

Response to the statement of  
Special Co-ordinator of the Stability Pact for  
Southeastern Europe  
by the Japanese Ambassador Itaru Umezu  
( Permanent Council, 16 June 2005)

Mr. Chairman,

I have the honor to express my gratitude to Dr. Erhard Busek, Special Co-ordinator of the Stability Pact for Southeastern Europe, for attending this OSCE Permanent Council meeting and for his comprehensive report.

Having in mind that peace and stability in South Eastern Europe are concerns shared by the entire international community, for many years the Government of Japan has provided assistance for Southeast European countries and intends to continue doing so.

Japan has always attached importance to the Stability Pact and supported its implementation. Japan was a supporting state until June 2000, when it changed its status to that of an official Stability Pact member. In order to promote the goals of the Pact, Japan has held various seminars and workshops such as the "High Level Conference on SEE". In April 2004, Japan co-hosted with the EU Presidency the "Ministerial Conference on Peace Consolidation and Economic Development of the Western Balkans", with the participation of Foreign Ministers and Ministers for Economic Affairs from 5 countries in the region.

Japan is now making efforts to follow up on proposals made at this Conference in the areas of "Peace Consolidation," "Economic Development," and "Regional Cooperation." In the field of "Peace Consolidation", Japan conducted training programs for the supporting staff of the War Crimes Tribunal in Bosnia and Herzegovina through a project of the UNDP. In October 2004 Japan became a permanent observer of the SECI Regional Center for Combatting Transborder Crime. In the field of "Economic Development," Japan and the Republic of Montenegro co-organized the Workshop on the Promotion of Tourism in the Western Balkans in November 2004. A second such workshop will be organized this year. In order to

promote “Regional Cooperation,” Japan is considering supporting a symposium on ethnic reconciliation proposed by the European Center for Peace and Development in Belgrade. As part of its ongoing cooperation with the OSCE, Japan is currently seconding two Japanese staff to OSCE missions in the regions. It has also decided to support a project in Mostar aiming at ethnic reconciliation in cooperation with the OSCE mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina by providing computers for local junior and senior high schools as well as dispatching relevant experts.

The prospect of EU and NATO membership for the countries of Southeastern Europe is a powerful vehicle for the further stabilization of the region. Japan would like to take this opportunity to reaffirm its support for the region’s integration into Euro-Atlantic structures and its determination to play a complementary role in the stabilization of Southeastern Europe while coordinating its efforts with our partners. Japan hopes for further progress in the implementation of the Stability Pact and intends to cooperate in this effort in various ways, including utilizing the OSCE framework.

I thank Dr. Busek once again and wish him success in the future.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.