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Canadian Delegation to the
Organization for Security & Cooperation
in Europe



Délégation du Canada auprès de
l'Organisation pour la sécurité et la coopération
en Europe

**DELEGATION OF CANADA TO THE OSCE
STATEMENT IN RESPONSE TO ADDRESS BY
THE AUSTRIAN MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, H.E. URSULA PLASSNIK
591ST (SPECIAL) MEETING OF THE PERMANENT COUNCIL
2 FEBRUARY 2006**

Mr. Chairman,

It is a pleasure for Canada to welcome the Foreign Minister of Austria, Her Excellency Ursula Plassnik, representing the Presidency of the European Union, to this Special Session of the Permanent Council. We appreciate her comprehensive outline of EU proposals for strengthening cooperation with the OSCE, in all 3 dimensions, as we implement the wide variety of decisions taken at the Ljubljana Ministerial Council over the coming months.

We would like to take this opportunity to express, through Minister Plassnik, our great appreciation to the Government of Austria, for being such a committed host to this Organization, of which just under half of our membership also belongs to the European Union. We look forward to working with the European Union, under the Austrian presidency, in pursuing our common Euro-Atlantic goals and objectives both in Vienna, through multilateral channels, and bilaterally in our capitals. We invite the European Union to continue to work through the OSCE to further security and stability in Europe and will be interested to hear more about the concept of an EU-OSCE memorandum. We also look forward to the EU members continued active contribution to the reform process this Organization has embarked upon.

Canada would like to reiterate its full support for the shared values - democracy, rule of law and respect for human rights - both the OSCE and the EU embrace. Our integrated and comprehensive approach to security and stability in Europe is at the core of this constructive multilateralism and mutual reinforcement.

We strongly support cooperation between the OSCE and the EU in areas such as the fight against terrorism and trafficking in human beings, the promotion of tolerance and diversity, freedom of assembly and association, election monitoring, gender equality, democratization and good governance. It is only through sharing of resources, information and expertise that we can meet the challenges to the values that bind us together.

Canada continues to see great benefit in cooperation on the ground, in the Balkans for example, where the EU has demonstrated its ability to work effectively and efficiently

in helping promote the implementation of OSCE commitments. The recently established EU Border Assistance Mission to Moldova and Ukraine should also provide welcome assistance to OSCE efforts.

In closing, Canada wishes Austria all success in fulfilling the EU Presidency's objectives and assures the EU Presidency of Canada's full support in seeking ways to enhance cooperation between the OSCE and the EU.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.