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Slovensko predsedstvo EU 2008  
Slovenian Presidency of the EU 2008  
La Présidence slovène de l'UE 2008

## **Slovenian Presidency of the Council of the European Union**

**Permanent Council No. 703  
28 February 2008**

### **EU statement on Kazakhstan (Path to Europe)**

The European Union welcomes the recent announcement by the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, H.E. Nursultan Nazarbaev, to elaborate a special programme in the context of EU-Kazakh relations, including Kazakhstan's preparations for its OSCE Chairmanship in 2010, which he referred to as "Path to Europe".

The European Union stands ready to assist Kazakhstan in preparing for the Chairmanship in 2010 and looks forward to engaging with Kazakhstan in areas of mutual cooperation with the EU and also relevant to the OSCE. The fact that a Central Asian country will take over this position for the first time presents an unprecedented opportunity both for the OSCE and Kazakhstan.

The EU welcomes Kazakhstan's commitment to strengthen its relations with the EU, to fulfil the OSCE's core principles in all three dimensions, and to further its own democratic reform process, as expressed in Minister Tazhin's letter to the Chairman-in-Office and in his address at the OSCE Ministerial Council in 2007. We also particularly commend Kazakhstan's commitment to preserve ODIHR and its existing mandate and not to support any future efforts to weaken them.

The European Union looks forward to Kazakhstan's full implementation of political and democratic reforms and reaffirms its readiness to assist Kazakhstan actively in this endeavour.

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The candidate countries Turkey, Croatia\* and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia\*, the countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate countries Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia, the European Free Trade Association countries and members of the European Economic Area Iceland and Norway, as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia align themselves with this statement.

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

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