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**EU STATEMENT IN RESPONSE TO THE REPORT BY THE CO-ORDINATOR OF OSCE  
ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVITIES**

The EU thanks Mr. Swiecicki, the Co-ordinator of Economic and Environmental Activities, for his report to the Permanent Council. This being his last appearance at this forum, we would also like to thank him for his untiring efforts during more than three years in this position to strengthen the economic and environmental dimension of the OSCE.

Regarding this year's Economic Forum, the EU welcomes the follow-up activities proposed by the Co-ordinator and the Chairmanship. At the meeting of the Economic and Environmental Sub-Committee of 17 June 2005 the EU has made substantial comments on these proposals, which, in general terms, we consider both relevant and which will be discussed with a view to get concrete results by the next ministerial meeting. The EU supports the increased focus which the Forum put on the review of implementation of commitments. An early decision on the themes of both the Economic Forum 2006 and the review session is paramount for giving enough time for their proper preparation. In general, the EU fully supports the approach of the Belgian Chairmanship regarding the theme, the structure and the overall preparatory work of next year's Forum, as described in the draft decision of the incoming Chairmanship.

We have seen significant developments in the economic and environmental dimension during the tenure of Mr. Swiecicki. Until three years ago, the Office of the Co-ordinator almost exclusively dealt with the preparation and organisation of the Economic Fora. Meanwhile, its staff has substantially increased in numbers and its tasks have been extended. In particular the Maastricht Economic and Environmental Strategy has given a new impetus to the role of the Co-ordinator, by tasking him to provide advice and assistance to participating States on the implementation of their commitments in the economic and environmental dimension. This is reflected in the growing number of projects developed and implemented by the Office of the Co-ordinator in such important areas as good governance, environmental security and fight against trafficking and money laundering, which deserve continuous attention.

The Maastricht Strategy also tasked the OSCE to mobilize and facilitate the involvement of other organisations dealing with economic and environmental fields. The conclusion of a memorandum of understanding with UNECE has been a first important step in this regard. The co-operation between UNDP, UNEP and the OSCE in the Environmental Security Initiative is another example worth following.

The EU would once again like to thank Mr. Swiecicki and wish him all the best for his future endeavours.

The Acceding Countries Bulgaria and Romania, the Candidate Countries Turkey and Croatia<sup>1</sup>, as well as Ukraine align themselves with this statement.

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<sup>1</sup>Croatia continues to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process