

Finnish Presidency of the Council of the European Union

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**EU Statement in response to Secretary General of the International
Energy Forum, Ambassador Arne Walther**

The European Union welcomes Ambassador Walther to the Permanent Council and thanks him for his address.

Let me present to you some of the EU thinking concerning energy security questions. The world is facing a number of challenges in the energy field. The EU is convinced that the global nature of these challenges require strengthened partnership between all stakeholders. In response to these challenges the European Union called, at the European Council of last March, for an Energy Policy for Europe, aiming at effective Community policy, coherence between Member States and consistency between actions in different policy areas and fulfilling in a balanced way the three objectives of security of supply, competitiveness and environmental sustainability.

The EU is convinced that the development of a new energy policy should be based on the full use of synergies between the promotion of energy security, sustainable energy supply, competitiveness, innovation and the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, and include the strong promotion of energy efficiency and renewable energies. The need to further diversify sources of energy supply, promote development of renewable energies and make more efficient use of energy is in this sense a priority for the EU as well as the importance of energy efficiency as a factor in competitiveness and sustainable development. The EU will accelerate development of regional energy cooperation within the EU, facilitating the integration of regional markets into and further development of the EU internal market.

The external aspects of energy security will also constitute an important part of such an overall policy which will be conducted in a spirit of solidarity and intended to ensure reliable, affordable and sustainable energy flows into the Union. The EU will make use of all available policies and instruments to support external action in this area. Furthermore, intensified diversification with respect to external as well as indigenous sources, suppliers and transport routes supported by investments in the necessary infrastructure will be one of the main objectives of the new policy.

The EU is convinced that this will require, inter alia, the furthering of energy dialogues and partnerships between the EU and its main partners, be they producer, transit or consumer countries, in synergy with relevant international organisations. The EU takes note of the important role played by the International Energy Forum, in particular as a useful framework for broadening the dialogue among energy producing and consuming countries. In accordance with the conclusions of the European Council last June in Brussels, the EU supports prompt ratification of the Energy Charter Treaty by all its signatories, as a first step to ease dialogue on energy security issues.

Concerning energy security issues in the OSCE, the EU would like to recall the provisions of the Strategy Document for the Economic and Environmental Dimension adopted at the 11th Meeting of the Ministerial Council in Maastricht on 1-2 December 2003, in which the OSCE participating States promised to encourage energy dialogue and efforts to diversify energy supply, ensure the safety of routes, and make more efficient use of energy resources. The EU is looking forward to the report of the Coordinator of Economic and Environmental Activities on the exploratory work undertaken in the area of energy security. As the EU stated on 12 May 2006 at the Economic and Environmental Sub-Committee, we reiterate our perception of energy security being an issue the OSCE could look at. We also recall our belief that discussions within the OSCE could contribute to long-term, mutually beneficial co-operation in the broader energy field. The EU is especially interested in the topics of good governance and transparency, environmental security, and energy efficiency in relation to energy security.

The Acceding Countries Bulgaria and Romania, the Candidate Countries Turkey, Croatia ¹ and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia as well as the Countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, and Serbia align themselves with this statement.

¹ Croatia and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process