ground for overcoming the deep ethnic divides in the country.

We support the Mission's focus on good governance in particular at the municipal level, on developing the justice reform, on monitoring war crimes prosecutions, on the fight against the trafficking in human beings and on promoting the rule of law. We also welcome the advisory work of the Mission, notably on election-related matters.

In closing, Madame Chairperson, the EU congratulates the Mission on its continuing significant contribution to sustainable peace and further democratic reforms in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and for their good co-operation with the host government. We trust that the OSCE Mission will continue to play a constructive role.

The candidate countries TURKEY, CROATIA* and FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA*, the countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate countries ALBANIA, MONTENEGRO and SERBIA, the European Free Trade Association country and member of the European Economic Area LIECHTENSTEIN, as well as UKRAINE, the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA, ARMENIA, AZERBAIJAN align themselves with this statement.

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