



## German Presidency of the Council of the European Union

### **2007 Annual Security Review Conference**

**19-20 June 2007**

## European Union Opening Statement

Mr. Chairman, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen. It is a privilege for the Presidency of the European Union to address this 5th Annual Security Review Conference.

Needless to say politico-military issues and broader questions of security in the Euro-Atlantic area are of utmost importance for the EU, today maybe even more so than in the past. The Extraordinary Conference of the States Parties to the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe which concluded here just a couple of days ago and the persisting protracted conflicts in the Republic of Moldova and Georgia and the conflict dealt with by the Minsk Group clearly illustrate how relevant questions of security and disarmament remain.

This is why the European Union attaches such great importance to the Annual Security Review Conference. It provides an essential forum for dialogue and consultation involving all relevant role players at an equal footing. A forum to analyse the security environment in the OSCE area, to evaluate the implementation of the OSCE Strategy to Address Threats to Security and Stability in the Twenty-First Century as well as to discuss how the OSCE should collectively respond to the changing challenges to our common security.

The CFE regime remains a cornerstone of European security. The EU therefore regrets that it was not possible to achieve agreement on a Final Document at the Extraordinary Conference of the States Parties to the CFE Treaty which ended on 15

June 2007 here in Vienna. The EU hopes that the dialogue between all States Parties on outstanding issues regarding the CFE Treaty will be resumed soon.

The EU firmly believes in the first dimension of the OSCE and is actively committed to its further enhancement. Within the framework of the OSCE we have collectively created a unique network of treaties, commitments, decisions, norms and measures on conventional disarmament and arms control as well as on confidence and security building measures. This network has promoted security and stability in Europe by increasing trust and transparency among participating States. It has also made a valuable contribution to addressing new risks and challenges. We have therefore good reason to be proud of this outstanding achievement which we should not take for granted. The European Union firmly believes that it needs to be preserved, fully implemented and further strengthened and that last but not least this outstanding achievement could also serve as a model in other regions of the world.

The EU therefore remains actively engaged in the Forum for Security Cooperation. By providing guidelines and best practice guides in various fields of disarmament and arms control the FSC effectively supports the implementation of the impressive *Acquis* of confidence and security building measures. The EU welcomes this dynamic development as well as the ongoing work within the FSC in furthering the implementation of related UN Security Council Resolutions throughout the OSCE area. We call on all participating States to take advantage of the upcoming Special FSC Meeting on prospects for arms control and confidence- and security-building measures as an opportunity to further advance our cooperation. One of our most burning issues will be to combat the scourge of the destabilizing accumulation and spread of small arms and light weapons. Our current work related to the issues of ammunition, efforts towards effective and efficient management and security of stockpiles as well as the problems related to the air transport of SALW and their ammunition have to remain high on the agenda.

As to the protracted conflicts in the Republic of Moldova and Georgia and the conflict dealt with by the Minsk Group much remains to be done to achieve a peaceful settlement. In spite of the continued efforts of the OSCE and very much to our regret we have so far seen little success to date.

However, the recent OSCE project for the rehabilitation of the South Ossetian Region in Georgia, which is heavily funded by the EU, gives cause to hope. It is starting to produce results, thus proving that the old OSCE recipe of mixing economic development with confidence-building measures still works. Let me therefore be crystal clear: We call upon all those concerned to engage in an open dialogue, to show readiness for compromise and to refrain from all action that could further heighten tensions. We hope that on this basis a reopening of the 5+2 negotiations for resolving the Transnistrian conflict will be possible in the very near future. The EU, for its part, is ready to support all steps which contribute to a peaceful resolution of the protracted conflicts in the Republic of Moldova and Georgia based on the principles of territorial integrity of these countries, and to the complete fulfilment of the 1999 Istanbul Commitments.

Central Asia is a region to which the European Union attaches great importance. We will therefore adopt a comprehensive, action-oriented Strategy for the region at the European Council later this week. The European Union has a strong interest in a peaceful, stable and economically prosperous Central Asia which is strongly committed to the rule of law, human rights and democratic values. We acknowledge the substantial contribution of OSCE institutions and field missions to security and stability in Central Asia. The European Union will continue to support and actively engage in the Organization's activities in the region, in areas reaching from border management, good governance and the rule of law to education.

The European Union is convinced that effective security has to be based on a broad security concept. With its multidimensional concept of cooperative security encompassing politico-military issues, economic and environmental aspects as well as the promotion of human rights, democracy and rule of law the OSCE constitutes an indispensable actor in the European security architecture. It also plays an essential role in early warning, conflict prevention, crisis management and conflict resolution.

With its comprehensive mandate, its institutions, its field operations and its experience the OSCE provides essential prerequisites to addressing also new threats to our common security. The fight against terrorism, organized crime, illicit

drugs, trafficking and intolerance constitutes an important part of the activities of our Organisation.

Let me conclude by reaffirming what Minister Steinmeier said in this room at the very outset of our EU Presidency. We are convinced that the EU and the OSCE share common goals: securing peace and post-conflict reconstruction with a host of instruments and measures. Rest assured that the European Union will continue to support a vigorous response of the OSCE to these fundamental security challenges. It is my firm belief that the 2007 Annual Security Review Conference will play a very important role in this respect.

The Candidate Countries Turkey, Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia\*, the Countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Montenegro, EFTA country Iceland, a member of the European Economic Area, as well as the Republic of Moldova align themselves with this statement.

---

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