



PERMANENT REPRESENTATION OF PORTUGAL  
TO THE OSCE

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Portugal 2007- Presidency of the European Union

## Portuguese Presidency of the Council of the European Union

**692<sup>nd</sup> Meeting of the Permanent Council**

**13<sup>th</sup> December 2007**

### European Union Presidency Statement on the celebration of Human Rights Day

I would like to draw the attention of participating States to a EU Presidency statement, issued on the 10<sup>th</sup> December 2007, on the celebration of Human Rights Day.

«As we celebrate today Human Rights day, the EU Presidency would like to take this opportunity to recall that all human rights are universal, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated. Human Rights are the principles that make us humans and are applicable worldwide. The struggle for the realization of human rights is a struggle for each and everyone as it is fundamental to ensure the equal enjoyment of human rights by all. The values of universality of all Human Rights, the ideals of justice and human dignity enshrined in the Universal Declaration and reaffirmed in the Vienna World Conference of 1993 constitute essential objectives of the European Union and serve as a fundamental basis for our action.

Today, we also begin the celebration of the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. We have come a long way since the Declaration was adopted in 1948 and have faced serious challenges, but the EU is confident that the simple and basic idea of human rights for all will continue to have a dramatic and positive impact in history.

The EU is firmly committed to continue to develop a deeply rooted culture of human rights worldwide, with education playing a crucial role to this end. The EU stresses once again the necessity to ensure that civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights are treated equally without any discrimination in their applicability.

The EU Presidency would also like to recall, on Human Rights day, that we are celebrating this year the 18th anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which has almost universal ratification, representing a landmark achievement in the promotion and protection of human rights.

The EU Presidency acknowledges that the protection and promotion of human rights, for which governments have responsibility, cannot be realised without the help and the work of human rights bodies and of international organisations and, in this regard, the EU pays tribute to the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and to her Office. The EU also praises the courageous work of Human Rights Defenders and of civil society, which have vital role in the worldwide promotion of these rights and deserve our unfailing support.

The EU Presidency reiterates that human rights are the foundation of our coexistence and that we must keep united to achieve our common goal of bringing effectiveness, within each country, to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and to the major Human Rights instruments.» *end of quote*