

**17th Economic and Environmental Forum
Vienna, 20 January 2009**

EU closing statement

The European Union thanks the Greek Chairmanship, the Secretary General of the OSCE, the Co-ordinator of Economic and Environmental Activities and the OSCE staff for having organised this interesting Forum focusing on the very pertinent topic of migration management.

We have highly appreciated the presentations by the various speakers dedicated to the importance of this issue from diverse perspectives. The presentations have illustrated different approaches of participating States to this complex issue and highlighted many challenges countries of origin, transit and destination are facing in the context of international migration, as well as the links between questions of migration management and the OSCE concept of comprehensive security. We have greatly appreciated that the contributions of participating States elaborated also on challenges of illegal migration, such as combating criminal networks, smuggling and trafficking in human beings.

As we have learned from various presentations, the OSCE can build on initiatives and expertise of several international bodies and networks, such as International Organization for Migration (IOM), the International Labour Office (ILO), the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD), Europol and others. The European Union believes that close cooperation and coordination of the OSCE with relevant international organisations could facilitate meeting challenges related to international migration.

The EU has taken note of numerous proposals made by participating States and partner organisations and welcomes all initiatives and concrete steps which could address the most pressing problems. We are looking forward to the concrete conclusions by the OSCE Coordinator for Economic and Environmental Activities on possible future actions by the OSCE. The EU attaches special importance to the activities carried out by the OSCE field operations. We would be interested to hear about their ideas on how to follow up on the discussions of the Forum in their specific regions.

We hope that all States will act upon the conclusions that have been drawn during the Forum. We look forward to continuing our discussions in the framework of the Economic and Environmental Committee, during the second preparatory conference in Tirana and the second part of the Economic and Environmental Forum in Athens.

The candidate countries Turkey and Croatia*, the countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate countries Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro, the European Free Trade Association country and member of the European Economic Area Norway, as well as Ukraine align themselves with this statement.

* Croatia continues to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

Stálá mise České Republiky při OBSE

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