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**EU Statement on the progress of an international Treaty on the Arms Trade at the United Nations**

**Forum for Security Co-operation, 1<sup>st</sup> of November 2006.**

The Presidency, on behalf of the European Union, would like to draw to the attention of FSC colleagues the welcome news that on Thursday 26 October 2006, the UN gave the go-ahead for negotiations on a new, comprehensive international arms trade treaty. A UN Resolution calling for the establishment of a group of governmental experts was approved in the First Committee (Disarmament and International Security) of the General Assembly after a vote. The group will commence its work in 2008 with a mandate to examine the feasibility and scope and draft parameters of a new arms trade treaty. In the build up to the group of governmental experts the Secretary-General of the UN will also be asked to seek the views of UN member states regarding the treaty.

The new treaty would cover the export, import and transfer of conventional arms. The intention is for the new treaty to be based on the existing international legal responsibilities of the states, particularly in relation to human rights. The Resolution also stated that the lack of an international standard for arms trading has had a detrimental effect on peace, stability, security, and sustainable development.

The European Union expressed its support for an international treaty to establish common standards for the trade in conventional arms already in the Council Conclusion of October 3, 2005 and co-sponsored the First Committee resolution.

The European Union warmly welcomes this development and calls on all OSCE Participating States to actively support the global effort to achieve a comprehensive international arms trade treaty.

The Acceding Countries Bulgaria and Romania, the Candidate Countries Turkey, Croatia <sup>1</sup>, the Countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Montenegro, EFTA country Norway, member of the European Economic Area, as well as Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova align themselves with this statement.

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